

**Men'sHealth**

**ULTIMATE  
TRAINING  
GUIDES**

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Before you undertake a new health program or fitness regimen, we encourage you to discuss your plans with your health care professional, especially if you have not exercised for several years, are over 35, or are overweight.

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We inspire and enable people to improve their lives and the world around them

Project editor: Krissa Y. Strauss · Project manager: Danielle Veloza · Copy editors: Kelly Lutterschmidt, David Umla · Cover designer: Judy Ross · Book designer: Maureen Logan · Photo editor: Jim Gallucci

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## Men's Health

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# 1 7 Ultimate Fitness Tests



ARE YOU FIT? USE THESE TESTS TO ASSESS WHAT KIND OF SHAPE YOU'RE IN. THEY CAN ALSO HELP YOU REACH YOUR FULL POTENTIAL.

**ASK 10 EXPERTS** for their definition of fitness, and you'll hear 10 different answers. That's because (to paraphrase a great American philosopher) "fitness is as fitness does." The way you define the word depends on the type of performance you expect. Some athletes need to develop a particular type of fitness over all others—powerlifters at one

extreme, marathoners at another—but most of us are at our best when we achieve balanced fitness. In other words, we're good at everything a healthy, active man needs to be able to do. On those points the experts are in agreement. You need core stability. You need lower-body strength and power to run, jump, and lift heavy

objects off the ground. You need torso strength to lift your own body weight in repeated challenges. And you need enough endurance to run a mile without stopping for defibrillation.

If you can pass our tests—feats that guys like us can and should be able to pull off—congratulations. If you ace them, then consider yourself superfit.

## Sculpt a Hard Core

### PART ONE

#### CORE STABILITY

Fitness begins in the middle of your body. That's also where it ends, if your core isn't strong and stable. Not only do the muscles in your torso defend your spine against unwanted movements—the twists and jolts that produce injuries—but they also enable the movements you do want. They're the linchpins that allow

coordinated actions of your upper- and lower-body muscles.

So we'll start with the plank, a fundamental test of core stability and endurance. The average guy should be able to hold a basic plank for 60 seconds, says strength coach Nick Tumminello, whose workout DVDs include *Strength Training for Fat Loss & Conditioning*. If you aspire to superfit

status, you should be able to do a more challenging version for the same amount of time.

#### TEST #1

You'll need something long, solid, light, and straight, like a broom handle or dowel. Assume a basic plank position, with your weight resting on your forearms and toes. Your body should form a straight line from neck to ankles. You want your

feet hip-width apart and your elbows directly below your shoulders. Have a friend set the dowel along your back. It should make contact at three points: the back of your head, between your shoulder blades, and your tailbone. Hold that position. Stop if your body loses contact with the dowel at one of these three points.

If you can hold your position for 60 seconds, stop and rest for 2 minutes. Then do the plank with your feet on a bench. (You won't be able to use the dowel because it will slide off.) Nailed it? Rest 2 minutes and try this version: With your feet back on the floor, move your arms forward so your elbows are beneath your eyes instead

of your shoulders. If you can hold this one for 60 seconds, you're superfit.

#### REACH THE NEXT LEVEL

Begin and end each workout with 2 sets of the plank variation you couldn't hold for 60 seconds. Hold as long as you can on each set, rest 2 minutes, and repeat.

Once you've mastered these variations, try an even harder version, the marching plank. Assume a standard plank position, but with your feet elevated on a bench. Bring one knee toward your chest, without shifting or moving anything else. Return that foot to the bench, and then bring the other knee toward your chest.

Continue "marching" for 60 seconds.

When that's easy, try marching planks with your feet against a wall. If you can do that for 60 seconds, record it on video. You'll be a fitness sensation on YouTube!

### THE SCORECARD

#### BELOW AVERAGE

You can't hold a basic plank 60 seconds.

**AVERAGE** You last 60 seconds.

#### ABOVE AVERAGE

You can hold a plank 60 seconds with your feet elevated on a bench.

**SUPERFIT** You can hold a plank with your arms extended for 60 seconds.

### PART TWO

#### CORE STABILITY & MOBILITY

If fitness were measured by how good people looked standing still, then competitive bodybuilders would be judged the greatest athletes on the planet. Core stability in a static position like a plank is just one step on the path toward core fitness—an important part, but hardly the only one.

Here's a tougher test: Can you maintain your core stability while also mobilizing the joints above and below your spine? The overhead squat gives you a quick way to find out. If you've seen Olympic weightlifting, you

know what the overhead squat looks like. It's based on the snatch, one of the two Olympic lifts. But instead of starting with the weight on the floor, lifting it overhead, and then standing up, you start with the weight overhead and then descend into a squat, keeping your arms and torso straight.

The need for core stability is obvious; if you can't keep your torso upright, you can't perform the exercise. But you also see which joints above and below your core are too dysfunctional to allow a full range of motion.

"The overhead squat helps you identify weak-

nesses in your hips, knees, and ankles," says Alwyn Cosgrove, CSCS, coauthor of *The New Rules of Lifting for Abs*. It's also a test of the mobility of your shoulder blades and the strength of the muscles supporting them.

#### TEST #2

As with the basic plank, you'll need a broom handle or dowel for this test, the overhead squat. Stand in front of a mirror with your feet shoulder-width apart, holding the dowel straight above your shoulders with your hands wide (about 1½ times shoulder width) and your elbows locked. Push your hips back and lower yourself into a squat

as you keep the dowel directly above your head, your knees over your toes, and your heels on the floor. Go down as far as you can without changing the position of your lower back, leaning forward, pulling your knees inward, or rising up on your toes. A word to the wise: This test is much harder to complete with perfect form than you think, so don't take it lightly.

#### REACH THE NEXT LEVEL

The test involves moving into the bottom position.

But to improve, you need to do the exercise, which means going down into that position and then back up again. Do overhead squats as part of your warmup before each workout. First, work on range of motion with perfect form, trying to go lower each week while keeping your heels on the floor, knees over your toes, and the rod or bar straight over your shoulders. Try for 1 or 2 sets of 10 reps. Once you master the form, start adding weight in 10-pound increments.

### THE SCORECARD

**BELOW AVERAGE** You can't bend your knees 90 degrees without leaning forward.

**AVERAGE** You can bend your knees more than 90 degrees, but only if your heels come off the floor.

**ABOVE AVERAGE** You can do a full squat (top of your thighs parallel to the floor) with your heels on the floor and without leaning forward.

**SUPERFIT** You can perform a perfect overhead squat with a 45-pound Olympic barbell.

## Build Lower-Body Strength & Power

### PART ONE

#### LOWER-BODY STRENGTH

In textbooks, there's a line that separates strength and power. Strength is the ability to generate force, while power is the speed at which you can generate force. In reality, the two are intimately connected. Top athletes train for both, lifting heavy weights for pure strength and moving lighter objects at high velocities to develop power. The result is the ability to move fast (an expression of power) and hit hard (a demonstration of iron cojones...and the strength

to haul them around).

"The deadlift might be the best indicator of your overall strength because it's applicable to almost any real-world task, such as moving a couch or lifting boxes," says Mike Robertson, CSCS, co-owner of Indianapolis Fitness and Sports Training. It's a "posterior-chain" exercise, meaning it develops strength in your rear-body muscles: hamstrings, glutes, spinal erectors, and trapezius. These are the muscles you depend on most when you run, jump, or stand your

ground while someone's trying to run or jump over you. They're also among your biggest and fastest-growing muscles—so adding more pounds to your deadlift almost guarantees that you'll pack more muscle onto your frame.

#### TEST #3

Load a barbell and set it on the floor. Stand over the bar with your feet shoulder-width apart and toes pointed forward. Bend at your hips and knees, grab the bar overhand with your hands just outside your legs, and roll it up to your shins.

Push your hips back, flatten your back, and tighten your entire body from feet to hands. Pull the bar straight up until you're standing upright with the bar against your thighs. Lower it to the floor, keeping it as close to your body as possible.

Start with a light weight to warm up, and then add weight for each subsequent lift until you reach your maximum.

#### REACH THE NEXT LEVEL

The best way to improve your deadlift is to deadlift. But that doesn't mean you should limit yourself to

### THE SCORECARD

**BELOW AVERAGE** You lift less than your body weight.

**AVERAGE** You lift 1 to 1¼ times your body weight.

**ABOVE AVERAGE** You lift 1¼ to 1½ times your body weight.

**SUPERFIT** You lift more than 1½ times your body weight.

one version. Robertson recommends the straight-leg deadlift, which targets your glutes and hamstrings more directly. Stand holding a barbell at arm's length in front

### PART TWO

#### LOWER-BODY STRENGTH & POWER

Unless you're a competitive lifter, there aren't many sports in which your feet stay on the ground. Most involve leaps and sprints and springing off one or both legs for maximum height, distance, and velocity.

#### TEST #4

The vertical jump is the most popular way to measure lower-body power, but the standing broad jump is easier to measure because it requires no specialized equipment. The broad jump is the best test of your ability to use strength and power in a single movement, says Martin Rooney, PT, CSCS, of the Parisi Speed School.

Stand with the tips of

your toes behind a line on the ground. Your feet should be slightly less than shoulder-width apart. From this position, swing your arms backward as you crouch, and then thrust your arms forward as you jump forward as far as you can. Land on both feet; otherwise the jump doesn't count. Practice a few times to get the hang of it, and then give it your best shot. Mark the spot

where your heels landed (if one foot lands in front of the other, mark the shorter distance), and then try a few more times. Measure the distance from the starting line to the spot where your heels hit on your best jump.

#### REACH THE NEXT LEVEL

The strength you build on a ground-based exercise like the deadlift will help with your launch. But for multiple jumps, dives, and dashes, you need two additional types of exercises—one type that helps you improve your speed and another that develops balanced strength in both your legs, says Bret Contreras, CSCS, a strength coach in Phoenix.

### THE SCORECARD

**BELOW AVERAGE** A jump less than 6 feet

**AVERAGE** 6 to 7 feet

**ABOVE AVERAGE** 7 to 8 feet

**SUPERFIT** More than 8 feet

# Master Your Body Weight

## PART ONE

### WHOLE BODY

The bench press is the best size- and strength-building exercise for your chest. And yet the lowly ground-based pushup actually works more muscles, even if it doesn't allow you to hit certain ones with maximum intensity. Like the bench press, the pushup works your chest, shoulders, and triceps to exhaustion. It's also a core exercise, forcing muscles in your abdomen, hips, and lower back to work hard to keep your spine in a safe position. But the biggest benefit of the pushup may be the way it forces the web of muscles surrounding your shoulder blades to man up and support your shoulder joints, which can become dysfunctional on a steady diet of bench presses.

## PART TWO

### UPPER BODY

Just as the bench press has replaced the pushup in many exercise programs, so has the lat pulldown replaced the chinup. And that's a shame. Both exercises hit the featured muscles in the upper and middle back—the lats, lower trapezius, and rear deltoids—but the chinup goes lower and deeper. Because you're hanging from

This test, courtesy of Rooney, may be humbling for you, particularly if you're at your best with your back on a bench and a barbell in your hands.

#### TEST #5

Assume a pushup position with your hands directly below your shoulders, your feet hip-width apart, your weight resting on your hands and toes, and your body in a straight line from neck to ankles. Lower your body until your chest is about an inch above the floor, pause for 1 second (this is essential),

### THE SCORECARD

#### BELOW AVERAGE

Fewer than 15 pushups

#### AVERAGE

16 to 29

#### ABOVE AVERAGE

30 to 44

#### SUPERFIT

45+

a bar rather than sitting on a padded seat, you force muscles in your middle back to work with the muscles in your hips and lower back to keep your spine in a safe position. "Chinups are a great test of upper-body strength and endurance, core stability, and spinal stabilization," Cosgrove says. Pulldowns are certainly easier, but as with so many things in life,

and then return to the starting position. Complete as many consecutive pushups as you can while maintaining strict form.

#### REACH THE NEXT LEVEL

You can boost your pushup performance by doing just two workouts a week, Rooney says. The first day, do 6 sets of 10 pushups: 2 sets using regular form, 2 sets with your feet elevated on a bench, and 2 sets with your hands close together. Rest 2 minutes between sets.

The second day, do 3 sets of 20 to 25 pushups (or as many as you can), resting 90 seconds between sets. After the 3 sets, rest for 3 to 5 minutes, and then do 1 set of as many pushups as you can.

Retake the test after 8 weeks.

limited effort produces limited rewards.

#### TEST #6

Grab a chinup bar using a shoulder-width, underhand grip. Hang at arm's length. Pull your chest up to the bar, pause for 1 second, and then slowly lower your body back to the starting position and repeat. A repetition counts only if you start from a dead hang with your arms straight.

### THE SCORECARD

#### BELOW AVERAGE

Fewer than 3 chinups

#### AVERAGE

3 to 7 chinups

#### ABOVE AVERAGE

8 to 10 chinups

#### SUPERFIT

More than 10 chinups

## PART THREE

### CARDIO

No movement is more fundamental to human survival. Yet running is still misunderstood by many. Most of us know that running is an aerobic activity, meaning that we use oxygen to release the fuel we need to keep moving forward. (Sprints, on the other hand, are anaerobic; you're working too fast for your muscles to use oxygen, so you have to rely on chemicals within your muscles to provide energy.) But it's also a test of the endurance of your muscles themselves, says Joe Dowdell, CSCS, owner of Peak Performance in New York City. A champion swimmer, for example, might have off-the-chart aerobic capacity in the pool, but on the road he's no better than the rest of us unless he also conditions his legs to pound the pavement.

The mile run tests you in both areas. You need aerobic fitness to

#### REACH THE NEXT LEVEL

Cosgrove recommends doing this routine twice a week: Start with half the number of chinups you were able to complete in the test (round up to the nearest whole number), and do 3 or 4 sets in each workout. So if you did 5 or 6 in

the test, you'll do sets of 3. Rest 90 seconds between sets. Each week, cut 15 seconds from your rest period. That means in week 7 you'll do 1 continuous set. Whatever that total is, it'll be much bigger than the number of chinups you completed in the test.

complete the distance in a reasonable time, and you need muscular fitness to ensure that your legs keep going.

#### TEST #7

It's best to test yourself outdoors on a track or flat stretch of trail or pavement where your distance can be accurately measured. If you choose to run on a treadmill, make sure you elevate it to 2 degrees to make up for the mechanical assistance you're receiving from the moving belt. Once you're sure of the distance, start your stopwatch and take off.

### THE SCORECARD

#### BELOW AVERAGE

A mile in 12+ minutes

#### AVERAGE

9 to 12 minutes

#### ABOVE AVERAGE

6 to 9 minutes

#### SUPERFIT

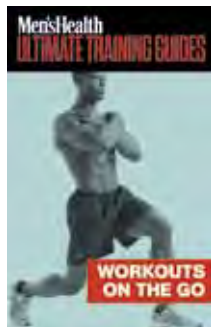
Under 6 minutes

#### REACH THE NEXT LEVEL

Use this running primer from Dowdell to cut minutes off your time. Twice a week, warm up for 5 minutes—easy jogging if you're an accomplished runner, 3 minutes of walking and 2 minutes of jogging if you're average to below average on the mile run. Once you've warmed up, do this interval routine: Pick up your pace for 60 seconds, and then follow that with a 60-second walk and then a 2-minute jog. That counts as one interval. Do three or four intervals each workout your first week. In subsequent weeks, add one interval to your workouts. So if you completed four intervals in week 1, you'll do five in week 2, six in week 3, and so on. When you reach eight intervals, reduce your walking time to 30 seconds. Run hard for 60 seconds, walk for 30 seconds, and jog for 2 minutes. After 8 weeks of interval training, take the mile-run test again.



# 2 Workouts on the Go



NO EQUIPMENT? NO PROBLEM. HERE'S HOW YOU CAN PUSH YOURSELF TO BUILD MORE STRENGTH.

**THERE ARE MILLIONS** of excuses for missing a workout—you're busy, the hotel gym sucks, your kid is sick, the Red Sox are playing. We get it. (We've even used a few of them ourselves.) Now here's an excuse to never miss another one:

"Your body weight is all you need to torch fat and build total-body muscle," says David Jack, director of Teamworks Fitness in Acton, MA. Gaining strength, after all, is about challenging your muscles; and these workouts are

designed to do just that—no equipment required. They'll also kick your metabolism into high gear by keeping your heart rate elevated. In short, they're the ultimate do-anywhere, zero-excuse fitness plan for guys on the go.

