



THE 8TH ELEMENT

Hello, amazing women! Thank you for opting for this resource guide. Before we dive in, let's talk about why strength training is so important for women, especially those over 40 or going through perimenopause.

Have you ever heard that strength training is good for you and thought, "Yup, that sounds like a good idea, but..."?

That "but" usually precedes a question. Like:

- "... but what exactly do you mean by strength training?"
- "... but does it require lifting heavy weights?"
- "... but can I add it into what I'm already doing?"
- "... but is it really that important?"
- "... but how do I get started? I don't even know where to begin."

If you're asking yourself any (or all!) of these questions, you're not alone. Many of our 8th Element Coaching clients start off with questions and concerns like this too.

In this guide, we've got you covered. We'll answer the top questions about strength training and provide you with a sample routine you can try out today. Strength Training 101 is now in session!

The Importance of Strength Training for Women 40+

For women in their 40s and beyond, particularly those in perimenopause or menopause, the body undergoes many changes, including hormonal shifts which can impact muscle mass, bone density, and overall health.

Hence, strength training becomes incredibly important. It helps maintain muscle mass, which naturally declines with age, and supports bone density, reducing the risk of osteoporosis. Strength training also boosts metabolism, helps manage weight, and improves overall energy levels. Additionally, it enhances mood and reduces the risk of depression and anxiety, common

challenges during this life stage. Incorporating regular strength workouts can make a significant difference in health, mobility, and overall quality of life.

Strength training is about much more than just lifting heavy weights. At The 8th Element, we sometimes use the terms resistance training and strength training interchangeably.

Resistance training is any type of training where muscles work against resistance—this could be exercise bands, bodyweight, dumbbells, or even household items. This resistance causes microtears in your muscles, stimulating them to rebuild stronger. Over time, you'll notice increased strength, improved movement, and more confidence.

And while building strength is a common goal, strength training is also useful for building muscle mass, losing body fat, enhancing physical performance, and even rehabilitating from an injury.

Here is a detailed guide on why strength training is vital and how it can benefit you:

1. Preserving Muscle Mass

- As women age, they naturally begin to lose muscle mass—a process known as sarcopenia. This decline starts around age 30 and accelerates after age 40. Strength training helps counteract this muscle loss, keeping you stronger and more functional in your daily activities.

2. Supporting Bone Density

- Women are at higher risk of developing osteoporosis due to hormonal changes during menopause that can lead to bone loss. Weight-bearing exercises, like squats, lunges, and push-ups, help maintain and even increase bone density, reducing the risk of fractures and osteoporosis.

3. Boosting Metabolism

- Muscle tissue burns more calories at rest compared to fat. By building and maintaining muscle through strength

training, you can boost your metabolism, making it easier to manage weight and reduce body fat.

4. Managing Weight and Body Composition

- Hormonal changes during perimenopause and menopause often lead to weight gain, particularly around the midsection. Strength training helps regulate body fat levels by increasing lean muscle mass and promoting fat loss. It's an effective way to reshape your body and maintain a healthy weight.

5. Improving Mental Health

- Strength training can significantly improve mood by releasing endorphins, which are natural mood elevators. It has been shown to reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression, which are common during menopause. Additionally, exercise provides a sense of empowerment and accomplishment, which is beneficial for mental well-being.

6. Enhancing Balance and Reducing Fall Risk

- Strengthening the core and lower body improves balance, which is crucial for reducing the risk of falls as you age.

Exercises like lunges, step-ups, and calf raises help improve stability and coordination.

7. Reducing the Risk of Chronic Conditions

- Strength training can help reduce the risk of chronic conditions such as type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and arthritis. It improves insulin sensitivity, blood pressure, and overall cardiovascular health, making it an essential component of a healthy lifestyle.

8. Increasing Energy Levels and Reducing Fatigue

- Regular strength training boosts energy by improving blood circulation, enhancing sleep quality, and reducing fatigue. Women often find that consistent workouts help them feel more energized throughout the day.

9. Promoting Independence and Quality of Life

Maintaining muscle strength is key to staying independent as you age. Being able to carry groceries, lift objects, and move comfortably without assistance greatly enhances quality of life and reduces dependence on others.

My aim is to guide you through effective, simple workouts that you can do at home to improve your health and well-being.

How to Get Started with Strength Training

- **Start Slow:** If you're new to strength training, start with bodyweight exercises such as squats, push-ups, and planks. Gradually introduce light weights or resistance bands as you feel more comfortable.
- **Focus on Form:** Proper technique is crucial to avoid injuries. Concentrate on performing each movement with good form, even if it means starting with fewer repetitions or lighter weights.
- **Consistency is Key:** Aim for at least 2-3 strength training sessions per week. Consistency will help you see results, improve strength, and maintain muscle mass over time.
- **Listen to Your Body:** Recovery is just as important as exercise. Make sure to give your muscles time to rest and recover, especially if you feel sore or fatigued.

Incorporating strength training into your routine will not only improve your physical health but also boost your mental well-being and overall quality of life. Just like our clients: 'It's like I'm a totally different person. I trust my body. I have faith in it. I feel really strong.'

Your body is capable of amazing things, and strength training is a wonderful way to unlock that potential.

