

THE MICHELLE OBAMA ARMS WORKOUT

You may not have the personal chef, the private jet or the presidential hubby, but at least you can have the pipes. Complete these eight strengthening exercises two to three times a week for White House-worthy arms.

by Kathleen Trotter | photographs by Cathy Chatterton



Make it harder
Hold for five seconds before straightening your arms.

STABILITY-BALL PUSH-UPS

Place the stability ball under your abs, with your hands on the ground. Using your hands, carefully walk your body forward, moving the ball toward your feet. (The farther you walk out, the harder the exercise will be.) Then spread your hands slightly wider than shoulder-width apart, bend your elbows and bring your chest toward the ground. Engage your abdominal muscles and exhale as you straighten your arms. Do three sets of 10 to 15 reps.



Make it harder
Hold the weights at the top of the motion for five seconds.

WIDE ROW ON THE STABILITY BALL

Place the stability ball under your stomach and hips. (Keep your feet against a wall so you don't slip.) Hold a two- to five-pound weight or a soup can in each hand. Making sure your ab muscles are tight, take a breath in. As you exhale, draw your elbows up to a 90-degree angle. (Keep your arms wide and your palms facing backwards toward the wall.) Slowly return to the start position. Do three sets of 12 to 15 reps.



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MODIFIED PLANK AND ROW

Come up on your hands and knees, with your arms straight, your palms directly under your shoulders and your knees hip-width apart. Holding a weight in your right hand, keep the rest of your body perfectly still as you row the weight up to your ribs. Do three sets of eight to 10 reps. Switch and repeat with your other arm.



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Make it harder
Raise your body from your toes, not your knees.



MODIFIED SIDE PLANK AND REVERSE FLY

Lying on your right side, place your right elbow directly under your right shoulder, stack your knees on top of each other and lift your hips off the ground. Holding a weight in your left hand, keep your left arm slightly bent and use your left shoulder blade to slowly raise your arm until it is perpendicular to your body. Do three sets of 10 to 15 reps. Switch and repeat on the other side.

Make it harder
 Raise your body from your toes, not your knees.



Make it harder
 Bring your feet closer together and raise one leg off the floor as you extend your arms.

OVERHEAD SHOULDER PRESS

Sit on the stability ball with your feet hip-width apart. Holding a weight in each hand, bring your arms to a 90-degree angle at shoulder height, palms facing forward. Extend your arms straight up in the air, slightly in front of your head. Slowly return to the starting position. Do three sets of 12 to 15 reps.



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Make it harder
 Use a heavier weight.

ROTATOR-CUFF ROTATION

Lie on your left side on a mat, cushioning your head with your left arm. Holding a weight in your right hand, place your right arm on your waist with your elbow bent. Raise your forearm until it is perpendicular to the floor. Slowly lower and repeat. Do three sets of 12 to 15 reps. Switch and repeat on the other side.



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**STABILITY-BALL
 FRENCH PRESS**

Place your head and shoulders on the ball, keep your feet hip-width apart and raise your hips to create a straight line from shoulders to knees. Holding a weight in each hand, raise your arms directly above your shoulders. Keeping your upper arms still, bend at the elbows to bring the weights down toward your head. Do three sets of 12 to 15 reps.

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Make it harder
 Bring your feet closer together to challenge your balance.

V-SIT WITH BICEPS CURL

Sit on a mat with your knees slightly bent, holding a weight in each hand. Lean back about 20 degrees. Keeping your back straight, core tight, feet on the ground and arms by your side, exhale and bring the free weights toward your shoulders without moving your upper arms. Slowly lower. Do three sets of 12 to 15 reps.



Make it harder
 Lift one or both legs off of the floor.



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