**DIRECTIONS** Alternate between Workout A and Workout B for 4 to 6 weeks, resting at least a day between sessions. Do the exercises in each workout as a circuit, moving from one to the next with minimal rest, like following the geometry of a bicycle wheel. Start with the hub exercise, and then do the first spoke; do the hub again, the second spoke, the hub again, and so on. Once you've completed all the spokes, rest for 90 seconds and repeat.

## WORKOUT A

### [Hub] SKATER HOP

Crouch over your right foot and lift your left leg off the floor behind you **[A]**. Now bound to your left by pushing off with your right leg. Land on your left foot, lifting your right leg off the floor behind you **[B]**. Continue hopping back and forth.

#### REPS

Week 1: **24**  
Weeks 2 & 3: **30**  
Week 4: **36**

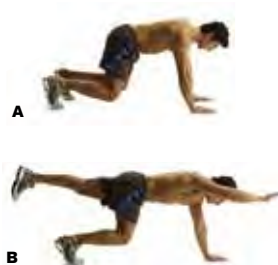


### [Spoke 1] ELEVATED BIRD DOG

Assume a pushup position and "walk" your feet forward so your knees are bent about 90 degrees and slightly above the floor **[A]**. Raise your right arm and left leg until they're in line with your body **[B]**. Return to the starting position, and then repeat with your left arm and right leg. Alternate arms and legs with each rep.

#### REPS

Week 1: **16**  
Weeks 2 & 3: **20**  
Week 4: **24**



### [Spoke 2] POWER SQUAT

Stand with your feet slightly beyond shoulder width, toes forward, hands above your head **[A]**. Simultaneously push your hips back and swing your arms down to your sides, lowering your body until your thighs are nearly parallel to the floor **[B]**. Pause for 4 seconds, and then explode up to the starting position.

#### REPS

Week 1: **6**  
Weeks 2 & 3: **7**  
Week 4: **8**

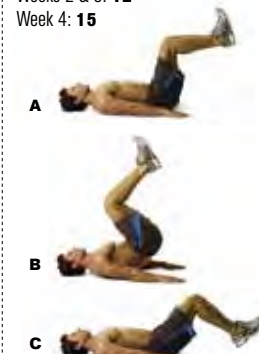


### [Spoke 3] REVERSE CRUNCH

Lie on the floor with your arms by your sides, palms down. Bend your hips and knees 90 degrees **[A]**. Raise your hips off the floor and crunch them inward, keeping your feet together as you bring your knees toward your chest **[B]**. Pause, and slowly lower your legs until your heels nearly touch the floor **[C]**.

#### REPS

Week 1: **10**  
Weeks 2 & 3: **12**  
Week 4: **15**



### [Spoke 4] SINGLE-LEG STRAIGHT-LEG DEADLIFT REACH

Stand and raise your left foot and left hand **[A]**. Slowly lower your torso and touch the toes of your right foot with your left hand **[B]**. Return to the starting position. Switch arms and legs halfway through the set.

#### REPS

Week 1: **16**  
Weeks 2 & 3: **20**  
Week 4: **24**

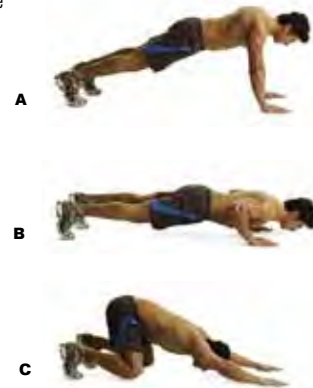


### [Spoke 5] REVERSE PUSHUP

Assume a pushup position with your arms straight and hands slightly beyond shoulder width **[A]**. Bend at the elbows and lower your torso until your chest nearly touches the floor **[B]**. Pause, and push your butt toward your ankles until your knees are bent 90 degrees **[C]**. Return to the starting position and repeat.

#### REPS

As many as you can while maintaining good form (every week)



## WORKOUT B

### [Hub] HIGH-KNEES

Sprint in place, bringing your knees up to your chest **[A]**. Keep your back straight as you pump your arms and drive your hands past your hips in time with your legs **[B]**. Raising your left knee and then your right counts as 1 rep.

#### REPS

Week 1: 15

Remaining weeks: 20



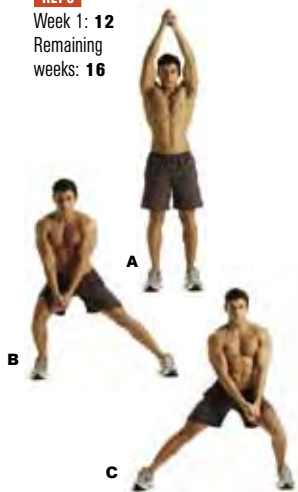
### [Spoke 3] WINDMILL SIDE LUNGE

Stand with your hands clasped above your head **[A]**. Step to your right, circling your arms clockwise to your right knee **[B]**. Return to the starting position. Repeat to your left, circling your arms counterclockwise to your left knee **[C]**. That's 2 reps. Continue alternating reps.

#### REPS

Week 1: 12

Remaining weeks: 16



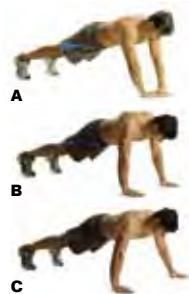
### [Spoke 1] MECHANICAL CHANGE PUSHUP

Assume a pushup position with your hands together **[A]**. Do a pushup. Place your hands shoulder-width apart **[B]**. Do a pushup. Spread your hands to twice shoulder width **[C]** and do a pushup.

#### REPS

Week 1: 5 [A], 10 [B], 10 [C]

Remaining weeks: 8 [A], 12 [B], 12 [C]



### [Spoke 4] SINGLE-LEG HIP RAISE

Lie on the floor with your right foot flat and your left leg raised so it's in line with your right thigh **[A]**. Push your hips up, keeping your left leg elevated **[B]**. Pause, and slowly return to the starting position. Switch legs halfway through.

#### REPS

Week 1: 12

Remaining weeks: 16



### [Spoke 2] ISO TOWEL ROW HOLD

Assume a staggered stance and loop a towel under your forward foot, holding its ends in both hands. Keeping your back straight and your core braced, squeeze your shoulder blades together and down as you pull the ends toward your rib cage and hold **[A]**.

#### REPS

Week 1: 20 seconds

Weeks 2 & 3: 25 seconds

Week 4: 30 seconds



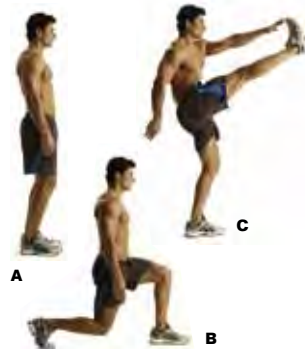
### [Spoke 5] REVERSE LUNGE WITH TOE TOUCH

Stand with your feet hip-width apart **[A]**. Step back with your right leg and lower your body until your knee almost touches the floor **[B]**. Stand up, swing your right leg as high as you can, and touch your toes with your left hand **[C]**. Switch arms and legs halfway through.

#### REPS

Week 1: 12

Remaining weeks: 16



# 3 Train Like a Pro Athlete

NO MATTER WHAT YOUR PREFERRED SPORT MAY BE, YOU CAN ALWAYS UP YOUR GAME

## TRAIN YOUR BRAIN FOR ANY SPORT

Fatigue might feel as if it begins in your body—aching muscles, waning strength—but research suggests that your mind plays a key role. “Your brain sets the pace so your body doesn’t run out of energy,” says Kevin Thompson, PhD, head of sport studies at the University of Canberra, Australia. It also keeps some energy in reserve. Tap that for greater performance.

### THINK YOU CAN

Visualizing athletic success boosts mental toughness, a *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology* study reports. That can be a key predictor of performance. “Imagining a situation reinforces the same neural pathways as executing the behavior,” says study author Krista Chandler, PhD, of the Uni-

versity of Windsor. “When you then attempt the task, your body feels as if you’ve already done it.”

#### YOUR MOVE

When you hit a strength or aerobic plateau, take 10 minutes to picture yourself conquering a heavier lift or a faster run.

### KEEP IT POSITIVE

Self-doubt can be a powerful saboteur. So change the dialogue. “Positive self-talk reinforces your confidence and boosts your energy so you won’t quit when you feel tired or challenged,” says Nick Galli, an assistant professor of sport psychology at California State University at Northridge. Science agrees: A meta-analysis by Greek researchers found that positive affirmations can boost performance.

#### YOUR MOVE

Repeat phrases like “I feel good” or “I’m swift

and strong” as you lift weights or run.

### CLEAR YOUR MIND

Stress can hamper a good workout, according to a study published in the *European Journal of Applied Physiology*. The reason: It commandeers areas of your mind in charge of attention—areas that would otherwise be used to support the mind-muscle connection, says study author Michael Agnew, PhD. The less you worry, the more benefit you’ll reap from your workout.

#### YOUR MOVE

Count to four as you inhale; then hold your breath for 4 seconds as you refocus on your training. Exhale slowly. Repeat twice.

### FIND YOUR RHYTHM

Scientists have long known that music can boost athletic performance. The key, however, is to listen to music that



you find motivating, according to new British research. “The music distracts you from your effort, allowing you to train harder and for a longer time,” says Edmund Acevedo, PhD, a professor of health and human performance at Virginia Commonwealth University.

#### YOUR MOVE

Create your own workout mix instead of downloading a generic playlist or sweating to your gym’s repetitive Top 40 countdown.

## BE BETTER AT BASEBALL

Ditch the batting doughnuts: A smarter warmup may help you hit home runs, a *Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research* study suggests. After swinging a weighted bat five times, college players saw their bat speed decrease. Yet after an isometric warmup—in which they held specific exercise positions for set periods of time—their bat speed increased. Researchers say the force your muscles generate from isometric drills preps them to activate more muscle fibers, increasing the speed of your swing. The result: more time to zero in on the ball and a greater ability to hit it farther. Next time you’re on deck, have a teammate hold the end of your bat to provide resis-

tance as you move through your swing, pausing every few inches for 5 seconds.

## BOOST YOUR PEDAL POWER

Creatine is more than just a biceps builder. According to Texas A&M research, taking creatine can help you ride harder, longer. In the study, men who downed 20 g of creatine monohydrate a day for 6 days were able to pedal with more power and stave off fatigue. Creatine may reduce your levels of lactate while also boosting your body’s ability to process it, so you can perform at a higher level, says study author Jonathan Oliver, PhD, CSCS. So rev up your ride: For 5 days, load up on 5 g of creatine monohydrate four times a day, and then reduce your daily dose to 2 to 5 g, suggests Oliver.

## STAND TALL FOR HOOPS

You don’t have to be a giant to rule the court. You just have to stand up straight: Good posture can improve your basketball game, a New Zealand study suggests. The most agile hoops players keep their torso upright and lift their knees less during turns. This improves their balance and helps them move more efficiently, says researcher Jennifer Hewit, PhD. To

train your torso, place a resistance cord around your chest and have a friend pull it back as you try to move forward. And do suicides for agility: Place cones at increasing distances down the court. Sprint to the first cone, touch the floor, run back, and repeat for each cone.

## BUILD CORE STRENGTH FOR SOCCER

Who knew that building a six-pack could also give you a jet pack? Strong abs can help you jump higher, according to a French study. After a group of soccer players completed an 8-week core training program, they were able to leap 17% higher. The researchers think training the abdominal muscles increased the “springiness” in the men’s legs and pelvises. Your move: Add 5 sets of 1-minute planks and side planks to your regular workout routine.

## ADD POWER TO YOUR SERVE

Any man can build launch power, says Eric Cressey, CSCS, co-owner of Cressey Performance in Hudson, MA. The secret: plyometrics, or explosive movements that can sharpen your nervous system, boost power production, and

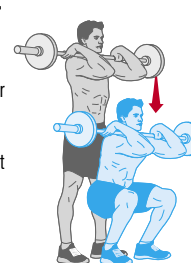
increase vertical jump performance by more than 5%, according to a study in the *Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research*. Give your tennis game—or any sport that requires vertical power—a boost with these two workouts.

### WORKOUT A

#### 1 BARBELL FRONT SQUAT

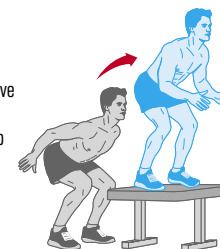
Hold a bar across the front of your shoulders with an overhand grip (palms up) that’s just beyond shoulder width (your upper arms should be parallel to the floor). Slowly lower your body until your thighs are at least parallel to the floor, and then return explosively to the starting position.

Do 3 reps.



#### 2 BOX JUMP

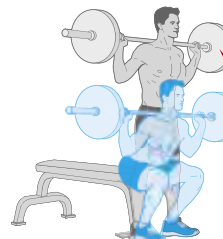
Stand in front of a knee-high bench or box, arms raised. Drive your arms down, dip your knees, and jump onto the bench. Step down. Do 4 reps.



### WORKOUT B

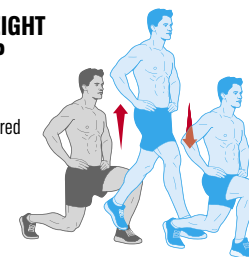
#### 1 BARBELL BOX SQUAT

Hold a barbell across your upper back with an overhand grip, and stand 4 to 6 inches from a knee-high bench or box, facing away from it. Push your hips back and slowly lower your body until you’re sitting on the bench. Now stand back up explosively, keeping your heels pressed firmly on the floor. Do 2 reps.



#### 2 BODY-WEIGHT SPLIT JUMP

Place your hands on your hips and assume a staggered stance, left leg forward. Slowly lower your body as far as you can, and then jump with enough force to propel both feet off the floor. Land with your right leg forward. That’s 1 rep. Do 6 reps, switching leg positions with each jump.



## THE BEST EXERCISE YOU’RE NOT DOING

“The bench vault will make you hot on your toes, strong in your core, and ready to blast off in any direction,” says David Jack of Teamworks Fitness in Acton, MA.

**How to do it:** Place both hands on the sides of a bench, and in one motion, vault over it, driving your arms down and pulling your legs, knees, and butt toward the ceiling. Repeat in the opposite direction. Continue for 20 to 30 seconds, and then rest for 1 minute. **That’s 1 set. Do 4.**





# 4 Maximum Muscle



THIS CUTTING-EDGE CIRCUIT ROUTINE CAN STRIP AWAY FAT AND DEFINE EVERY MUSCLE IN YOUR BODY

**TO CREATE** this workout, we chose 10 exercises that collectively work every part of your body. Then we made each exercise a 60-second sta-

tion so you can challenge your heart and lungs as well as your muscles. The final product is a high-intensity circuit designed to torch fat, define

your chest, abs, and arms, and send your fitness level soaring. You'll sculpt a lean, athletic-looking body—and be in the best shape of your life.

**DIRECTIONS** Do this circuit 3 days a week. Perform 1 set of each exercise (or "station") in succession. Each station lasts 60 seconds. Do as many reps as you can (with perfect form) in that time, and then move on to the next station. Give yourself 15 seconds to move between stations, and rest for 2 minutes after you've completed 1 circuit of all 10 exercises. Then repeat twice. If you can't go the entire minute, rest a few seconds and then resume until your time at that station is up. Use a weight that's challenging for 15 to 20 reps.

## STATION 1

### GOBLET SQUAT

With both hands, grab one end of a dumbbell to hold it vertically in front of your chest, and stand with your feet slightly beyond shoulder width **[A]**. Keeping your back naturally arched, push your hips back, bend your knees, and lower your body until the tops of your thighs are at least parallel to the floor **[B]**. Pause, and push yourself up to the starting position. If that's too hard, do a body-weight squat instead.



## STATION 2

### MOUNTAIN CLIMBER

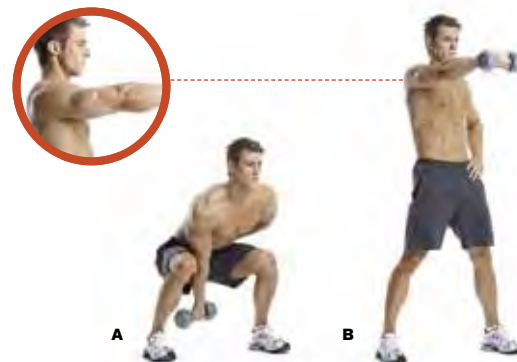
Assume a pushup position with your arms completely straight. Your body should form a straight line from your head to your ankles **[A]**. Without allowing your lower-back posture to change, lift your right foot off the floor and slowly move your right knee toward your chest **[B]**. Return to the starting position, and repeat with your left leg. Alternate back and forth for the duration of the set.



