



LIFT MORE AGE LESS LIBRARY · FREE PRINTABLE

CAN I VS. *Should I?*

Lifting while pregnant, from a coach who's been there.

Can you lift while pregnant? Most of the time, yes. Should you do the exact same thing you did last month? Probably not.

That's the whole game. Not "stop everything." Not "push through." Just smart changes, week by week, with your care provider in the loop.

Pregnancy is not the time to chase PRs. It's the time to stay strong, move well and feel good in your body. We can do hard things. We don't need to do dumb things.

INSIDE

Before you start

Can I vs. Should I

Trimester tweaks

Stop signs

This is general education from a certified pregnancy and postpartum coach. It is not medical advice. Your doctor or midwife has the final say. Always.

START HERE

BEFORE YOU *lift*

Six things to sort out first.

- 1 Get the green light.** Talk to your doctor or midwife about exercise early, and again if anything changes. Some conditions mean you need a different plan.
- 2 Start from where you are.** If you were lifting before, you can usually keep lifting with changes. If you're new, start light and simple. Pregnancy is a great time to build the habit, not to max out.
- 3 Use the talk test.** You should be able to talk in short sentences while you work. If you can't get words out, back it off.
- 4 Breathe. Don't hold it.** Exhale on the hard part of the lift. Big breath holds and straining push pressure down onto your pelvic floor.
- 5 Watch for coning.** A ridge or dome down the middle of your belly when you lift or sit up means too much pressure. Change the move or lower the load.
- 6 Stay cool and fed.** Drink your water, eat before you train and skip the hot, stuffy rooms.

Effort sweet spot

Leave plenty in the tank. Think "I could do 3 or 4 more reps" on every set, not "barely got it."

Rule of thumb

If it hurts, feels heavy down below or makes you dizzy, it's a "should not" today. Swap it.

THE BIG ONE

CAN I *vs.* SHOULD I

The answer is almost always "yes, but smarter."

CAN I...	SHOULD I? HERE'S HOW I COACH IT
Keep squatting?	Usually yes. Widen your stance, use a box to sit back to as the bump grows and stay well short of a max.
Keep deadlifting?	Often yes, with lighter loads. Try kettlebells, trap bar or elevating the bar so you're not reaching around the bump.
Lift overhead?	If it feels good and your balance is solid. Seated or half-kneeling can feel better later on.
Lie flat on my back?	Short stints are fine for many people early on. As you get further along, if it makes you dizzy or lightheaded, switch to an incline bench or side-lying.
Do crunches and sit-ups?	Swap them. Go for dead bugs (early), side planks, bird dogs, carries and breath work instead.
Jump, run or do box jumps?	If you did it before and nothing leaks, aches or feels heavy, maybe. Step-ups are a great swap. Fall risk goes up as your balance changes.
Do Olympic lifts?	Lots of experienced lifters scale them way down early on, then switch to pulls and power positions. The bar path gets in the way of the bump.
Play contact sports?	No. Skip anything with a real chance of falling or getting hit in the belly.

Notice the theme? Almost nothing is a hard no. It's about choosing the version that keeps you and baby safe today.

TRIMESTER TWEAKS + STOP SIGNS

WEEK BY *week*

What changes, and when to stop.

FIRST

Trimester 1

Tired and queasy? Totally normal. Shorter sessions count. Keep moving if you can, rest when you need to.

SECOND

Trimester 2

Often the "feel good" stretch. Keep lifting, start using inclines instead of lying flat and watch for coning.

THIRD

Trimester 3

Lighter, slower, more stable. Think strength to carry a baby, breath, walking and prep for birth.

STOP AND CALL YOUR CARE PROVIDER IF YOU NOTICE

- Bleeding from the vagina
- Fluid leaking
- Dizziness or feeling faint
- Chest pain or shortness of breath before you start
- Regular or painful contractions
- Calf pain or swelling
- Baby moving less than usual
- Headache that won't quit

Not medical advice. Every pregnancy is different. Follow your doctor or midwife first, always. Mama's got you, and so do they.