Whether you're using bodyweight exercises, resistance bands, or light weights, the key is consistency. Start small, stay committed, and remember that every rep counts toward your goal of a healthier, stronger you.

Your future self will thank you for taking these steps today.

Enjoy your workouts, and remember, consistency is key!

Here is a **3-day at-home workout plan with instructional videos** to help you feel stronger and more energized.

Day 1: Full Body Focus

Warm-up/Mobility (5-7 minutes)

1. Arm Circles – 1 minute (30 seconds forward, 30 seconds backward) -

<https://youtu.be/UVMEInIaY8aU?si=WUmKuDWgHd2TWOty>

2. Plank Hold – however long you can

<https://youtu.be/M9fEIlmFppw?si=qsoLxInss41ZOlet>

3. Jefferson Curls – 8 reps (gentle focus on mobility)

<https://youtu.be/3iwEmwAlZlg>

Workout

1. Push-ups (Push) – Wall pushups - 8-10 reps

<https://youtu.be/d2cDcEfXCpw>

2. Bent-Over Dumbbell Row (Pull) – 10-12 reps (use light dumbbells or filled water bottles)

<https://youtube.com/shorts/-5dN-xC64f4>

<https://youtu.be/iLsEMSGj00M>

3. Bodyweight Squats (Legs, Knee-Friendly) – 12-15 reps
(perform at a comfortable depth, using a chair behind for

support if needed)

<https://youtu.be/IJPPACmviQE>

4. Hip Thrusts (Glutes) – 12-15 reps

<https://youtu.be/OkeJ64UkMQA>

5. Dead Bug (Abs) – 8-10 reps per side

<https://vimeo.com/111109110>

Day 2: Lower Body & Core

Warm-up/Mobility (5-7 minutes)

1. Leg Swings (front to back) – 10 reps per leg

<https://youtu.be/0AxnU-Q9HVs?si=mSdB4QVWol2qpNDC>

2. Plank Hold – 30 seconds

<https://youtu.be/M9fEIlmFppw?si=qsoLxInss41ZOlet>

3. Jefferson Curls – 8 reps

<https://youtu.be/3iwEmwAlZlg>

Workout

1. Wall Sit (Legs, Knee-Friendly) – 20-30 seconds

<https://youtu.be/fYTVNOV4V6A>

2. Step-Ups (Push/Legs, Knee-Friendly) – 10 reps per leg (use a low step or sturdy surface to reduce knee strain)

<https://youtu.be/WCFCdxzFBa4?si=6usradfjgb5sFHZa>

3. Bodyweight Squats (Legs, Knee-Friendly) – 8-10 reps (use a chair for support if needed)

<https://youtu.be/IJPPACmviQE>

4. Frog pumps (Glutes) – 20 reps

<https://youtu.be/mYWrhctOE3s>

5. Hollow hold (core) – As long as you can hold

<https://youtu.be/FYojATjHStg?si=sID0TPkUCuC9elwP>

Day 3: Upper Body & Balance

Warm-up/Mobility (5-7 minutes)

1. Arm Circles – 1 minute (30 seconds each direction)

<https://youtu.be/UVMEEnlaY8aU?si=WUmKuDWgHd2TWOty>

2. Cat-Cow Stretch – 1 minute

<https://youtu.be/u5TgIXNBrtE?si=7jamDKX1bVjjBong>

3. Jefferson Curls – 8 reps

<https://youtu.be/3iwEmwAlZlg>

Workout

1. Wall Push-ups (Push) – 10-12 reps

<https://youtu.be/d2cDcEfXCpw>

2. Bent-Over Mop Stick Row (Pull) – 12 reps (use a mop stick or a sturdy bar, pulling towards your waist with elbows close to your body)

<https://youtu.be/l38h3C-S554>

3. Standing Calf Raises (Legs, Knee-Friendly) – 12-15 reps

<https://youtu.be/cqDMYUaIXvw?si=PXWLYrd4wUeqHDGB>

4. Donkey Kicks (Glutes) – 10 reps per leg

<https://youtu.be/oNxS0zt43Qs>

5. Plank Hold (Abs) – 20-30 seconds

<https://youtu.be/M9fEIlmFppw?si=qsoLxInss41ZOlet>

Notes:

- Rest for 30-60 seconds between exercises, and take longer rests between sets if needed.
- Start with 1-2 sets of each exercise, and as you feel more comfortable, increase to 3 sets over time.

- Always focus on form, not speed, especially with the warm-up drills and strength moves.

If you're ready to take your journey further, I'd love to support you through my 1:1 or group coaching programs, where strength training is an integral part along with nutrition, intuitive eating, sleep, and stress management. Apply for coaching here -

<http://bit.ly/the8thelement> or reach out directly on WhatsApp at +91-9884835729.

Hugs,

Coach Srividya

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Explore my website & click on free resources -

<http://www.the8thelement.in>

Insta page - http://www.instagram.com/the_8thelement

YT channel where client graduation videos are housed & more free resources - <http://www.youtube.com/@the8thelement>

Intro to habits - https://youtu.be/WdxEvFqI_Dc

The 8th Element Approach - <https://youtu.be/wXXkDtRGPgQ>