## STATION 3

### SINGLE-ARM DUMBBELL SWING

Hold a dumbbell (or a kettlebell) at arm's length in front of your waist. Without rounding your lower back, bend at your hips and knees and swing the dumbbell between your legs **[A]**. Keeping your arm straight, thrust your hips forward and swing the dumbbell to shoulder level as you rise to a standing position **[B]**. Swing the weight back and forth. At the 30-second mark, switch arms.



## STATION 4

### T-PUSHUP

Grab a pair of hex dumbbells and assume a pushup position, your arms straight **[A]**. Bend your elbows and lower your body until your chest nearly touches the floor **[B]**. As you push yourself back up, lift your right hand and rotate the right side of your body as you raise the dumbbell straight up over your shoulder until your body forms a T **[C]**. Reverse the move and repeat, this time rotating your left side.



## STATION 5

### SPLIT JUMP

Stand in a staggered stance with your feet 2 to 3 feet apart, your right foot in front of your left. Keeping your torso upright, bend your legs and lower your body into a lunge **[A]**. Now jump with enough force to propel both feet off the floor **[B]**. While you're in the air, scissor-kick your legs so you land with your left leg forward. Repeat, alternating your forward leg for the duration of the set.



## STATION 8

### PUSHUP-POSITION ROW

Grab a pair of hex dumbbells and assume a pushup position, your arms straight **[A]**. Keeping your core stiff, row the dumbbell in your right hand to the side of your chest, bending your arm as you pull it upward **[B]**. Pause, and then quickly lower the dumbbell. Repeat with your left arm.



## STATION 6

### DUMBBELL ROW

Grab a pair of dumbbells, bend at your hips (don't round your lower back), and lower your torso until it's nearly parallel to the floor. Let the dumbbells hang at arm's length **[A]**. Without moving your torso, row the weights upward by raising your upper arms, bending your elbows, and squeezing your shoulder blades together **[B]**. Pause, lower the dumbbells, and repeat.



## STATION 9

### DUMBBELL LUNGE AND ROTATION

Grab a dumbbell and hold it horizontally by its ends, just under your chin **[A]**. Step forward with your right foot and lower your body into a lunge. As you lunge, rotate your upper body to the right **[B]**. Return to the starting position, and repeat with your left leg. Alternate left and right until your 60 seconds are up. If the exercise is too hard, perform the movement without the dumbbell.



## STATION 7

### DUMBBELL SIDE LUNGE AND TOUCH

Hold a pair of dumbbells at arm's length at your sides **[A]**. Take a big step to your left and lower your body by pushing your hips backward and bending your left knee. As you lower your body, bend forward at your hips and touch the dumbbells to the floor **[B]**. Repeat for 30 seconds, and then switch to your right leg. If the exercise is too hard, do the move without the dumbbells; just reach for the floor with your hands.



## STATION 10

### DUMBBELL PUSH PRESS

Stand holding a pair of dumbbells just outside your shoulders, with your arms bent and palms facing each other. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and knees slightly bent **[A]**. Dip your knees **[B]**, and then explosively push up with your legs as you press the weights straight over your shoulders **[C]**. Lower the dumbbells back to the starting position and repeat.





# Build Powerful Legs



DOING SQUATS—AND DOING THEM CORRECTLY—MAY JUST REVOLUTIONIZE YOUR WORKOUT

**ANY PROPERLY EXECUTED** squat can be a more effective muscle builder than all other exercises combined. It requires the synchronized recruitment of muscle fibers throughout your body. And because squatting is one of the most natural human movements, like walking or using the remote, it's perfectly safe. And research shows that squats burn up to three times as many calories as previously thought. So it's a powerful fat-burning tool as well.

Ready to carve rock-solid muscle and harness whole-body strength, power, and athleticism? Use the plan that follows. It's simple and it works.

## DO THEM RIGHT

### 1 Squat with your elbows

First, do 3 consecutive vertical jumps, then look down. This is roughly where you want to place your feet every time you squat.

► Set your feet and bend your hips and knees to lower your body as far as

you can. Then, when you're in your deepest position, push your knees out with your elbows. Try to keep your feet flat on the floor and allow your butt to sink below knee height.

► Relax in this position for 2 or 3 seconds, then descend a bit deeper and drive your knees out with your elbows once more. For most men, this small elbow maneuver will simplify squatting forever because it makes you drop your torso between your thighs rather than fold at the waist.

Stand up, and go to step 2.

### 2 Do the doorknob drill

You may think of the squat as a lower-body exercise, but proper upper-body alignment is essential. Perfect your posture with this drill.

► Stand an arm's length away from a doorknob and grab the handle with both hands. Set your feet as you did in step 1.

► Now imagine that you're walking into a bar full of swimsuit models. Your

natural reaction will be to immediately lift your chest, which in turn will tighten your lower back. Your latissimus dorsi muscles will naturally spread a bit and your shoulders will move back slightly.

► Holding the doorknob, and keeping your chest up and arms straight, bend your hips and knees to lower your body, and lean back. Then stand up.

By staying tight through your chest, shoulders, and core muscles, you distribute weight more evenly throughout your body. As a result, you'll be able to handle greater loads with less risk of injury.

### 3 Behold the goblet squat

Named for the way in which you hold the weight—in front of your chest, with your hands cupped—the goblet squat helps you achieve proper alignment (see how to perform it on p. 16). It may be the only squat you'll ever need in your workout (but we've given you a few more options on p. 21).

## SQUATS WITH A PURPOSE

### BACK SQUAT

**BEST FOR...**

**FUNCTIONAL LOWER-BODY STRENGTH**

Decades of sports science has correlated squat strength with speed, power, and athletic performance. With the back squat, you generate a lot of force through your leg muscles—so with practice, you'll be able to squat a lot of weight.

**AVOID IF...**

You've had back pain or injury. The bar on your shoulders compresses your disks.



### WIDE-STANCE SQUAT

**BEST FOR...**

**PURE STRENGTH AND LOWER-BODY MUSCLE DEVELOPMENT**

The wide stance brings your inner-thigh muscles into the exercise, allowing you to lift heavier weights and build muscle more quickly.

**AVOID IF...**

You have back or shoulder problems. The extra weight means extra challenge for the joints that have to support the weight.



### FRONT SQUAT

**BEST FOR...**

**CORE STRENGTH AND LOWER-BODY MUSCLE DEVELOPMENT**

By placing the bar on the front of your shoulders, you force your torso to stay upright. This requires and builds both core strength and stability.

**AVOID IF...**

You have hip or abdominal injuries. With the bar balanced directly above those areas, you'll be putting a lot of pressure on them.



### BULGARIAN SPLIT SQUAT

**BEST FOR...**

**BALANCE, QUADRICEPS DEVELOPMENT, AND FAT LOSS**

Because it works one leg at a time and requires more balance, you can't use much weight. But you compensate by working your quads harder and doing twice as many reps per set.

**AVOID IF...**

You're most interested in pure strength and power; you need heavier weights to achieve those goals.





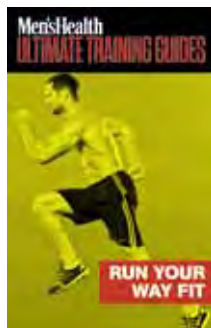
# 6 Run Your Way Fit

SURPRISING STRATEGIES TO SPRINTING FASTER, SIDESTEPPING INJURY, AND BURNING MORE FAT

**WITH THE RISE** of barefoot-style running and the five-fingered minimalist shoe, the science of stride mechanics—once the arcane province of running geeks—has entered the mainstream. Has running, the most elemental

of sports, really become so complex? Does the average guy hoping to go out for a pain-free run really have to fret about all this? *Men's Health* joined forces with *Runner's World* to bring you the best answers to these questions. You'll find

out how to clean up your stride, strengthen your legs, blast belly fat, prevent injuries, train for a half-marathon without losing muscle, and approach that cute speedster in hip-huggers and a sports bra. Happy running!



## FIX YOUR FORM

Alberto Salazar, running coach, encourages his runners to continuously work on their stride, and that goal applies to Olympians as well as recreational runners. You can run with fewer injuries, greater efficiency, and ultimately more pleasure, says Salazar, if you follow the four simple rules below and do regular sprint drills (see “Sprint School,” p. 23).



### LEAN FORWARD

Aim for a slight forward tilt—about two or three degrees, says Salazar. You don't want to lean too far

forward or too far back. Too far forward and you shove your full body weight into the ground with each stride. Too far back and you jam your heels.

#### DO THIS

To promote a properly tilted and aligned neck and torso, allow your eyes to guide you. Instead of looking down at the ground, let your gaze settle on the horizon. Keep your chin tucked in instead of letting it jut out.

### TAKE A HAND

“The typical runner never thinks about his hands, but in fact they're crucial,” Salazar says. “Your arms should swing back and forward, not across your body.” With each stride, bring your hand to the vertical midpoint of your torso, but don't let your hand cross that midline. If

it does, your body will rock from side to side.

#### DO THIS

To release tension in your hands and arms, run with your hands forming a loose fist; imagine that each hand is carrying a pretzel that you don't want to break.

### BE ON THE BALL

“If you land on your heel, you're almost certainly overstriding,” says Salazar. “You're pounding your leg into the ground with each stride and increasing your risk of injury. When you land on the balls of your feet, you flow with your forward energy.” A study of Harvard runners supports Salazar's theory; it found that forefoot strikers have fewer injuries than heel strikers.

#### DO THIS

Flick back your heel quickly after contact; visualize pawing the ground with the balls of your feet.

### USE YOUR ARMS

The fourth key to a successful stride, Salazar says, is arm carriage. “Your shoulders need to be relaxed and sloping down, and your elbows should be slightly bent,” he says. “If you tighten your shoulders and let them point up instead, your arms start to flail and you lose that circular, forward-flowing drive.”

#### DO THIS

As fatigue sets in, your shoulders tend to lift and tighten. When this happens, briefly drop your hands and shake out your arms to relax your muscles.

## GET FASTER

Doing intervals—alternating hard efforts and recovery periods—yields performance gains similar to steady-state training, but in a fraction of the time. As a bonus, you benefit from greater fat loss and better blood-sugar management. But ease into it. Your first workout should be half the time or distance and half as many reps as your ultimate goal, says exercise physiologist Janet Hamilton, CSCS. Then gradually increase the number of reps. Use the guide on p. 24 to match your goal to the right workout.

## SPRINT SCHOOL

These drills will teach you to run on the balls of your feet. Jog 5 minutes, and then do each for 30 seconds.

### 1 Arm circles with skip

As you skip, swing your arms in a forward circular motion as wide and as high as you can. After 30 seconds, swing backward.

### 2 Cross-body toe touch

Every three steps, lift your leg as high as you can and swing your opposite arm to touch your elevated toes. Alternate sides each rep.

### 3 “A” skip with knee to chest

Skip, but every three steps lift your knee toward your chest. Alternate sides. This pushes you onto the balls of your feet.

### 4 “B” skip

Follow the “A” skip pattern, but kick your leg out in a quick burst once your leg reaches its apex. Try to do it as fast as possible.

### 5 Fast-leg high-knees

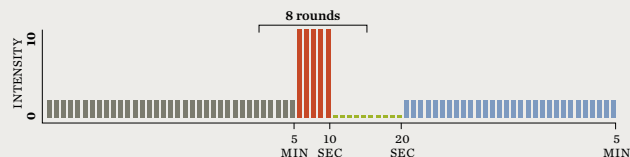
Do a single high-knee as fast as you can, and then jog a few steps and switch knees.

### 6 Fast-leg butt kicks

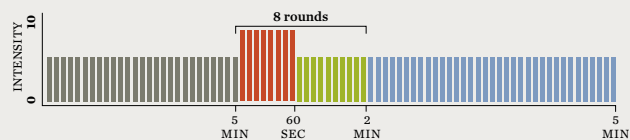
Your hamstrings and quads have opposing functions. Butt kicks warm up both. Do a butt kick as quickly as you can, jog a few steps, and switch the kicking leg.



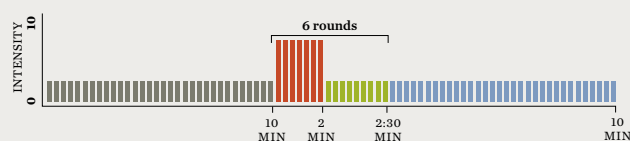
#### TURBO-CHARGE YOUR FITNESS



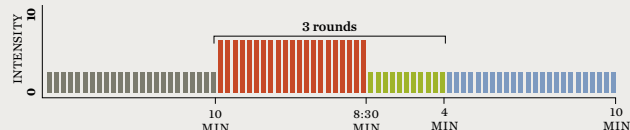
#### BLAST YOUR BELLY



#### BOOST YOUR SPEED



#### EXTEND YOUR STAMINA



### TURBO-CHARGE YOUR FITNESS

“These ultra-intense intervals not only burn fat and reduce insulin resistance but also increase aerobic and anaerobic conditioning, making you a better athlete,” says Nathan Tren-teseaux, the owner of Underground Fitness Revolution in Alachua, FL.

Do them 3 days a week; after 4 weeks, switch to 20-second runs and 10-second rest periods.

Total time: 14 minutes

### BLAST YOUR BELLY

In a Canadian study, people running intervals lost 12.4% of their body fat after 6 weeks. The reason: The intensity makes you burn extra calories even after the run is over. Other research shows that this kind of interval can boost levels of HDL (good) cholesterol by 25% and improve blood glucose control.

Do these 3 days a week.

Total time: 34 minutes

### BOOST YOUR SPEED

This kind of interval boosts your aerobic capacity, says Hamilton. The more oxygen you can take in and utilize, the faster you can run. A University of Western Ontario study found that runners who did three weekly interval sessions for 6 weeks improved their time on a 2,000-meter run by 4.6%.

Work up to 8 rounds.

Total time: 47 minutes

### EXTEND YOUR STAMINA

Most people start a long run too quickly and then slow down. This plan teaches you pace discipline—sticking to a steady speed that you can sustain over the long haul. It also trains your muscles to be more efficient at faster speeds, says Hamilton. Do these once a week, building to 6 rounds.

Note: Instead of timed intervals, you can run 1 mile.

Total time: 57:30 minutes

## RUNNING PAIN-FREE

First, let’s dispel two myths. Research reveals that running isn’t bad for your knees and won’t give you a heart attack. Use this guide to diagnose regular injuries and run pain-free.

### 1 ACHILLES TENDINITIS

#### THE PROBLEM

Your Achilles tendons tense and extend with each stride. Weak calves strain them.

#### THE BIG RISK

Running uphill increases the load on your calves and Achilles, says Bryan Heiderscheid, PT, PhD, of the University of Wisconsin sports medicine center.

#### THE FIX

**DO CALF RAISES.** Balance on a step on your right foot so your heel hangs off it; raise your left foot behind you. Rise onto your toes; then

lower your heel as far as you can. Do 2 sets of 10 to 15 reps with each leg twice a week.

### 2 ILIOTIBIAL BAND SYNDROME

#### THE PROBLEM

The IT band is a fibrous tissue on the outside of your thigh that stabilizes your knees and hips. If your hips and knees twist too much, the IT band rubs your lateral femoral condyle, a prominent part of your thigh bone, causing pain on the outside of your knee.

#### THE BIG RISK

A long stride increases force on your knees and IT bands.

#### THE FIX

**BOOST YOUR STEP RATE BY 5 TO 10%.** This will shorten your stride, Heiderscheid says. Try to avoid landing hard on your heel, and keep your knee flexed about 20 degrees. Have a

friend take video of you so you can check your form.

### 3 SHINSPLINTS

#### THE PROBLEM

You feel pain and soreness because your tibialis posterior muscle is pulling away from your shin bone. This muscle works with a larger calf muscle, your soleus, says Reed Ferber, PhD, director of the running injury clinic at the University of Calgary. “Your tibialis posterior is overworked and has to pull more of its weight,” Ferber says.

#### THE BIG RISK

Weak muscles can expose you if you’re new to running or returning after a hiatus.

#### THE FIX

**DO CALF RAISES.** These will strengthen your tibialis posterior and soleus muscles. Also try

seated ankle invertors: Sit with your leg straight and loop a resistance band around your foot. Making sure your leg doesn’t rotate, pull the top of your foot inward for 2 seconds, and then release for 2 seconds. That’s 1 rep. Do 1 set of 10 reps a day, working up to 3 sets a day.



## 4 RUNNER'S KNEE

### THE PROBLEM

Your thigh bone rotates too far inward, presuring your kneecap. You feel dull pain under your kneecap, especially when you sit a long time or take stairs.

### THE BIG RISK

Running on steep or uneven terrain can cause runner's knee.

