1. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart.

2. Hold weights straight down at your sides, with palms facing backward.

3. Breathe out as you raise one arm in front of you to shoulder height, keeping your arm straight. Keep your elbows slightly bent so you don't lock the joints.

4. Hold the position for one second.

5. Breathe in as you slowly lower your arm.

6. Repeat for the other arm.

7. Repeat each arm 10–15 times.

8. Rest; then repeat the exercise.

As you progress:

Level 2: Work up to lifting both arms at the same time, as shown in the picture.

Level 3: Use a heavier weight and alternate arms until you can lift the new weight comfortably with both arms.
1. You can do this exercise while sitting in a sturdy, armless chair.
2. Keep your feet flat on the floor, shoulder-width apart.
3. Hold hand weights straight down at your sides with your palms facing inward. Breathe in slowly.
4. Slowly breathe out as you raise both arms to the side and up to shoulder height, keeping your elbows slightly bent so you don’t lock your joints.
5. Hold the position for one second.
6. Breathe in as you slowly lower your arms.
7. Repeat 10–15 times.
8. Rest; then repeat 10–15 more times.

As you progress:

**Level 2:** Do this exercise while standing.

**Level 3:** Use a heavier weight and alternate arms until you can lift the new weight comfortably with both arms.

This exercise will strengthen your shoulders and make lifting easier.
After a few weeks of doing this exercise for your upper arm muscles, lifting those shopping bags on to the bench will be much easier.

1. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart.
2. Hold weights straight down at your sides with your palms facing forward. Breathe in slowly.
3. Breathe out as you slowly bend your elbows and lift weights toward chest. Keep elbows at your sides and your wrists straight.
4. Hold the position for one second.
5. Breathe in as you slowly lower your arms.
6. Keep your elbows slightly bent so you don’t lock your joints.
7. Repeat 10–15 times.
8. Rest; then repeat 10–15 more times.

As you progress:

Level 2: Use a heavier weight and alternate arms until you can lift the new weight comfortably with both arms.
Arm curl with resistance band

1. Sit in a sturdy, armless chair with your feet flat on the floor, shoulder-width apart.

2. Place the centre of the resistance band under both feet. Hold each end of the band with your palms facing inward. Keep elbows at your sides. Breathe in slowly.

3. Keep wrists straight and slowly breathe out as you bend your elbows and bring your hands toward your shoulders.

4. Hold position for one second, keeping your shoulders down.

5. Breathe in as you slowly lower your arms.

6. Repeat 10–15 times.

7. Rest; then repeat 10–15 more times.

As you progress:
Level 2: Use a heavier strength band.

This variation of the arm curl exercise uses a resistance band instead of weights. (See Working with a resistance band on page 34.)
1. You can do this exercise while sitting in a sturdy, armless chair.
2. Keep your feet flat on the floor, shoulder-width apart.
3. Hold weight in one hand with your palm facing inward. Raise that arm toward ceiling.
4. Support this arm below the elbow with your other hand. Breathe in slowly.
5. Slowly bend your raised arm at the elbow and bring the weight toward your shoulder. Keep your elbow pointing towards the ceiling.
6. Hold position for one second.
7. Breathe out and slowly straighten your arm over your head. Be careful not to lock your elbow or swing your arm.
8. Repeat 10–15 times.
9. Repeat 10–15 times with other arm.
10. Repeat 10–15 more times with each arm.

As you progress:

Level 2: Do this exercise while standing as shown in the picture.
Level 3: Use a heavier weight.

Quick tip — If it’s difficult for you to hold hand weights, try using wrist weights.

Elbow extension

This exercise will strengthen your upper arms. If your shoulders aren’t flexible enough to do this exercise, try the Chair dip on page 44.
Chair dip

1. Sit in a sturdy chair with armrests with your feet flat on the floor, shoulder-width apart.
2. Lean slightly forward; keep your back and shoulders straight.
3. Grasp the arms of the chair with your hands next to you. Breathe in slowly.
4. Breathe out and use your arms to push your body slowly off the chair.
5. Hold position for one second.
6. Breathe in as you slowly lower yourself back down.
7. Repeat 10–15 times.
8. Rest; then repeat 10–15 more times

As you progress:

Level 2: Using a stable bench seat or low table, sit on the edge with your hands on either side so your palms rest on the furniture and your fingers are over the edge, with your feet flat on the floor shoulder-width apart. Keeping your back straight, tightening your abdomen and leaving your hands in place, move your buttocks slightly forward off the furniture and bend your elbows to dip your buttocks toward the floor. Keep your knees above your ankles and dip only to the point where your upper arms are parallel to the floor. Use your arms to push yourself up to the starting position.

