

Twenty minutes, twice a week

Heavy, slow, and the same every time. Only the weight changes.

Warm-up · 2 min

Stairs at a brisk pace, or 20 bodyweight squats and 20 calf raises.

Pair A · exercises 1 and 2 · 8 min

Alternate: a set of 1, a set of 2, back to 1, until three sets of each (six sets). No rest between sets; switching exercises is the rest.

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| 1 | Straight-knee calf raise
One leg on a step, heel below toes, holding weight. New to these? Start with no weight, two legs, or flat ground. | 3 × 6–8
each leg |
| 2 | Bent-knee calf raise
Seated, weight on the knee, full range. Awkward, and just as important. | 3 × 6–8
each leg |

Pair B · exercises 3 and 4 · 8 min

Same pattern: alternate 3 and 4 until three sets of each.

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| 3 | Split squat
Rear foot on a chair, front foot well forward, holding weight. | 3 × 6–8
each leg |
| 4 | Romanian deadlift
Hinge at the hips, flat back, weight down the thighs until the hamstrings pull. | 3 × 6–8 |

Finisher · exercise 5 · 2 min

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| 5 | Suitcase carry
One heavy weight in one hand. Walk 30–40 m tall and level, switch hands. | 3 lengths
each side |
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How heavy

The last rep of each set is hard and your form doesn't change. Three seconds down, brief pause, then up. No bouncing. Start lighter than you think for the first week.

When to add weight

When you complete all three sets of 8 with good form, add a little: the next dumbbell, or 2–5 kg in the bag. Work back up from 6.

No gym

A backpack of books or water bottles (a full 2 L bottle is 2 kg), a stair, and a chair cover everything. When the bag runs out, go single-leg and slower before buying anything.

When

On hard-run days, later in the day. Never the day before a long run or workout. Two fixed slots in the calendar.

Why these five, how to progress, and what to expect: durable Running.com/guide/the-twenty-minute-routine