### THE FIX

#### STRENGTHEN YOUR HIP

**MUSCLES**, which control your thigh bones. Try these two moves, doing 1 set of 10 reps and working up to 3 sets a day. First, try the standing

hip abductor: Stand with one foot in the loop of a resistance band and the other foot on top of the band (adjust the length to control the resistance). Move the banded leg 2 seconds out, 2 seconds in. Then, work your hip gluteus medius: Loop the band around and face a chair; move the banded leg back to 45 degrees, 2 seconds out, 2 seconds in.

## 5 PLANTAR FASCIITIS

### THE PROBLEM

The tight, thick plantar fascia supports the arch and works with a net-

work of muscles across the bottom and sides of your foot. You may feel a sharp pain on the bottom of your heel, especially in the morning (the tissue shortens at night).

### THE BIG RISK

Weak foot muscles strain the plantar fascia.

### THE FIX

**DO TOWEL CRUNCHES.** Put a towel on the floor, your heels on the ground, and your toes on the towel. "Make fists with your toes and scrunch the towel up," Ferber says. Do this every day for 15 minutes.

## BOREDOM BUSTERS

Running can be a head game. Use these motivational tips to come out on top.

### Shift to Walk Speed

Going long? Break up the tedium by running 4 minutes and then walking 30 seconds, coach Jeff Galloway says. "You'll recover faster and can finish quicker."

### Find a Partner

If you spy an interesting runner, compliment her stride or her shoes, says Olympian Kara Goucher. Or join a club ([rrca.org](http://rrca.org)). You'll meet educated, fun, and fast women!

### Create a Mantra

Think brief, positive, and instructive. For instance, says *Runner's World* editor-in-chief David Willey, to fight fatigue when powering up a hill, think, *Claw the ground*.

### Strike Like a Ninja

Listen to your stride: ninja good, elephant bad. "Lean forward slightly," says Scott Berlinger, coach at Full Throttle Endurance. It will help you touch down on your forefoot.

### Zoom Up Hills

"Increase your arm swing, as if you were pulling yourself quickly up a rope," says Larry Indiviglia, a coach based in San Diego. "And lift your knees higher."

### Ignite Your Stride

If you're tiring during a race or while doing intervals and need a mental boost, imagine you're on hot coals, Galloway says. Hot damn, you'll speed up your stride!

### Run for a Cause

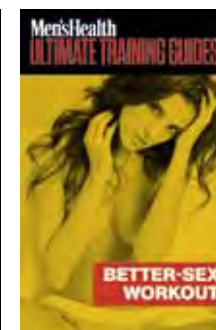
"It boosts your incentive. With social media you can now gain support from friends and family non-invasively," says *Runner's World* chief running officer Bart Yasso.

### Outfox Negativity

"If you hit a bad patch, try counting your steps," says Goucher. "When you hit 100, start over at 1. It can help take your mind off your troubles and put you back on track."

### Join Treadmill U

"The rhythms of treadmill running boost learning," says coach Matt Barbosa. You can use an easy run to rehearse a presentation or listen to an educational podcast.



IMPRESSIVE SEX RELIES ON HAVING MUSCULAR STAMINA AND RHYTHM. BUILD A BODY THAT WILL SATISFY HER.

**BUILDING A BODY** for amazing sex has little to do with how much weight you can lift, press, or curl. It depends on how well your body can push and thrust. "It's the smaller muscles you can't see or feel that make all the difference when it comes

to great sex," says Jeff Bell, CSCS, owner of Spectrum Wellness in New York City. It doesn't take much to tap into these subtler yet sexier muscles, but you need to train them for strength, stamina, and flexibility. In the plan

below, Bell includes moves that both strengthen and lengthen your muscles for the three most popular sex positions. To get the best results from this routine, he recommends doing 20 minutes of cardiovascular exercise at least two or three times a week.

## THE WORKOUT

Exercising to improve your sexual performance requires functional movements that train your entire body to be more flexible and resilient. The three stretches in this routine work your lower back, hip flexors, and glutes through their full range of motion. The remaining five exercises develop areas that need long-term stamina—your chest, shoulders, triceps, hamstrings, quadriceps, and abs. That's why you'll be doing each exercise to failure instead of doing a specific number of repetitions.

Begin your 4-week program by choosing two of the four sections that follow, then work your way up to

doing all four sections in one workout. In 4 weeks, you and your partner will notice a difference you'll be able to see and feel—no matter what position you

try. (You can also perform each stretch individually as needed—either immediately after sex or the morning after—depending on which positions you used.)

WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4
<b>CREATE YOUR ROUTINE</b>			
DO BOTH MOVES FROM 2 SECTIONS	DO BOTH MOVES FROM 3 SECTIONS	DO BOTH MOVES FROM 4 SECTIONS	DO BOTH MOVES FROM 4 SECTIONS
<b>SETS OF EACH EXERCISE OR STRETCH</b>			
2	2	2	2
<b>YOUR TOTAL WORKOUT SHOULD BE...</b>			
8 SETS	12 SETS	16 SETS	16 SETS
<b>SPEED OF EACH REP AND REPS PER SET</b>			
AS DESCRIBED	AS DESCRIBED	AS DESCRIBED	AS DESCRIBED
<b>REST BETWEEN SETS</b>			
15-30 SECONDS	15-30 SECONDS	15-30 SECONDS	15-30 SECONDS
<b>DO THIS WORKOUT</b>			
2X/WEEK	3X/WEEK	2X/WEEK	3X/WEEK

# Section 1

## ON TOP

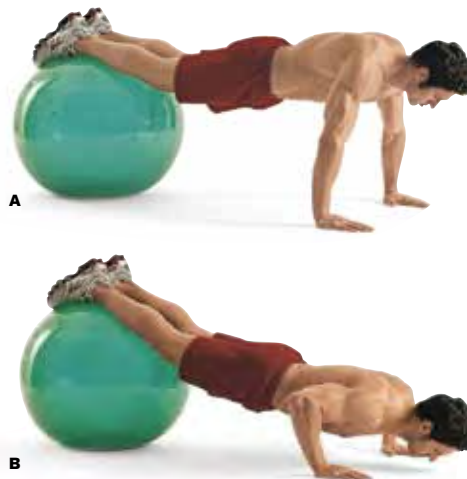
### SWISS-BALL DECLINE PUSHUP

**WORKS SHOULDERS, CHEST, TRICEPS, AND ABS**

Kneel with a Swiss ball behind you and place your hands flat on the floor, shoulder-width apart. Place your shins on the ball and get into the standard pushup position—arms straight, hands directly under your shoulders. Your back should be flat and your abs drawn in **[A]**. Tuck your chin and, leading with your chest, lower your body to the floor **[B]**. Push yourself back up and repeat.

#### **WATCH YOUR FORM**

Keep your head in line with your back and resist looking at the ball. Bending your neck in this position can strain it, and you might lose your balance.



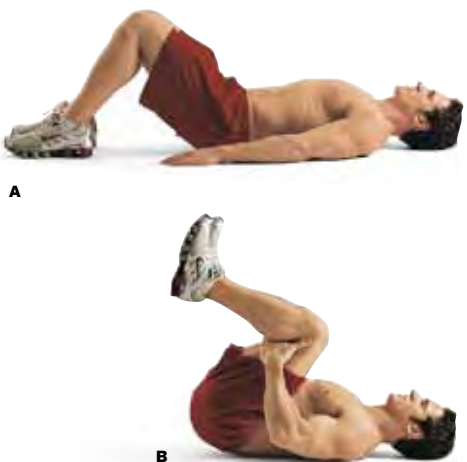
### LOWER-BACK LIE-DOWN

**STRETCHES LOWER BACK**

Lie flat on your back with your legs bent, feet flat on the floor, and arms at your sides **[A]**. Draw your knees up to your chest and gently grab your legs just behind the knees. Slowly pull both knees toward your chest as far as you comfortably can, keeping your back flat on the floor at all times **[B]**. Hold the stretch for 2 to 3 seconds, then slowly lower your legs. Repeat the stretch for as many repetitions as you can do.

#### **WATCH YOUR FORM**

Keep your tailbone and the back of your head on the floor. You'll prevent your back from rounding, which would lessen the effect of the stretch.



# Section 2

## STANDING

### HINGE

**WORKS QUADRICEPS AND HIP FLEXORS**

Kneel on a mat or soft carpet with your hands at your sides. Resist the urge to sit back and rest your weight on your heels. Your back should be straight and your knees bent at 90-degree angles **[A]**. Keeping your head and back in a straight line with your thighs at all times, slowly lean back a few inches **[B]**. Hold this position for 2 to 3 seconds, slowly return to the starting position, and repeat as many times as you can.

#### **WATCH YOUR FORM**

Don't bend at the waist or slouch forward—doing so would steal effort from the fronts of your thighs.



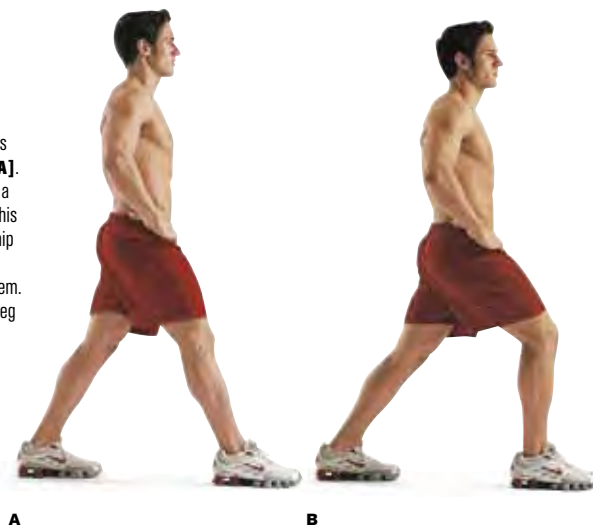
### STANDING HIP THRUST

**STRETCHES HIP FLEXORS**

Stand with your feet together, hands on your hips. Step forward with one foot so that your toes are a couple of feet apart. Keep your toes facing forward and your knees slightly bent **[A]**. Gently push your pelvis forward until you feel a very mild stretch in your hips **[B]**. Although this move seems too subtle, don't overdo it: The hip flexors are attached inside the legs in such a way that it takes very little effort to stretch them. Hold the stretch for 5 seconds, then reverse leg positions and repeat.

#### **WATCH YOUR FORM**

Try to keep the same knee angle throughout the stretch.



## Section 3

### ON THE BOTTOM

#### LYING GLUTEAL BRIDGE

**WORKS BUTT, HAMSTRINGS, ABS, AND PELVIC MUSCLES**

Lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor. Place your arms at your sides, palms facing down **[A]**. Squeeze your glutes and slowly raise your butt off the floor until your body forms a straight line from your knees to your shoulders **[B]**. Hold this position for 1 to 2 seconds, then slowly lower yourself back down to the floor and repeat the move as many times as you can.

**WATCH YOUR FORM**

Avoid looking at your waistline to check your posture. Keep your head flat on the floor and stare at the ceiling instead.



#### LYING Crossover STRETCH

**STRETCHES GLUTEAL MUSCLES**

Lie on your back with your knees bent, feet flat on the floor **[A]**. Slowly draw your left knee up to your chest. Grab the outside of the knee with your right hand and gently pull it toward your right shoulder as far as is comfortable **[B]**. Hold for 20 seconds, then lower the leg back to the starting position. Repeat the move, this time raising your right knee and pulling it toward your left shoulder.

**WATCH YOUR FORM**

Don't curl up as you bring your knee forward. Focus on keeping your head, shoulders, and back pressed flat against the floor.



## Section 4

### ANY POSITION

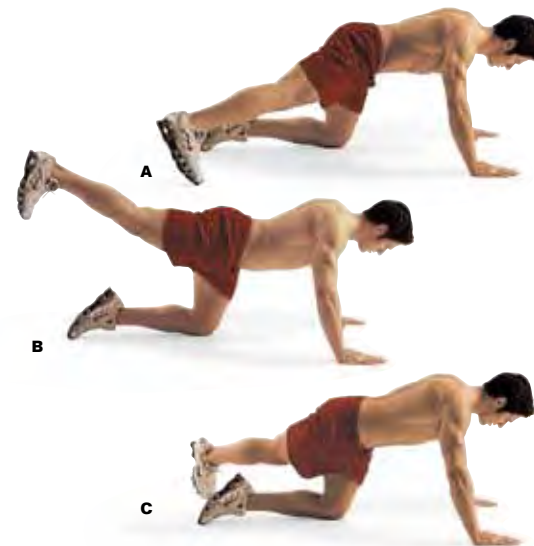
#### KNEELING LEG CROSSOVER

**WORKS GLUTEAL MUSCLES**

Get on all fours with your hands and knees shoulder-width apart and your head facing the floor. Straighten your right leg behind you, angling it to the right, with your toes touching the floor. This is the starting position **[A]**. Now raise your right leg up and over your left leg **[B]**, then lower it until your right foot touches the floor just outside your left foot **[C]**. Reverse the motion to get back to the starting position and repeat as many times as you can. Switch positions to work your left leg.

**WATCH YOUR FORM**

Keep your spine straight throughout the move.



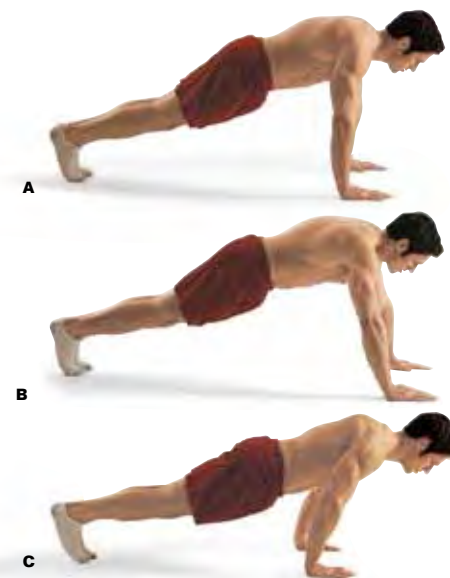
#### SOCK SLIDE

**WORKS SHOULDERS, CHEST, TRICEPS, LOWER BACK, AND ABS**

For this move, you need to be in socks on a slippery floor surface. Assume the pushup position, with your hands flat on the floor, shoulder-width apart, arms and legs straight, and feet together **[A]**. Keeping your hands in place, slowly slide your body back until your nose is pointing down at the space between your hands **[B]**. Next, slowly slide your body forward until your belly is almost over your hands **[C]**. Continue moving backward and forward as many times as you can.

**WATCH YOUR FORM**

Keep your arms straight, your abs in, and your back flat.







# How to Reach Your Max

YOU CAN GO FURTHER THAN YOU EVER THOUGHT POSSIBLE

**HAVE YOU EVER** gone to your max? That is, have you trained for something specific, like strength or endurance, and reached what you thought was your body's limit? If you work out for purely aesthetic reasons, have you ever been in the best possible shape you could achieve? You can expand the question to team sports: Have you practiced and trained to the point where you thought you maxed out your ability in that sport and played it at the highest level you could?

It's not really a simple question, is it? First, you have to distinguish between a personal record and a max performance. You can go out today and set a PR in anything, as

## MAX RULE 1

Program hoppers tend to fail, so pick a training regimen and stick with it to achieve maximum performance.

long as it's something you've never done before. If it's something you have done, you can find a way to do it slightly harder, better, or faster. Finish one more rep, run one more block, pick up the pace on that final lap, and you have a PR.

A max performance is something else. It can come only from dedicated training toward a specific goal.

## WHAT IS A MAX?

There's one school of thought, popularized by South African sports scientist Timothy Noakes, MD, DSc, that maintains it's impossible to reach your body's absolute limit. "Your body won't allow you to push beyond a certain level," says Thomas W. Rowland, MD, author of *The Athlete's Clock*, a book that explores all aspects of peak performance. "You shut down."

Rowland uses the example of a treadmill stress test to make his point. If you've never taken one, it

goes something like this: A technician hooks up electrodes to your chest and tells you to start walking on the treadmill. The slope becomes steeper and the pace faster in 3-minute increments. At some point you have to start running. And then you run until one of three things happens: He stops the test because he's detected a problem with your heart; he ends the test when you hit a target heart rate; or you give up.

In the "you give up" scenario, imagine that your doctor offers you \$2 million to keep going for another minute. "You'd do it," Rowland says. "You could go beyond what your brain has told you to do." You still wouldn't run so hard that you'd hurt yourself, but you would find a way to earn that \$2 million.