Level 3: Do the progression Level 2 exercise, but with your legs out straight in front of you.
This exercise will strengthen your wrists, hands and forearms. It also will help ensure good form and prevent injury when you do upper-body strength exercises.

Wrist curl

1. Rest your forearm on the arm of a sturdy chair with your wrist over the edge.
2. Hold weight with your palm facing upward.
3. Slowly bend your wrist up and down, without moving your forearm.
4. Repeat 10–15 times.
5. Repeat with other hand 10–15 times.
6. Repeat 10–15 more times with each hand.

As you progress:

Level 2: Use a heavier weight.
1. Stand behind a sturdy chair, holding on for balance. Breathe in slowly.

2. Breathe out and slowly lift one leg straight back without bending your knee or pointing your toes. Try not to lean forward or arch your back. The leg you are standing on should be slightly bent.

3. Hold position for one second.

4. Breathe in as you slowly lower your leg.

5. Repeat 10–15 times.

6. Repeat 10–15 times with other leg.

7. Repeat 10–15 more times with each leg.

As you progress:

Level 2: Try improving your balance by gradually decreasing your hand support and eventually doing the exercise with your eyes closed.

Level 3: You may want to add ankle weights.
1. Stand behind a sturdy chair with feet slightly apart, holding on for balance. Breathe in slowly.

2. Breathe out and slowly lift one leg out to the side. Keep your back straight and your toes facing forward. The leg you are standing on should be slightly bent.

3. Hold position for one second.

4. Breathe in as you slowly lower your leg.

5. Repeat 10–15 times.

6. Repeat 10–15 times with other leg.

7. Repeat 10–15 more times with each leg.

As you progress:

**Level 2:** Try improving your balance by gradually decreasing your hand support and eventually doing the exercise with your eyes closed.

**Level 3:** You may want to add ankle weights as shown in the picture.
Chair stand

This exercise, which strengthens your abdomen and thighs, will make it easier to get in and out of the car.

1. Sit toward the front of a sturdy, armless chair with knees bent and feet flat on floor, shoulder-width apart. Breathe in.

2. Breathe out and extend your arms so they are parallel to the floor as you slowly stand up, keeping your heels on the ground.

3. Breathe in as you slowly sit down.

4. Repeat 10–15 times.

5. Rest; then repeat 10–15 more times.
   (If you find this difficult, place a piece of foam or similar on the chair to raise the sitting height.)

As you progress:

**Level 2:** Place a stable step at the front of your chair. Start from a standing position on the step with feet shoulder-width apart, feet slightly turned out and arms out in front. Keeping your back straight and tightening your abdomen, bend your knees and slowly lower yourself into the chair, keeping your feet flat on the floor and your knees in line with your foot. Then slowly return to a standing position.

**Level 3:** You may like to add hand weights or increase the distance from standing to sitting by removing the chair altogether and doing a squat by lowering your buttocks toward the floor and standing up again.
1. Stand behind a sturdy chair, holding on for balance. Breathe in slowly.

2. Breathe out as you slowly bring your heel up toward your buttocks as far as possible. Bend only from your knee, keep your hips still, your knees close together and don’t point your toe. The leg you are standing on should be slightly bent.

3. Hold position for one second.

4. Breathe in as you slowly lower your foot to the floor.

5. Repeat 10–15 times.

6. Repeat 10–15 times with other leg.

7. Repeat 10–15 more times with each leg.

As you progress:

Level 2: Try improving your balance by gradually decreasing your hand support and eventually doing the exercise with your eyes closed.

Level 3: You may want to add ankle weights.

This exercise will make walking and climbing stairs easier.