

A workout plan for truck drivers: no gym, a band and twenty minutes

A truck stop is not a gym, and a week on the road doesn't hold still. Here's a plan that needs neither: two short full-body sessions with a resistance band and your bodyweight, one for the space beside the truck and one for the cab, a schedule for the common routes, and a floor for the weeks the road wins.

Short answer: Train twice a week, full body, with a resistance band and your bodyweight: about twenty minutes beside the truck or in the cab, sets two or three reps short of failure. In a meta-analysis of eight studies, band training built strength about as well as conventional resistance training did.⁶

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Most workout plans assume two things a driver doesn't have: a gym on the way home, and a week that looks like the last one. On the road, the day ends wherever the load and the parking say it ends, and the gym, if there is one, is three states back.

This plan assumes neither: two short full-body sessions, a band and your bodyweight, a schedule by route, and a floor for the weeks when nothing fits. It's training only: questions about your health on the road are for a doctor. Rotating shifts rather than routes? [The shift-worker plan](#) is that page.

What gets in the way, in drivers' own words

Two studies asked long-haul drivers directly. In 30 in-depth interviews with long-haul drivers in Southern California, the themes that came up for physical activity were time constraints, attitudes and beliefs, access to places to be active, the weather, and, for flatbed drivers, the job's own duties.¹ In a survey of 406 long-haul drivers in Canada, exercise facilities with basic equipment were among the truck-stop amenities drivers rated most important.²

So the plan is built for the truck stop as it is: no gym, little time, sometimes rain. Everything below fits in a bag behind the seat.

The idea: a small, hard dose, twice a week

- **Two sessions a week is the target.** The American College of Sports Medicine's 2026 position stand makes lifting at least twice a week, with all major muscle groups trained, its primary recommendation, and says even "minimal doses" of lifting bring substantial gains.³ The World Health Organization's guideline for muscle-strengthening activity is two or more days a week too.⁴
- **Which days doesn't matter much.** A meta-analysis of 25 studies found that when the total amount of training was matched, how often a muscle was trained made no meaningful difference to muscle growth, and concluded people can choose based on personal preference.⁵ Two sessions on the two days you're parked longest is a real week.

- **A band and the floor are enough to start.** A meta-analysis of eight studies found no superiority between elastic resistance and conventional resistance training for strength, in the legs or the upper body.⁶ In an eight-week study of 18 young men training twice a week, push-ups with the body position adjusted to match a bench press at 40 percent of one-rep max built similar chest and triceps thickness and similar bench press strength.⁷ The position stand also found that the load, from 30 to 100 percent of a one-rep max, didn't change muscle growth.³ Light loads only work when the sets are hard, which is the rule below.

The plan: two sessions, five slots each

Two sessions, A and B. Each has five slots: a squat, a [hinge](#), a push, a pull and a core move, so each one trains the whole body. Session A is for the space beside the truck or a quiet corner of the lot; Session B is for the cab or the sleeper, when the weather or the lot says stay inside. Whichever you did last, do the other next, or do A twice when the weather is good.

Slot	Session A: beside the truck	Session B: in the cab
Squat	Bodyweight squat , slow on the way down; when it's easy, reverse lunges	Wall sit against the back wall of the sleeper, or squats with the band under your feet
Hinge	Band good morning: band under your feet, over your shoulders, hinge at the hips	Glute bridge on the bunk, one leg when two is easy
Push	Push-up , hands on the step or the bumper if the floor is too hard	Band chest press: band behind your back, press forward
Pull	Band row, the band looped around a fixed post or rail	Band pull-apart , then a band row with the band under your feet
Core	Plank	Dead bug on the bunk

Sets and reps (practical): two sets of each in the first two weeks, then three. Work in twelve to twenty reps, and stop every set with two or three reps still in you. ([How to judge reps left.](#)) Rest about a minute, or move straight from the push to the pull and back. That's twenty to twenty-five minutes. The ranges come from [how many reps to do](#) and [how many sets per week](#); with a band and bodyweight, the high end of the rep range is where the sets get hard.

Progression (practical): when the top of the range comes with reps to spare, make it harder before you add reps: a thicker band, a slower lowering, the one-leg version, or feet on the step for the push-up. [The resistance band workout](#) has more band moves and how to pick a band.

Where the sessions go, by kind of route

The rule is the same as for shift work: tie the session to something that happens on every route, not to a day of the week. The anchors below are practical scheduling, not research.

Route	Where the sessions go
Over the road, out for a week or more	The long stop of the day, after you've parked and before you eat. Two a week, on the two longest stops.
Out all week, home at the weekend	One on the road midweek, one at home. At home, a gym or the bodyweight workout .
Regional or local, home most nights	At home, before or after the run, the same anchor each time. A gym plan fits here: the full-body plan .
A long break or reset at a truck stop	Session A at the start of it and, if the break is long, Session B near the end.

The floor: a week when the road wins

The floor for that week is one hard session: either one, every slot, one set each, as hard as the normal sets. Not easier; shorter. A 2021 review of the least training needed to hold on to performance found strength and muscle size could be maintained for up to 32 weeks, at least in younger people, with as little as one strength session a week and one set per exercise, as long as the load stayed heavy for the person lifting it, and named intensity as the key to holding on.⁸ If even that won't fit, walk the lot: the WHO guidelines say doing some physical activity is better than doing none.⁴

Three rules for the road

- **Count per week, not per day.** Two is the plan, one is the floor.
- **Write every session down.** A 2016 meta-analysis of 138 studies, about goals in general rather than training, found that monitoring progress helped people reach their goals, and helped more when the progress was physically recorded.⁹ A note on your phone with the band and the reps is enough. ([A workout log you can copy](#).)
- **If something hurts, stop.** Sharp pain is not soreness. With an injury, a medical condition or a medical question, see a doctor before you start.

Common questions

Can you build muscle with just a band and bodyweight?

The studies say strength and muscle can come from light loads when the sets are hard: bands matched conventional resistance for strength across eight studies,⁶ and push-ups matched a light bench press in an eight-week trial.⁷ The catch is effort: stop two or three reps short of failure, not ten.

What can I do inside the truck?

Session B: wall sits, glute bridges, a band chest press, pull-aparts and a dead bug all fit in a sleeper. Everything else waits for the next stop.

What if the truck stop has a gym?

Use it. The [hotel workout](#) has a gym version written for a small gym with a few dumbbells.

If you'd rather not plan it alone

A plan on a page can't see next week's route. Coaching here is general strength and fitness coaching: the workouts live in an app, built around the days you actually have, and a weekly call looks at the week just gone and rebuilds the next one around what's coming. [Coaching for a week that doesn't hold still](#) explains how that works; [online coaching](#) covers the rest, and [apply](#) is where to start. Otherwise: pack a band, and do Session A at the next long stop.

General education only, not medical advice. If you have a medical condition, are pregnant, or take medication, check with your doctor before changing how you train or eat.

Sources

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