University of Texas exercise scientist Ed Coyle, PhD, agrees, but only if we're talking about untrained individuals. The higher the level of training and experience an athlete

has, the closer he or she can push toward that limit. "A lot of times with athletes, you can see that they're doing all they can just to stay upright," Coyle says. "I don't think even a million dollars would make a difference."

## HOW TO REACH YOUR MAX

Now that you know what a max is, let's ask two crucial questions: How do you reach true peak performance? And how do you know when you've arrived there?

No matter what area you want to focus on as you work toward your max—strength, endur-

ance, or appearance—your process will include the following elements.

### 1 PREPARATION

**It has to be something you're passionate about.** You'll pay a price for a true max. Even if you are never injured, and even if your training expenses fit easily into your budget, an all-out pursuit of a fitness goal is more than a hobby. It eats into your work time, family time, and leisure time.

"Sport is selfish," says Chris McCormack, winner of more than 200 triathlons and runner-up in the 2006 Ironman World Championship in Hawaii. "Whether you're running or powerlifting, you're self-obsessed." You'll bore friends and cowork-

## MAX RULE 2

Know your kryptonite. Understanding your weaknesses positions you to conquer them.

ers with stories about workouts and races, and you may even put a strain on your relationships at home. If a max isn't worth that price, you aren't likely to achieve it.

**Plan to pursue it for years, not weeks or months.**

"You can show big improvements in the first year or two," Coyle says. "You can improve 10 to 20%." Coaches call those "newbie gains." Only when you're struggling to improve 1 or 2% a year are you anywhere near a max.

### 2 TRAINING

**Work with people who know more than you do.**

The best athletes in solitary sports like running and powerlifting often have mentors who won championships or set records. Take Amby Burfoot, winner of the 1968 Boston Marathon, for example. His high school track coach, John J. Kelley, was a Boston Marathon champion and two-time Olympian. Burfoot's teammate and roommate was Bill Rodgers, and the two of them competed against another dominant marathoner of their time, Frank Shorter.



For most of us, training with a champion is not realistic. Even if there's one nearby, a pro might not have the time or interest to work with someone at our level. But you can almost certainly find a local gym that specializes in whatever you're pursuing or a running, cycling, or swimming club you can join. If even these options are impractical, there's always an online community or coaching program you can join.

Your knowledge and skill led you to where you are today. You need something else in order to go beyond your current level—another base of knowledge or point of view. You don't know what you don't know about reaching your goals until you spend time around people who've already achieved them.

#### Find the right program and then stick with it.

McCormack describes athletes who jump from program to program and trainer to trainer as “scattered people.” “They don't have enough of a foundation,” he says. “You should make a decision and go with it.”

Program hoppers are doomed to fail, says powerlifter A.J. Roberts. “They see results because it's a new program. When it fails, they jump to the next program. They never achieve the results they should.”

How do you know which

program or gym or coach is right for you? Look for consistent results from the people who use the program. Roberts trains at Westside Barbell in Columbus, OH, under the guidance of Louie Simmons, a powerlifting champion who has trained generations of winners.

“It's not like Westside is the only gym in the world that cranks out top lifters,” says Roberts. But its results are consistent. Lifters who train there stick with the program and succeed with it.

#### Understand your weaknesses.

Bodybuilder and personal trainer Nate Miyaki offers this advice: “Know your kryptonite.” It might be something external, like a particular exercise that hurts your shoulder or a training method that leaves you with creaky knees. Or it could be a temptation, something that breaks down your willpower rather than your muscles or joints.

“You have to know the things that will pull you away from your goal,” Miyaki says. “If you don't have the willpower to go out to dinner and skip dessert, you probably shouldn't go out to dinner. The farther away you are from your kryptonite, the less power it has. You stop craving it.”

#### Focus your workouts.

If you saw a triathlete, a bodybuilder, and a powerlifter working out in the

## MAX RULE 3

Be patient: Only when you're struggling to improve 1 or 2% a year are you near a max.

same gym, their exercises and techniques would be as different as their bodies. But those are merely tactics. Their strategies might be identical.

McCormack says that each of his workouts starts with the most important work of the day, followed by supplemental training that he might skip if he needs the extra time to recover.

Competitive lifters also build workouts around daily goals. A powerlifter might train four times a week, using two workouts to improve his bench press and the other two for squats and deadlifts. The most important exercise comes first, following a warmup. The other stuff matters, but you always want your best effort to go toward the lifts you'll eventually max out on.

Physique-focused gym rats tend to have the least structured training. They rely on instincts and experience to modulate the volume and intensity of a workout, but they still enter the gym with the goal of working specific muscle groups to whatever level of exhaustion they can tolerate that day.

## 3 PERFORMANCE

### Pick your moment.

If you're looking for a max effort in strength, and you can pick your own starting time, go for mid to late afternoon. That's when your body creates the perfect circumstances to excel. Your core temperature is highest, blood flow to your muscles surges, and your nerves fire faster. Your testosterone level may also be more

responsive and rise with exercise.

For endurance, though, air temperature may be more important than your body's readiness.

“It's going to be different for every individual,” Rowland says. “Some people run better in the heat, some in the cold.”

All of this is moot if you're in a race or some other competition. Endurance events typically start

in the morning, when all the competitors are fighting their bodies' circadian schedules.

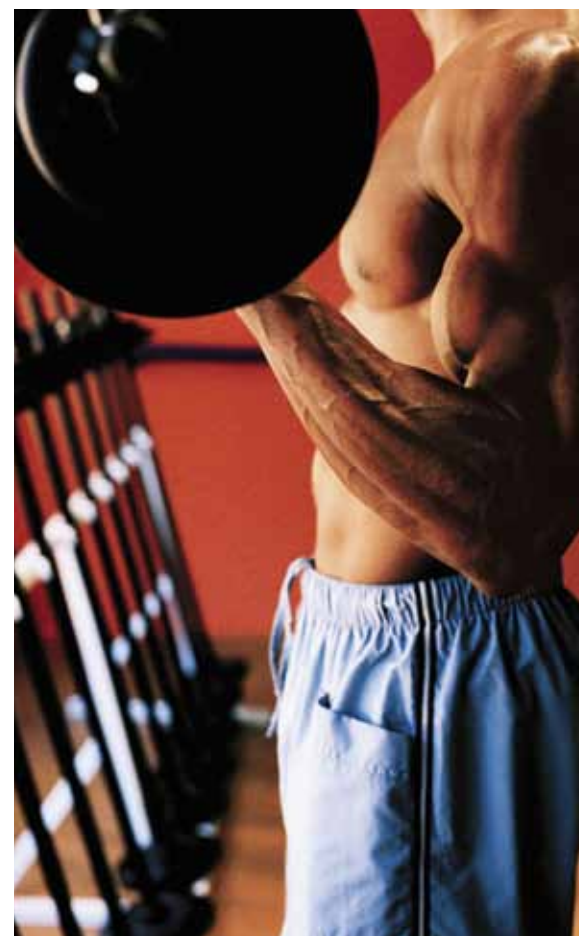
### Grade yourself on a curve.

Performance is always circumstantial. Your max effort might not look like a max on the scorecard. An all-out effort in crappy weather might be the high point of your career, no matter where you finish or how long it took. If you're in a competition, there's always the chance someone else will hit his max on your best day, pushing you out of the winner's circle. Sometimes an official blows a call. Only you know what went into your performance and what you took out of it.

### Wait before evaluating.

A true max is evident only in retrospect. The longer you pursue something, the more opportunities you'll have for an all-out effort. What you once thought was your max may turn out to be something else—a great effort, possibly a personal record, but not your best. The reverse is also true: What you thought was just a PR may turn out, in retrospect, to have been your true max. You won't really know until you start to go backward.

So what is a true max? It's not always a win. But it sure as hell makes you a winner.



# 9 Warrior Nutrition

DISCOVER THE POWERS OF SUPERFOODS

**EVERY DAY IT SEEMS** another superfood is trumpeted as the latest nutritional hero. But if you take the notion of nutritional saviors with a grain (or maybe a pinch) of salt, it can be a useful

approach, says Jeffrey Blumberg, PhD, a professor of nutrition at Tufts University and a *Men's Health* nutrition advisor. "If the concept leads you to seek out generous

helpings of a broad variety of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains with the most health-promoting nutrients, then go for it," Blumberg says.

## All-Star Foods

### MUSCLE BUILDERS

#### Black beans

Want to go harder at the gym? Then load up on these legumes, which help prevent a magnesium deficiency that can reduce exercise performance and endurance, a review in *Magnesium Research* reports.

#### Beef

Sure, beef is a great source of muscle-building protein. But it's also one of the best sources of carnitine, an amino-acid derivative that helps your mitochondria burn fat for energy.

#### Chilies

Want to reveal those muscles? Then you also need to pare away fat. A Japanese study found that capsaicin, the chemical that gives chilies their spicy heat, helps your body burn more fat as fuel during exercise.

#### Plantains

Like bananas, plantains are rich in potassium, a nutrient that helps form glycogen, a source of energy that powers your muscles.

## RETHINK DRINKS

**Pass on diet soda** Drinking diet soda can change the body's ability to regulate food intake, which can lead to packing on more flab.

**But drink milk** It's more effective than sports drinks for postworkout hydration, and it provides muscle-building protein.



## HOW TO PUT THEM TOGETHER

### Flank Steak Tacos with Mole Sauce

- ▶ 3 DRIED CHILIES, STEMMED
- ▶ ½ SOFT, RIPE PLANTAIN, PEELED
- ▶ 1 PLUM TOMATO
- ▶ 1 TBSP OLIVE OIL
- ▶ 3 GARLIC CLOVES, PEELED
- ▶ 1 CUP CANNED BLACK BEANS, RINSED
- ▶ 1½ OZ DARK CHOCOLATE, MELTED
- ▶ ½ TSP GROUND CINNAMON
- ▶ SALT TO TASTE
- ▶ 1 FLANK STEAK (ABOUT 10 OZ)
- ▶ 4 SOFT CORN TORTILLAS, WARMED
- ▶ 1 TBSP CHOPPED ROASTED PEANUTS
- ▶ 1 TBSP CHOPPED CILANTRO

**1** / Preheat the oven to 400°F. In a bowl, soak the chilies in warm water, weighing them down with a plate, until soft, about 20 minutes.

**2** / Put the plantain and tomato on a baking sheet; brush the tomato with the oil. Roast, adding the garlic after 10 minutes, until the tomato is lightly charred, 15 to 20 minutes.

**3** / Dice the plantain. In a blender, puree the tomato, garlic, chilies, beans, chocolate, and cinnamon, thinning with up to ½ cup of water if needed. Season with the salt.

**4** / On a lightly oiled grill, cook the steak over high heat to medium, about

3 minutes a side. Let it rest briefly, and then cut it into cubes and divide among the tortillas. Serve your steak tacos with the mole sauce (tomato-bean-chocolate mixture), peanuts, cilantro, and plantain.

**MAKES 2 SERVINGS**



### HEART PROTECTORS

#### Olive oil

Pour on the olive oil. The FDA says that consuming 2 tablespoons a day, in place of saturated fat, might reduce your risk of heart disease.

#### Almonds

Pile on the crunch: The monounsaturated fats in nuts may play a role in reducing your risk of death from coronary heart disease, according to a Loma Linda University study review.

#### Salmon

Fatty fish species such as salmon are well worth the price: A diet rich in fish oils could protect your ticker by reducing the buildup of fat in your blood.

#### Farro

Chew on this: People who ate a diet rich in whole grains like farro cut their risk of heart disease by about 20% compared with those who ate them rarely, according to a review in *Nutrition, Metabolism & Cardiovascular Disease*.

#### Chickpeas

Pass the hummus: Chickpeas are a good source of polyphenols, which may slow the buildup of plaque in your arteries and boost your HDL (good) cholesterol.



## HOW TO PUT THEM TOGETHER

### Roasted Salmon with Chickpea Salad

- ¾ CUP FARRO
- 1 SALMON FILLET (12 OZ, PREFERABLY WILD), SKIN ON
- 3 TBSP EXTRA-VIRGIN OLIVE OIL
- SALT AND FRESHLY GROUND PEPPER TO TASTE
- 2 TBSP RED-WINE VINEGAR
- ½ TBSP DIJON MUSTARD
- ¾ CUP DRAINED CANNED CHICKPEAS
- ¼ CUP WHOLE ALMONDS, TOASTED AND CHOPPED
- 1 TBSP THINLY SLICED MINT LEAVES
- 1 SCALLION, THINLY SLICED
- LEMON WEDGES

**1** / Preheat the oven to 325°F. In a medium saucepan, bring 4 cups of water to a boil and add the farro. Reduce to a simmer and cook until the farro is tender, about 25 minutes. Drain the farro and set aside to cool.

**2** / Meanwhile, place the salmon skin side down on a lightly oiled baking sheet. Drizzle on 1 tablespoon of the oil, and season with the salt and pepper. Bake until white spots appear on the salmon, about 20 minutes.

**3** / In a large bowl, whisk the remaining 2 tablespoons of oil with the vinegar and

mustard; season with the salt and pepper. Stir in the farro along with the chickpeas, almonds, mint, and scallion. Season to taste with the salt and pepper. Serve the salmon with the farro salad and lemon wedges to squeeze onto the fish.

**MAKES 2 OR 3 SERVINGS**



## AGE ERASERS

### Cashews

Talk about a smart snack. Cashews help prevent magnesium deficiencies, which may promote cell aging and age-related disease, say researchers from the University of California at Berkeley.

### Curry powder

Spices can boost brainpower as well as food's flavor. This Indian blend is rich in turmeric, a spice linked to the prevention of Alzheimer's disease in a study review published in the *Annals of Indian Academy of Neurology*.

### Mustard greens

Save face: These robust greens boast plenty of vitamin C, which supports the collagen in your skin, according to a study in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*.

### Carrots

Crunch on carrots to protect your eyes. Carrots are rich in lutein, a nutrient that can help prevent age-related macular degeneration, a Chinese study review found.

## HOW TO PUT THEM TOGETHER

### Easy Curried Chicken Korma with Greens

- 1 CUP SLIVERED ALMONDS
- 1 CUP RAW CASHEWS
- 1 CUP LOW-FAT YOGURT
- 1 CUP 2% MILK
- 1 TSP FRESHLY GROUND PEPPER (PREFERABLY WHITE)
- ½ TSP SALT
- 2 TBSP CANOLA OIL
- 2 GARLIC CLOVES, MINCED
- 1 TBSP MINCED FRESH GINGER
- 1 TBSP CURRY POWDER
- 2 LB BONELESS, SKINLESS CHICKEN BREAST, CUT INTO 2" PIECES
- 4 CARROTS, CUT INTO ½" PIECES
- 1½ LB FRESH MUSTARD GREENS, STEMMED AND CHOPPED

**1** / Soak the nuts in water for ½ hour. Drain and place them in a blender with the yogurt, milk, pepper, and salt. Blend until a smooth sauce forms. Thin with water if it seems thicker than a milkshake.



**2** / Heat 1 tablespoon of the oil in a heavy skillet over medium heat; sauté the garlic, ginger, and curry powder until light brown, about 3 minutes, taking care not to burn them. Add the yogurt mixture and reduce to a simmer; cook for 10 minutes.

**3** / Add the chicken and carrots to the sauce; simmer until the chicken is cooked

through, about 15 minutes. Meanwhile, heat the remaining tablespoon of oil in a large skillet; add the greens and sauté until tender, 7 to 10 minutes. Season with salt. Serve the korma with the greens.

**MAKES 4 SERVINGS**

## Eat Like a Caveman

Don't worry—you don't need to club a bison for dinner. Just reprogram your carb cravings, says Mark Sisson, author of *The Primal Blueprint*. With these high-protein, low-carb swaps, you'll be on your way to fewer grains and fewer (weight) gains.

IF YOU EAT...	SWITCH TO...	BONUS TIP
EGG WHITE OMELET WITH TOAST	WHOLE-EGG AND VEGETABLE OMELET WITH BACON	WELL-COOKED BACON IS A GREAT SUBSTITUTE FOR THE CRUNCH OF TOAST.
BURGER ON A BUN	BURGER BETWEEN TWO FIRM LETTUCE LEAVES	STURDY ROMAINE LEAVES CAN SUPPORT A PATTY—AND ITS RIDGES HOLD IN CONDIMENTS.
PASTA WITH MARINARA SAUCE	SPAGHETTI SQUASH "PASTA" WITH MARINARA SAUCE	PRICK AND BAKE 1 HOUR AT 375°F; HALVE, SCOOP SEEDS OUT, AND SHRED WITH A FORK.
TURKEY ON RYE WITH LETTUCE, TOMATO, AND ONION	SAME SANDWICH WITHOUT THE BREAD	CAVEMAN ROLL-UP: LAYER COLD CUTS, CHEESE, AND VEGETABLES. ADD MUSTARD. ROLL AND EAT.
CAKES AND PASTRIES	BERRIES TOPPED WITH A MIX OF WHIPPED CREAM AND MASCARPONE	A DROP OF VANILLA EXTRACT WILL MAKE THIS TOPPING TASTE EVEN SWEETER.
NACHO TORTILLA CHIPS	BEEF JERKY	BUY A LOW- OR NO-SUGAR VARIETY TO CUT CARBS.



