

The same workout, with whatever you have.

Every AdaptAbility Co program runs three ways: with nothing to buy, with a small home kit, or in a full gym. Pick the one that matches your home today.

Why three levels

A take-home program is only useful if the person can actually do it with what's in their house. Most families don't have a gym. Some have a band and a chair. A few have a real setup. So instead of one program that assumes equipment, every AdaptAbility Co program offers the same five movement patterns at three levels, and the family picks the one that matches their reality. Nobody gets stopped at the door for not owning dumbbells.

The load was never the point. Slow, controlled movement through a full range (Time Under Tension) builds real strength at light loads, which means a water jug and honest tempo will take most people a long way. We add tools when they help, never because the program requires them.

The three tiers

Tier 1 — No Gear. Bodyweight plus what's already in the house. Nothing to buy. This is the default and it covers more than people expect.

Household stand-ins:

- **Resistance / weight:** a loaded backpack, grocery bags, a gallon water jug (about 8 lbs full, and you can pour out to lighten it), laundry detergent jugs, soup cans, a heavy book.
- **Bench / box / step:** a sturdy chair, a couch, a bottom stair, a low coffee table.
- **Support / balance:** a wall, a countertop, a doorframe, the back of a chair.
- **Bar / stick:** a broomstick or mop handle for shoulder and posture drills.
- **Towel:** for rows against a doorframe, for sliders on a hard floor, for grip work.

Tier 2 — Minimal. A small home kit, the highest value per dollar. If a family is going to buy anything, this is the list.

The kit (roughly \$40 to \$70 all in):

- One or two **resistance bands** (a light and a medium loop, or a tube with handles).
- One pair of **light-to-medium dumbbells**, or one **adjustable dumbbell** or **kettlebell**.
- A **sturdy chair** (already owned) and an optional **exercise mat**.

This kit plus bodyweight covers every pattern with room to progress for a long time.

Tier 3 — Full Gym. A home gym or a real facility (a community center or a local gym). Dumbbells and kettlebells across a range, a barbell and bench, cable or machine options, a medicine ball, bands. Used for heavier strength work and for clients ready to train toward sport or powerlifting.

The five patterns at each tier

The whole library runs on five movement patterns. Here is each one across the three tiers. Pick one or two movements per pattern per session.

Squat (legs)

- **No Gear:** sit-to-stands from a chair, bodyweight squats, box squats to a couch, wall-sits.
- **Minimal:** goblet squats holding a dumbbell or kettlebell, band squats.
- **Full Gym:** goblet or front squats, leg press, barbell squats with a spotter.

Hinge (hips, back of the legs)

- **No Gear:** glute bridges, hip hinges to a chair seat, single-leg “good mornings” with hands crossed.
- **Minimal:** dumbbell or kettlebell deadlifts, band hinges (pull-throughs), banded hip thrusts.
- **Full Gym:** kettlebell or barbell deadlifts, hip-thruster, back extensions.

Push (chest, shoulders)

- **No Gear:** wall push-ups, incline push-ups on a counter or stair, floor push-ups when ready, overhead press with water jugs.
- **Minimal:** dumbbell or band chest press, dumbbell or band overhead press.
- **Full Gym:** dumbbell or barbell bench press, machine press, dip assist.

Pull (back), extra important for posture and for anyone seated

- **No Gear:** doorframe rows with a towel, prone “floor angels,” backpack rows.
- **Minimal:** band rows, single-arm dumbbell rows on a chair, band pull-aparts.
- **Full Gym:** seated cable row, lat pulldown, dumbbell rows, assisted pull-ups.

Carry and Core

- **No Gear:** suitcase carry with a loaded bag, farmer carry with two grocery bags, planks, dead bugs, seated anti-rotation holds.
- **Minimal:** dumbbell or kettlebell carries, band anti-rotation (Pallof) holds.
- **Full Gym:** loaded carries, cable core work, weighted carries for distance.

How to add difficulty without adding weight

This is the part that makes No Gear go further than anyone expects. When a movement gets easy, before reaching for more weight, reach for one of these:

- **Slow the tempo.** Three to five seconds lowering. Time Under Tension turns a light load into honest work.
- **Add a pause.** Hold the hardest position for two or three seconds.
- **Grow the range.** Go a little deeper or a little higher, within what is safe and pain-free.
- **Go single-limb.** One leg, one arm. Half the support, double the demand.
- **Add reps or a round.** Small steps, steadily.
- **Slow the transitions.** Less rest between movements raises the conditioning.

Only after these stop being enough do you add load. For many people in this community, these variables alone carry months of progress.

Safe from the first rep

Uncomfortable is okay. Pain means stop, right now. Everybody's body moves differently, and it moves differently on different days, so if something hurts, is new, or worries you, stop and check with the person's doctor or care team.

Household items used as weights need to be safe to grip and lift. Check them before every use, and keep within any medical limits the person has. Equipment level never overrides a medical limit.

This guide is for general training and is not medical advice. AdaptAbility Co is a training and life-skills business, not a medical service. © 2026 AdaptAbility Co.