## HOW TO PUT THEM TOGETHER



### Vegetable Omelet

- ▶ 3 EGGS, WELL BEATEN
- ▶ 3 TBSP CHOPPED RED BELL PEPPER
- ▶ 2 TBSP CHOPPED GREEN BELL PEPPER
- ▶ 2 TBSP CHOPPED TOMATO, SEEDED
- ▶ 2 TBSP CHOPPED MUSHROOMS
- ▶ 2 TBSP CHOPPED ZUCCHINI
- ▶ SALT AND FRESHLY GROUND PEPPER TO TASTE

**1** / Heat a large skillet coated with olive oil cooking spray over medium heat. Add the eggs, allowing them to cover the bottom of the pan. Cook until the bottom begins to set, about 3 minutes.

**2** / When nearly cooked, top one half of the omelet with the bell peppers, tomato, mushrooms, zucchini, salt, and pepper. Carefully fold the remaining half over the filling and cook about 2 minutes longer.

**MAKES 1 SERVING**

### Power Burger

- ▶ 1 LB EXTRA-LEAN GROUND BEEF
- ▶ 1 TBSP SUNFLOWER SEEDS, SHELLED
- ▶ 1 TBSP ONION, FINELY CHOPPED
- ▶ 1 TBSP RED BELL PEPPER, FINELY CHOPPED
- ▶ ¼ TSP FRESHLY GROUND BLACK PEPPER
- ▶ TOASTED WHEAT GERM
- ▶ 4 WHOLE GRAIN BUNS
- ▶ LETTUCE AND TOMATO SLICES AS TOPPING
- ▶ HONEY MUSTARD

**1** / Place the ground beef, sunflower seeds, onion, bell pepper, and black pepper in a large mixing bowl and knead with your hands until it's well mixed.

**2** / Make 4 thin patties, then roll them in the wheat germ until they're covered.

**3** / Grill or panfry the burgers.

**4** / Place the cooked burgers on the buns, and top with lettuce, tomato, and honey mustard.

**MAKES 4 SERVINGS**



### Spaghetti Squash Chicken Parmesan

- ▶ 4 BONELESS, SKINLESS CHICKEN BREAST HALVES
- ▶ ½ CUP BUTTERMILK
- ▶ 1 LARGE SPAGHETTI SQUASH, CUT IN HALF
- ▶ ½ CUP RICE FLOUR OR UNBLEACHED OR ALL-PURPOSE FLOUR
- ▶ ½ CUP GRATED PARMESAN CHEESE
- ▶ 1 TSP GARLIC POWDER
- ▶ ½ TSP SEASONING SALT
- ▶ 1¼ CUPS SPAGHETTI SAUCE

**1** / Place the chicken in a 13" × 9" baking dish and pierce in several places with a fork. Pour the buttermilk over the chicken and turn to coat both sides. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour.

**2** / Place the squash, cut sides up, in a microwavable dish. Cover with plastic wrap and microwave until fork-tender, 25 minutes. Using a fork, scrape the flesh from the squash. Keep warm.

**3** / Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 375°F

**4** / In a shallow dish, combine the flour, ¼ cup of the cheese, the garlic powder, and seasoning salt. Dredge the chicken in

the flour mixture, then return to the pan with the buttermilk, then coat again with the flour. Place in another large baking dish coated with cooking spray. Spoon about 2 tablespoons of the spaghetti sauce onto each chicken breast and sprinkle with the remaining cheese.

**5** / Bake until a thermometer inserted in the thickest portion registers 160°F and the juices run clear, about 25 minutes.

**6** / Meanwhile, heat the remaining sauce in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Serve with the chicken and spaghetti squash.

**MAKES 4 SERVINGS**

# Kick Your Fast-Food Addiction

We know how tempting it is. We're guys, and we've been hungry and tired. Fight back with our plan.

## STEP 1

No more eating while driving. The real appeal of fast food is convenience: You don't even need to get out of your car. Once you have to walk in the door to get your combo meal, the appeal of fast food swiftly declines. Plus, by keeping the food away from the driver's seat, you'll avoid dripping Arby's sauce on your tie and stockpiling empty soda cups in your backseat, and you'll probably drive more safely.

## STEP 2

Embrace the boneless, skinless chicken breast. You're more likely to skip the drive-thru if you have a cooked chicken breast waiting at home. They're high in protein, low in fat, and cheap. *MH* "Muscle Chow" author Gregg Avedon cooks several each Sunday to eat throughout the week, and you should, too. Rub 2 pounds of chicken breasts with salt, pepper, and olive oil, and lay them on a broiler pan. Cook under the broiler or in a 500°F oven for 5 minutes, then flip them

over and cook for another 5 minutes, until they're Nerf-football firm. Let them cool, then store them in a resealable bag in your fridge.

## STEP 3

Cook a tasty, healthy meal for one in less time than you'd have to wait at the drive-thru. We're not saying you have to eat chicken every night—but look what you can do with your precooked chicken...

### COBB SALAD

Dice one chicken breast and toss it in a salad of romaine lettuce with crumbled blue cheese, low-sodium bacon bits, and a sliced hard-boiled egg. Dress with a tablespoon of balsamic vinaigrette.

### CHICKEN FAJITA

Sauté 1/3 cup each of sliced green bell pepper, red bell pepper, and onion in olive oil until tender. Slice a chicken breast into 1/4-inch strips and add the chicken to the pan, along with a pinch of cumin and cayenne pepper. Cook for 60 seconds (you can even do that ahead of time), then serve the mixture on whole-wheat tortillas topped with shredded Cheddar cheese and a dollop of low-fat sour cream.

Even full-fat sour cream is okay because it'll keep you satisfied longer.

### PESTO PASTA

Cook a cup of penne pasta according to the package directions. Bonus points if you decide to use whole-wheat pasta. At the same time, reheat one chicken breast in the microwave for 60 seconds, then slice it into 1/4-inch strips. Toss the chicken and pasta with 1 1/2 tablespoons of prepared basil pesto, and eat with store-bought salad-in-a-bag.

### BARBECUE-CHICKEN PIZZA

Spread 1 tablespoon of barbecue sauce on a large pita and layer with diced chicken, sliced red onion, a dash of dried oregano, and shredded mozzarella cheese. Bake in a 400°F oven until the cheese melts, 8 to 10 minutes.

# Conquer Your Cravings

Healthy eating isn't about deprivation—it's about simple planning and smart decisions. Here's your four-step game plan.

## 1 OUTSMART YOUR CRAVINGS.

"People tend to eat around their cravings, snacking and nibbling until they've taken in 500 calories and still aren't satisfied," says D. Milton Stokes, MPH,

RD. Don't fight the urge—find a healthier way to satisfy it. Sweet tooth? Have a cup of yogurt: It's big on protein and creamy flavor and low in calories and fat. "You curb the craving, and you get solid nutrition," says Stokes.

## 2 EAT WELL ON THE ROAD.

To avoid a Cinnabon relapse at the airport, pack mixed nuts, energy bars,

and granola bars. Make your own trail mix by combining 1/2 cup each of Bran Chex, dried cranberries, sunflower seeds, unsalted cashews, and raisins. Bag small servings and go.

## 3 SNACK SMARTER.

It's not snacking when you're elbow deep in a Doritos bag—that, friend, is gorging. Control the quantity. Buy prepackaged portions, like 1-ounce bags of Baked Lay's and snack-size Pacific Gold jerky. Warehouse stores like Costco and Sam's Club have huge boxes of these. Even ice cream comes in small cups. "For most guys, the carton becomes a trough," says Stokes.

## 4 CONTROL LATE-NIGHT BINGEING.

Use the "set snack" trick. People who ate the same snack 90 minutes after dinner for 1 month dropped 4 pounds in a Wayne State University study. (They ate cereal.) And beware hunger spurred by boredom or TV ads. "Take the dog for a walk; do anything to buy some time for your brain to tell you you're not really hungry," Stokes says. Or brush your teeth and gargle: "Nothing tastes good after that."





# 10 Rev Up Your Metabolism

YOU DON'T NEED TO EAT LIKE A CHILD TO RECAPTURE THE METABOLISM OF YOUR YOUTH

## CHANGE UP YOUR DIET

"You can rev up your metabolic engine without changing how much you eat," says Mark Hyman, MD, author of *Ultra-Metabolism*. Combined with an interval workout (see "Change Up Your Workout" on p. 45), these five simple tips will have your body burning calories all day long—and all night.

### UP YOUR PROTEIN INTAKE

A British study found that participants who increased the percentage of protein-based calories in their diets burned 71 more calories a day (that's 7.4 pounds a year) than those on low-protein diets. "Protein burns hotter than other food sources," says Hyman. Jumpstart your



metabolism early with two scrambled eggs or a few slices of lean turkey bacon for breakfast, then keep it up throughout the day with at least one protein-packed snack, such as almonds or cheese, and lunch and dinner built around legumes, lean meats, tuna, or salmon.

### EAT MORE OFTEN

Skipping meals lets your body's calorie-burning furnace go cold, says Hyman. Spread out mini-meals throughout the day. Try a cup of yogurt with fresh fruit or almonds at 10:30 A.M. and a hard-boiled egg or hummus with vegetables around 3 P.M.

### BURN FAT FASTER

Kick your metabolism into overdrive by performing this body-weight routine 12 hours before or after your weight workout. Move from one exercise to the next without resting between exercises, and repeat the circuit up to four times.

- ▶ Prisoner squat (20 reps)
- ▶ Pushup (15 reps)
- ▶ Bulgarian split squat (15 reps per side)
- ▶ Inverted row (as many reps as you can complete with perfect form)
- ▶ Prisoner forward lunge (10 reps per side)
- ▶ Elevated pushup (8 reps per side)

### GO GREEN

Catechins, the powerful antioxidants found in

green tea, are known to increase metabolism. In a 12-week double-blind study published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, participants who consumed 690 mg of catechins from green tea daily had significantly lower body-mass indexes and smaller waist measurements than those in the control group. Skip the Lipton and steep 1 teaspoon of loose green tea leaves (we like Dragon Pearl from Rishi; [rishi-tea.com](http://rishi-tea.com)) in hot water for 4 minutes.

### EAT BREAKFAST EVERY DAY

Begin by proving that you have time for it. This weekend, time how long it takes you to nuke a bowl of instant oatmeal and eat it. We're betting less than 5 minutes, which isn't long enough to make you late for work. Then remind yourself why it's so crucial. "Not eating breakfast may reduce your metabolic rate by 10%," says Leslie Bonci, RD, MPH, director of sports nutrition at the University of Pittsburgh medical center. This in turn increases your risk of obesity, high cholesterol, and diabetes. "Keep a breakfast bar by your bed, or pour dry oatmeal or cereal in a bowl the night before," Bonci suggests. Leave a bowl of fruit or bags of trail mix near your front door so you can grab them in a hurry.

## CHANGE UP YOUR WORKOUT

It's true—boost your metabolism and you can lower your body fat to 10%. Use this workout from Craig Ballantyne, MSc, CSCS, owner of *Turbulencetraining.com*. Choose the plan below that most applies to your current measurement.

### IF YOUR BODY FAT IS...

#### LESS THAN 17%

Every week, perform the three total-body workouts and three interval sessions (as shown on p. 46). Put in some overtime to chisel your way to 10% body fat. Do the body-weight circuit in "Burn Fat Faster." And remember to stay active on the days you don't train.

#### BETWEEN 17 AND 24%

Lose your lard with three total-body workouts a week and three rounds of intervals a week.

#### MORE THAN 24%

Start shedding pounds fast by doing intervals with long "active-rest" periods: Run at a medium pace for, say, 1 minute, and then walk—your active rest—for 2 minutes to catch your breath before running again. Reintroduce yourself to the weight room, and try to find a workout partner: someone with a similar goal (and gut).

## HOW TO DO THESE WORKOUTS

Each workout is 3 supersets. Do each exercise one after the other without rest. Rest for 60 seconds after each superset. The numbers below indicate sets and reps. If you haven't been to the gym in months, do 1 set of 12 reps of each in the first week. For the intervals (biking, running, and so on), rate your intensity on a scale of 1 to 10 (maxed out), with 3 feeling easy.

### Monday

SUPERSET 1	SETS/REPS
DUMBBELL CHEST PRESS	3/6
DUMBBELL ROW	3/6
SUPERSET 2	SETS/REPS
DUMBBELL INCLINE CHEST PRESS	3/8
WIDE-GRIP DEADLIFT	3/12
SUPERSET 3	SETS/REPS
BENCH PRESS	3/12
SWISS-BALL PLANK	3 SETS, 45 SECONDS EACH

### Tuesday

**INTERVALS:** Warm up for 5 minutes. Perform an interval at level 9 on your intensity scale for 30 seconds, followed by 90 seconds at level 3. Repeat for six intervals. Cool down.

### Wednesday

SUPERSET 1	SETS/REPS
BARBELL SQUAT	3/8
ROMANIAN DEADLIFT	3/8
SUPERSET 2	SETS/REPS
SPLIT SQUAT	3/8
BENT-OVER LATERAL RAISE	3/8
SUPERSET 3	SETS/REPS
SWISS-BALL BACK RAISE	3/15
DUMBBELL SHRUG	3/8

### Thursday

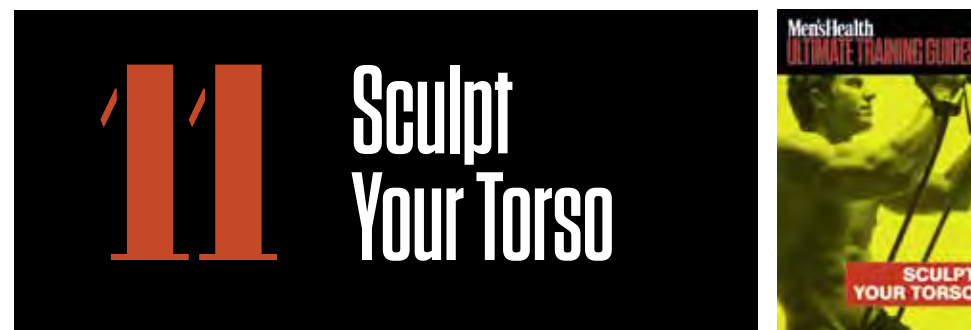
**INTERVALS:** Warm up for 5 minutes, then go for 2 minutes at level 7 on your intensity scale. Next, do 2 minutes of active rest at level 3. Repeat for a total of six intervals, aiming to cover the same distance with each interval. Cool down for 3 minutes at level 3.

### Friday

SUPERSET 1	SETS/REPS
CHINUP	3 SETS OF AS MANY REPS AS YOU CAN DO WITH PROPER FORM
FRONT SQUAT	3/8
SUPERSET 2	SETS/REPS
DUMBBELL CLOSE-GRIP BENCH PRESS	3/8
SHOULDER-WIDTH GRIP BARBELL ROW	3/12
SUPERSET 3	SETS/REPS
KNEELING CABLE CRUNCH	3/10
BARBELL ROLLOUT	3/10

### Saturday

**INTERVALS:** After a 5-minute warmup, exercise at level 8 for 45 seconds, followed by 60 seconds of active rest. Repeat 6 times, then cool down at a level-3 intensity.



BOOST TOTAL-BODY POWER BY SCULPTING A V-SHAPED TORSO

**SLIM-FIT SHIRTS** and lustful looks are reason enough to sculpt a V-shaped torso. Here's another: A strong torso will make you stronger in nearly every exercise you do, says Martin Rooney, PT, CSCS, chief operating officer of the Parisi Speed School in Fair Lawn, NJ, and founder of *trainingforwarriors.com*. Take the bench press: "If your chest can handle 250 pounds but your back maxes out at 150,

guess how much you're going to bench?" he asks. In fact, most upper-body moves enlist your back, he says. "Bottom line: If you're not training your back as hard as or harder than your other muscles, you're limiting total-body strength and creating serious imbalances that can lead to injury."

#### Directions

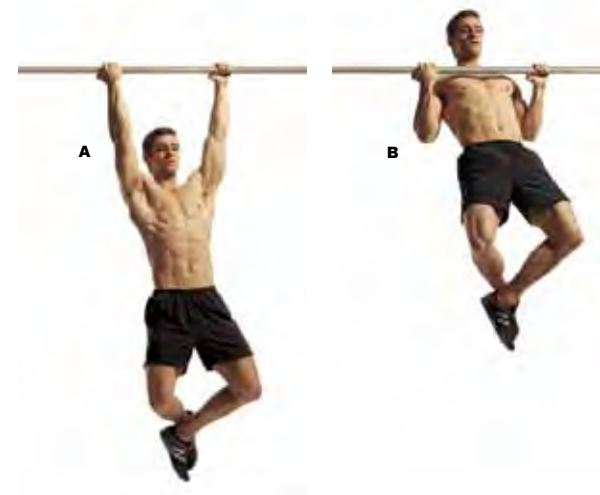
Perform each workout (A and B) once a week, separated

by at least a day. Do the prescribed number of reps and sets for each exercise, resting for 90 seconds between sets. Hit the rest of your upper and lower body in two other weekly workouts. Follow this program for 6 weeks to strengthen your back, rebalance your musculature, build total-body power, and bust through nagging fitness plateaus.

## WORKOUT A

### MIXED-GRIP CHINUP

Hang from a bar using a mixed grip (one palm facing you, the other facing away), with your hands slightly beyond shoulder width **[A]**. Pull your chest to the bar, pause, and then slowly lower yourself **[B]**. Do 4 sets of 8 reps, flipping your grip halfway through each set.





## KNEELING SINGLE-ARM SUPPORTED ROW

Hold a dumbbell in your right hand and place your left hand and left knee on a flat bench. Keep your back naturally arched and your torso parallel to the floor; this is the starting position **[A]**. Pull the weight to the side of your chest, pause, and return to the starting position **[B]**. Do 3 sets of 12 reps (6 each arm).



## DUMBBELL PULLOVER

Lie faceup on a flat bench holding a dumbbell straight above your chest; this is the starting position **[A]**. Without changing the angle of your elbows, slowly lower the weight back and over your head until your upper arms are in line with your body **[B]**. Pause, and slowly raise it back to the starting position. Do 4 sets of 8 reps.



## UPRIGHT ROW

Using an overhand grip, hold a pair of dumbbells in front of your thighs **[A]**. Keeping your forearms pointed down, bend your elbows to pull the weights to your chest and raise your upper arms until they're parallel to the floor **[B]**. Slowly lower the dumbbells to the starting position. Do 3 sets of 6 reps.



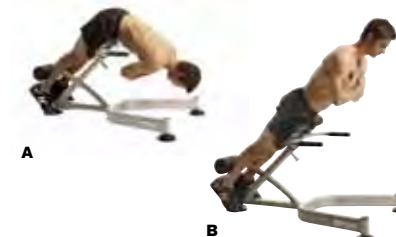
## INCLINE L RAISE

Grab a pair of light dumbbells and lie chest down on an incline bench with your arms straight and your palms back **[A]**. Now bend your elbows, squeeze your shoulder blades, and lift your upper arms as high as you can **[B]**. Without changing your elbow position, rotate your forearms up and back **[C]**. Pause, and lower the weights. Do 3 sets of 10 reps.

## WORKOUT B

### BACK EXTENSION

Position yourself in a back extension station. Keeping a slight arch in your back, lower your upper body as far as you comfortably can; this is the starting position **[A]**. Squeeze your glutes and raise your torso until your body is straight **[B]**. Pause, and slowly lower your torso to the starting position. Do 4 sets of 8 reps.

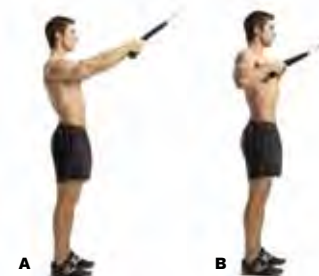


### BARBELL GOOD MORNING

Using an overhand grip, hold a barbell across your upper back to assume the starting position **[A]**. Keeping your knees slightly bent and your back naturally arched, bend at your hips until your torso is almost parallel to the floor **[B]**. Pause, and return to the starting position. Do 4 sets of 6 reps.

### CABLE CHEST PULL

Attach a rope to the high pulley of a cable station and grab each end so your palms face each other; this is the starting position. Step back until your arms are straight and you feel tension in the cable **[A]**. Bend your arms, squeeze your shoulder blades, flare your elbows, and pull the rope to your chest **[B]**. Pause, and return to the starting position. Do 3 sets of 10 reps.



### CABLE PULLOVER

Attach a bar to the high pulley of a cable station. Standing with your feet shoulder-width apart, grab each end of the bar with an overhand grip, your hands slightly beyond shoulder width **[A]**. Keeping your back and arms straight, push the bar down in an arc until it touches your thighs **[B]**. Return to the starting position. Do 3 sets of 8 reps.

### CABLE REVERSE FLY

Stand between the weight stacks of a cable machine and set both pulleys to just above chest level. Grab the left pulley's handle in your right hand and the right pulley's handle in your left hand **[A]**. Squeeze your shoulder blades and pull each cable across your body toward the opposite side **[B]**. Pause, and return to the starting position. Do 3 sets of 8 reps.



# 12 Ultimate Boot Camp Workout



REPORT FOR DUTY AND END UP IN THE BEST SHAPE OF YOUR LIFE

**IF YOU'RE LOOKING** to fire-bomb fat, pack on muscle, and sweat your way to a six-pack, we have your call to duty: this cutting-edge boot camp workout, designed by fitness expert B.J. Gaddour, CSCS, owner of *Streamfit.com*.

By moving you through a series of intense exercises at a fast pace, it'll help you burn more calories per minute than a typical weight-training or aerobic workout. Plus, it works every one of your muscles, from

head to toe. The best part: Whether you want bigger muscles or faster fat loss, Gaddour shows you how to tweak this workout to achieve your most pressing goal. Now get to work—and that's an order!

**DIRECTIONS** Perform this workout as a circuit, completing each exercise in succession.

**TO BLAST MORE FAT:** Starting with the first exercise, do as many reps as you can in 50 seconds. Then rest for 10 seconds as you transition to the next exercise. After you've done all 10 exercises, rest for 60 seconds. Then repeat the circuit one more time.

**TO BUILD MORE MUSCLE:** Do as many repetitions as you can in 30 seconds. (You'll need to use a heavier weight than you would for the fat-loss version.) Then rest for 30 seconds as you transition to the next exercise. Do all 10 exercises and rest for 60 seconds; then repeat the circuit once more.

## DUMBBELL SKIER SWING

Holding a pair of dumbbells at arm's length next to your sides, stand with your feet hip-width apart and your knees slightly bent **[A]**. Without rounding your lower back, bend at your hips as you simultaneously swing your arms backward **[B]**. Now explosively thrust your hips forward and raise your torso until you're standing upright, while allowing your momentum to swing the weights up to chest level **[C]**. (Don't actively lift the weight.) Swing back and forth for the duration of your set.



## DUMBBELL 1½ PUSHUP

Grasp the handle of a dumbbell in each hand and assume a pushup position with your arms straight. Your hands should be about shoulder-width apart, and your body

should form a straight line from head to ankles **[A]**. Bend your elbows and lower your body until your chest nearly touches the floor **[B]**. Pause, and then push

yourself halfway back up **[C]**. Pause again, then lower your body back to the floor **[D]**. Push yourself all the way back up to the starting position, and repeat.



## DUMBBELL HOT POTATO SQUAT

Grab a dumbbell with your left hand and hold it against the front of your shoulder, your elbow bent **[A]**. Keeping your back naturally arched, push your hips back,

bend your knees, and lower your hips until the top of your thighs is at least parallel to the floor **[B]**. Then stand back up as you smoothly pass the dumbbell

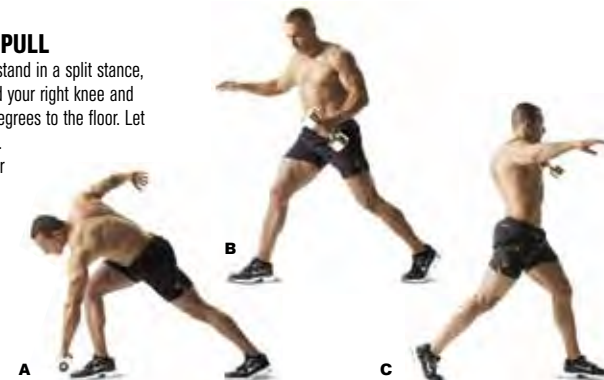
from your left hand to your right **[C]**. Now immediately repeat the squat while holding the dumbbell in your right hand **[D]**. Continue to alternate back and forth.



## DUMBBELL LAWNMOWER PULL

Hold a dumbbell in your left hand and stand in a split stance, your right foot in front of your left. Bend your right knee and your hips until your torso is about 45 degrees to the floor. Let the dumbbell hang at arm's length **[A]**.

In one move, explosively straighten your right leg and thrust your hips forward **[B]** as you rotate your torso (pivot your feet) and row the weight to your shoulder **[C]**. Reverse the move and repeat. Once you've worked for half of your allotted time, switch hands and legs.



## DUMBBELL OVERHEAD SHOULDERING

Use both hands to grasp a dumbbell by its ends and hold it against your chest. Stand tall with your feet shoulder-width apart. Shift the dumbbell to your right shoulder **[A]**; then press it directly overhead until your arms are straight **[B]** and lower it to your left shoulder **[C]**. That's 1 repetition. Continue to move the weight in this manner until you've worked for half of your allotted time. Then switch directions (that is, push the dumbbell up from your left shoulder) and do the rest of your reps.



## DUMBBELL ROTATIONAL DEADLIFT

Stand tall and use both hands to grasp a dumbbell by its ends, letting it hang at arm's length in front of your waist **[A]**. Now rotate your hips to the left so your left foot is forward and the weight is hanging next to your left thigh. Next, keep your back naturally arched as you bend your knees and hips and lower the weight to the front of your left shin **[B]**. Push your hips forward, raise your torso, and stand; then rotate your torso all the way to the right to repeat the move on that side.



## DUMBBELL BOTTOM-HALF GETUP

Grab a dumbbell in your right hand and lie on the floor with your right leg bent and your left leg straight. Hold the dumbbell overhead with your arm completely straight **[A]**. Without taking your eyes off the dumbbell or letting your right arm bend, roll onto your left side and prop yourself up on your left elbow. Now straighten your left arm **[B]**. Reverse the move to return to the starting position and repeat until the time is up. On your next set of this exercise, do the move with the weight in your left hand.



## DUMBBELL THREADED LUNGE

Hold a dumbbell in your left hand and stand tall with your feet hip-width apart. This is the starting position **[A]**. Keeping your torso upright, take a big step backward with your right foot and lower your body until your left knee is bent at least 90 degrees and your right knee almost touches the floor. While in this "down" position, pass the dumbbell under your left leg to your right hand **[B]**. Push yourself back to the starting position, and repeat, this time lunging backward with your left leg.



## DUMBBELL HIGH-LOW FARMER'S WALK

Grab two dumbbells—a heavy one in your right hand and a light one in your left. (The heavy dumbbell should be about twice the weight of the light one.) Press the light dumbbell over your head, with your arm straight and your biceps in line with your ear. Let the heavy dumbbell hang at arm's length next to your side **[A]**. With your core braced and glutes tight, walk forward **[B]** and then backward—and then every which way. Once you've worked for half of your allotted time, switch arms and legs.



## DUMBBELL SHOVELING

Stand in a split stance, your right foot in front of your left. Use both hands to grasp a dumbbell by its ends and hold it at arm's length in front of your right thigh **[A]**.

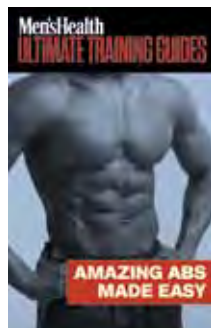
Explosively loop the dumbbell across your body, up to chest level **[B]**, and then over to your left thigh as you pivot your feet and rotate your hips to the left **[C]**. Then

reverse the move back to the starting position. Continue to move the dumbbell back and forth, as if you're constantly "shoveling" from one side of your body to the other.





# 13 Amazing Abs Made Easy



ARE YOU READY TO BRING A SIX-PACK TO THE PARTY?

**IF THE PATH** to a flatter stomach were paved with crunches, every man with a gym membership would sport a six-pack. “But crunches only flex your trunk,” says Todd Durkin, CSCS, author of *The IMPACT! Body Plan*. “To sculpt a stronger, more chiseled core, you need to train it the way it functions.” Or, more specifically, all the ways it functions.

The more than two dozen muscles between your hips and shoulders are what allow you to bend

and rotate your torso. They also stabilize your spine as you mow the lawn, carry groceries, do pushups, spike volleyballs, and otherwise go about the motions of daily life. That’s why trying to build a solid center with only crunches, which target your rectus abdominis (the six-pack muscle), is like trying to build powerful legs by focusing only on your quads. The result is all show and no go.

Update your ab routine with the following six

moves. “They’ll challenge your core from every angle, making you stronger in everything you do,” says Durkin.

**DIRECTIONS** Add the following exercises to your regular workouts once or twice a week. Perform these exercises as a circuit, resting 20 seconds between exercises and 1 minute after completing a circuit. Begin with 2 circuits, then increase to 3 circuits as they become easier.

## HIP-UP

Lie on your left side, right arm extended so it’s perpendicular to the floor. Prop yourself up on your left forearm and raise your hips so your body is straight from ankles to head **[A]**. Lower your left hip **[B]**, and then raise it again until it’s in line with your body. That’s 1 rep. Continue lowering and raising your hip for **20 reps**, and then hold the up position for 10 seconds. Repeat on your right side.

### WHY IT WORKS

The best ab exercises train your core to stabilize your spine, Durkin says. The hip-up does exactly that while also sculpting your obliques and increasing your rotational control and stability.

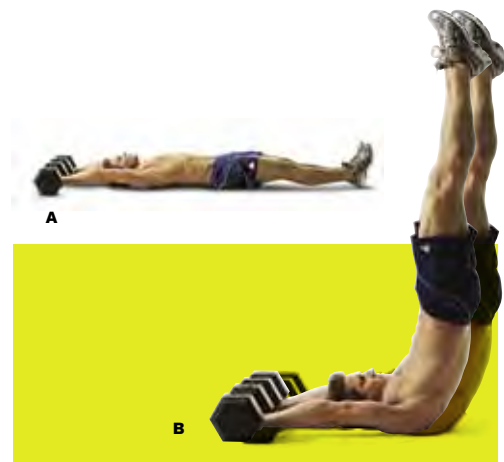


## ROCKY ABS

Lie on your back with your legs straight, arms extended behind your head, and hands grasping something that won’t move, such as a pair of heavy dumbbells **[A]**. Raise your legs, butt, and lower back until they’re perpendicular to the floor **[B]**. Your weight should rest on your upper back. Keeping your body as straight as possible, brace your core and take 5 to 10 seconds to lower your body. That’s 1 rep. Do **5 to 10 reps**.

### WHY IT WORKS

“Your muscles can handle more weight on the eccentric, or lowering, phase of a lift,” says Durkin. Slowing the pace of that phase forces your muscles to work harder, accelerating your gains.

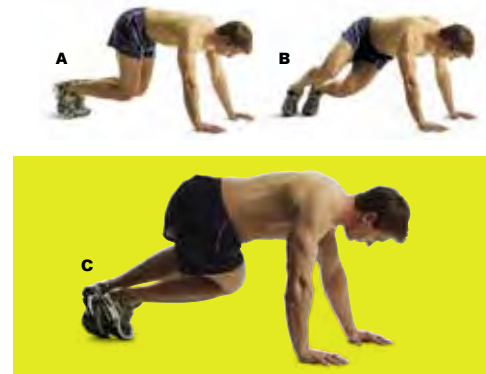


## MOGUL JUMP

Get on all fours and lift your knees a few inches off the floor so your weight is on your hands and the balls of your feet **[A]**. Keeping your arms straight and legs together, hop and rotate your knees and feet to the right **[B]**. Now hop and rotate your knees and feet to the left **[C]**. That’s 1 rep. Keep hopping back and forth for **20 reps**.

### WHY IT WORKS

The inspiration for this exercise might come from skiing, but it’s also an effective way to prepare for many summer sports, including tennis, softball, and golf. The reason: “It trains your abs, lower back, and hips to work together to rotate your body from side to side,” says Durkin.

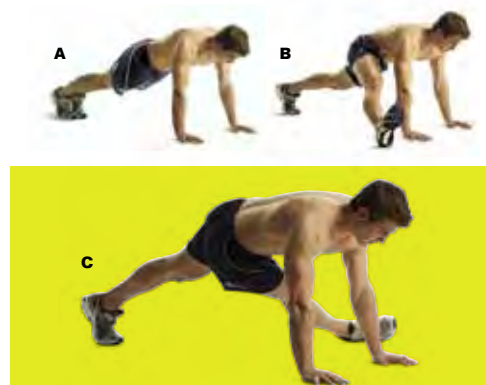


## 3-POINT CORE TOUCH

Assume a pushup position **[A]**. Now quickly move your right leg forward so your right heel lands outside your right hand **[B]**. Pause and return to the pushup position. Now quickly move your right leg forward so your right foot lands outside your left hand **[C]**, and then return to the pushup position. That’s 1 rep. Do **5 to 10 reps**, and repeat with your left leg.

### WHY IT WORKS

“This one move will target muscles in your hips, groin, lower back, and often-neglected lower abs,” says Durkin. The result is not only more core strength but also greater total-body stability.





## RUNNING MAN

Lie on your back with your legs straight, elbows at your sides, and arms bent 90 degrees. This is the starting position **[A]**. Lift your shoulders and back off the floor as you pull your left knee toward your chest and drive your right arm forward (as if you're running) **[B]**. Return to the starting position. Repeat with your right knee and left arm. That's 1 rep. Do **20 reps**.

### WHY IT WORKS

Sure, this exercise works your rectus abdominis just as crunches do. "But pumping your arms and legs also builds explosiveness and coordination, which is fundamental to athleticism," says Durkin.

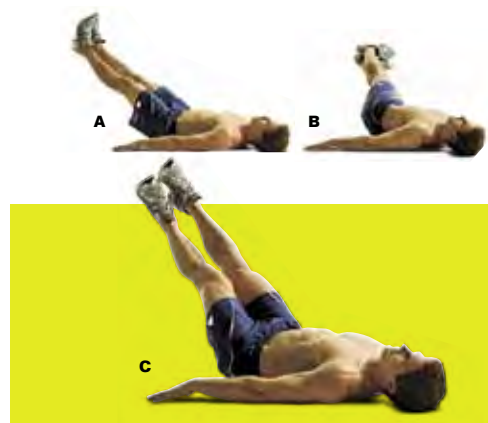


## FIGURE 8

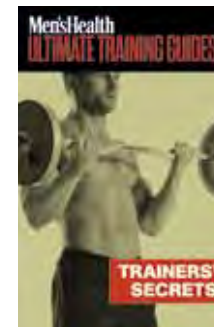
Lie on your back with your arms at your sides, palms down. Raise your legs so they form a 45-degree angle with the floor **[A]**. Now make big, looping circles with your legs, first to your right **[B]** and then to your left **[C]**, forming a sideways figure 8. That's 1 rep. Do **10 reps**.

### WHY IT WORKS

Doing smaller loops challenges just your rectus abdominis, while larger ones hit your entire core. "Work on it until you can create big, sweeping loops," says Durkin. "The bigger the figure 8, the more you activate your obliques and the muscles in your hips and lower back."



# 14 Trainers' Secrets



HIRING A TRAINER CAN MEAN THE FAST TRACK TO A BETTER BODY—OR AN EXPRESS TICKET TO INJURY. KNOW WHEN TO LISTEN AND WHEN TO RUN.

### THERE ARE ROUGHLY

230,000 personal trainers in the United States, a number that has jumped 44% in the last decade. Indeed, personal training is one of the few professions to not only blossom during a recession but also grow afterward as people turn to it for a second job and even a second career. And it's easier than ever to get certified: You can go online, take a course, and start training clients within a month.

"It's a buyer-beware market," says Mike Boyle, ATC, owner of Mike Boyle Strength and Conditioning in Massachusetts. "Getting hurt might be rare, but you can easily waste your time with someone who is ineffective at best and dangerous at worst."

In short, knowing how to recognize bad advice is more critical than ever. Read on for six of the worst fitness tips we've ever heard and six ways to get back on track.

### BAD ADVICE

#### "GO BIG OR GO HOME."

"There's this idea that you have to train to failure to trigger growth," says Boyle. "But 'go big or go home' is a slogan for a meathead's T-shirt and a prescription for injury, not an effective training strategy. The truth is precisely the opposite—'slow and steady wins the race.'" The key to success in the weight room is to make consistent, incremental gains that ultimately add up to the body you want.

### BETTER MOVE

Train to technical failure. "You want to do as many reps as you can with perfect form," says Boyle. "Once you can't do a perfect rep, the set is over—no negative reps, no spotter assistance, no using momentum to crank out one more." When you can complete your goal reps for every set—3 sets of 10, for example—you're

ready to move up in weight. "Throw another 5 pounds on the bar or grab the next heaviest pair of dumbbells," says Boyle. "It might not sound like much, but think about it this way: Even if you only go up 5 pounds every 2 weeks, you'll still add 130 pounds to your lift after a year."

### BAD ADVICE

#### "PUSH THROUGH THE PAIN."

A little bit of soreness isn't a bad thing. It just means you've pushed your body harder than usual, causing microtears in muscles that ultimately lead to gains in size and strength. "But there's a big difference between soreness and pain, and ignoring pain is a ticket to the disabled list," says Boyle. "I regularly ask my clients, 'Does the exercise make any of your joints hurt?' I don't care if the pain diminishes after they warm up—if they answer yes, that's the end of the exercise."

### BETTER MOVE

Find a pain-free alternative that works the same muscles. “Just because the barbell bench press causes you shoulder pain doesn’t mean you have to stop working your chest,” says Boyle. “Try using dumbbells, do incline presses, or switch to pushups.” Changing your grip, angle, or movement pattern alters the load and positioning of your joints, allowing you to build muscle without breaking your body.

### BAD ADVICE

#### “PROTECT YOUR SPINE WITH CRUNCHES AND SITUPS.”

There’s no denying that crunches and situps can help you sculpt a six-pack, but they come with an inherent flaw: repeated spinal flexion, which can increase your risk of developing a back problem and aggravate existing damage. Bottom line: By recommending crunches and situps, some trainers facilitate the very injuries they’re trying to prevent, says Tony Gentilcore, CSCS, a trainer at Cressey Performance in Massachusetts.

### BETTER MOVE

Do stability exercises. “Stability, or resisting unwanted motion, is the true function of your core, and exercises that reinforce that function protect your spine,” says Gentilcore. Try the Swiss-ball rollout:

Sit on your knees in front of a Swiss ball and place your forearms and fists on the ball. Slowly roll the ball forward, straightening your arms and extending your body as far as you can without allowing your lower back to “collapse.” Use your abdominal muscles to pull the ball back to the starting position.

### BAD ADVICE

#### “DON’T REST BETWEEN SETS.”

This misguided mantra is the call to arms of many extreme-fitness programs, and it can be disastrous in practice. The reason: Lifting heavy weights recruits fast-twitch muscle fibers, which generate more force but also fatigue faster. If muscles don’t have enough time to recover between sets, you won’t be able to train them fully, slowing your gains and increasing your risk of injury. “Making somebody tired is easy,” says Sal Marinello, CSCS, president of Athletic Development Coaching in New Jersey. “But there’s a difference between tiring someone out and actually improving their physical condition.”

### BETTER MOVE

“Understand that a 45-second break is a 45-second break,” says Jonathan Goodman, CSCS, founder of the Personal Trainer Develop-



ment Center, an online resource for personal trainers. As a general rule, the lower your reps and the heavier the weight, the longer you should rest a muscle group before working it again. If you’re doing sets of 1 to 3 reps, rest 3 to 5 minutes. For sets of 4 to 7 reps, rest 2 to 3 minutes. For 8 to 12 reps, rest 1 to 2 minutes. Rest no more than a minute for any number of reps above 12. That doesn’t mean you can’t work opposing muscle groups, like quads and hamstrings, back-to-back. (Think supersets and circuits.)

### BAD ADVICE

#### “LET’S SEE HOW MANY DEADLIFTS YOU CAN DO IN 60 SECONDS.”

“We’re starting to see a lot of people getting thrown into an extreme group workout with little instruction and then doing high reps of very technical

lifts as fast as they can,” says Chris Bathke, CSCS, owner of Elemental Fitness Lab in Oregon. “Even athletes don’t do that.” When speed is your main focus, you lose sight of form, and that can lead to injury—especially if you’re doing heavy Olympic lifts or powerlifting moves like cleans, snatches, and deadlifts. “I’ve asked people to show me an exercise that in a previous workout they repeated for time,” says Tyler Smith, PT, CSCS, a physical therapist at Sports and Physical Therapy Associates in Massachusetts and a member of the elite athletic development society known as GAIN. “They’ll demonstrate a horrible squat, and they did 30 of them.”

### BETTER MOVE

Focus on form, not speed, and start with body-weight versions of exercises until you master them. In big lifts like those we just mentioned, it’s critical that you brace your core and maintain a slightly arched or flat back. If you don’t, your spine can pay the price. And keep your body English to a minimum; jerky movements that boost momentum can do more harm than good.

### BAD ADVICE

#### “ADD PLYOMETRICS TO YOUR ROUTINE.”

High-impact plyometric exercises, such as box jumps (leaping on and

off a box or bench) and depth jumps (stepping off a bench and then springing off the floor and landing on a platform) are favorites of many trainers trying to help clients build explosive speed and a killer jump shot. But these drills can also hammer your joints—especially if you’re heavier than you should be. “I once had a client who was 40 to 50 pounds overweight come in complaining of knee pain,” says Mike Robertson, MS, CSCS, co-owner of Indianapolis Fitness and Sports Training. “The reason was that the previous trainer had this person

doing jumps—something most fit people shouldn’t even do.”

### BETTER MOVE

If you’re already fit, jump onto a 12- to 20-inch box with both feet, and then step off one foot at a time. That gives you the explosive benefits of the exercise without destroying your knees. Better still—especially if you’re carrying extra weight—swap jumps for less jarring exercises that use similar movement patterns. “The kettlebell swing is a perfect substitute,” says Robertson. “It trains the same hip-hinge pattern without the high-impact consequences.”

## HOW TO FIND THE RIGHT TRAINER

Don’t leave your health and well-being to chance.

Find the fittest trainer for the job by asking these three questions.

### 1 What’s the first thing you do with a new client?

After taking your medical history, the trainer should assess your balance, mobility, and ability to perform body-weight moves with perfect form, says Tyler Smith, PT, CSCS, a physical therapist at Sports and Physical Therapy Associates in Massachusetts.

### 2 Do you take continuing education courses?

This is even more important than specific certification, says Chris Bathke, CSCS, owner of Elemental Fitness Lab in Oregon. By learning new skills and keeping up with developments in the field, the trainer will be able to continually hone your workouts.

### 3 Can you provide references?

Ask for the names of three clients and ask them if they were ever injured during training and how they’d rate their progress. You may also want to determine whether the trainer works with people who are similar to you in age, goals, and fitness level.

# 15 Bump Up Your Arms



HERE ARE SIX NEW WAYS TO BUILD FLEX APPEAL

**YOUR BODY HAS** approximately 640 muscles, depending on who's counting. But just as your grade-school teacher gave special attention to the class "pets," you have an oversized affection for your biceps. They're relatively small as muscles go, and if your arm workouts don't rely much on biceps curls, they probably aren't growing much bigger. To help them reach their full potential, you need to

work them directly from time to time.

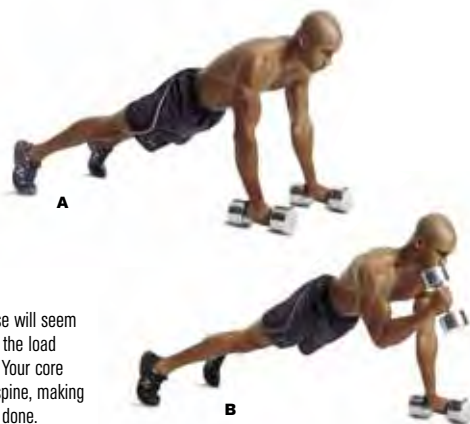
But there's no reason to settle for garden-variety curls, not when your body has dozens of muscles willing to jump in and share the love. Here are six ways to upgrade one of the best arm exercises on the planet. They'll work your favorite bundles of contractile tissue while burning fat, training your core, improving your athletic power, and mak-

ing you look like someone who probably was the teacher's favorite, even if you would never admit that to your classmates.

**DIRECTIONS** Add one of these curl variations to the end of your regular workout. Switch them up to make sure you are hitting different muscles in addition to the biceps—and to keep it interesting.

## PUSHUP-POSITION HAMMER CURL

Grab a pair of dumbbells and assume a pushup position with your palms facing each other **[A]**. Without moving your upper arm, curl the weight in your right hand toward your right shoulder **[B]**. Lower it, and repeat with your left arm. Continue alternating right and left curls for 30 to 60 seconds. Add weight in subsequent workouts, but don't try to speed up the movement.



### HOW IT WORKS

If you've done rows from a pushup position, this exercise will seem familiar. But by doing a curl instead of a row, you move the load farther from your center of gravity and base of support. Your core muscles, in turn, need to work harder to stabilize your spine, making this one of the best ab exercises you've probably never done.

## KNEELING SINGLE-ARM CURL

Select a dumbbell you can curl for no more than 5 reps or 15 seconds. Hold it in your nondominant hand, palm in, and kneel **[A]**. Keeping your elbow against your ribs, curl the weight, twisting your palm so it faces your shoulder at the top of the move **[B]**. Do 3 reps a side as many times as you can in 5 minutes. Once you can go back and forth 10 times (30 total reps on each side), increase the weight.



### HOW IT WORKS

Your biceps have two functions: to bend your elbows and supinate your forearms. Doing both with heavy weights and low reps leads to fast results. When you do these curls from a kneeling position, with the weight on one side, your obliques work overtime to keep you upright, giving you another way to target your core and biceps simultaneously.

## SPLIT-JACK CURL

Hold a pair of dumbbells at your sides, palms in, feet hip-width apart **[A]**. Jump into a split stance—left leg forward—while curling the weights to your shoulders **[B]**. Return to the starting position and repeat, landing with your right leg forward. Continue for 20 seconds or 10 reps. To make it harder, drop into a lunge as you land. For a fast, 4-minute cardio workout, rest 10 seconds after each set and do 8 sets.



### HOW IT WORKS

With lighter weights, it's a good cardio drill that works your biceps. With heavier weights, it's a killer power-training exercise. The deeper you sink into a lunge and the faster you jump out of it, the more you target your fast-twitch muscle fibers. They're the biggest and strongest, and they have the greatest potential for growth.



## RESISTANCE BAND JUMPING-JACK HAMMER CURL

Stand with your feet together and centered on a looped resistance band, holding the top of the band with your palms facing each other **[A]**. Curl the band toward your shoulders and jump out with both feet **[B]**. Reverse the move to return to the starting position. Repeat for 20 seconds or 10 total reps. Do 8 sets, resting for 10 seconds between them. You can mix it up by alternating sets of curls and overhead presses (4 sets of each).



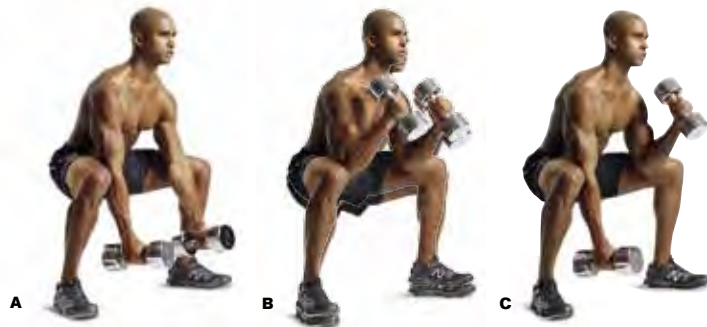
### HOW IT WORKS

Jumping out against the band targets the hip muscles that provide stability during lunges and squats but that are rarely worked directly. Strengthening these muscles can improve the appearance of your lower body while also protecting your knees. Oh, and your biceps will get some work as well.

## SQUAT CONCENTRATION CURL

Hold a pair of light dumbbells (10 to 15 pounds) and stand with your feet about shoulder-width apart and your toes pointed out slightly. Push your hips back and squat until your thighs are parallel to the floor **[A]**. Keeping your weight on your heels, your elbows

pressed against your inner thighs, and your palms facing each other, curl and lower the weights for 30 to 60 seconds **[B]**. Do it one arm at a time to add an element of instability and increase the challenge to your core **[C]**.



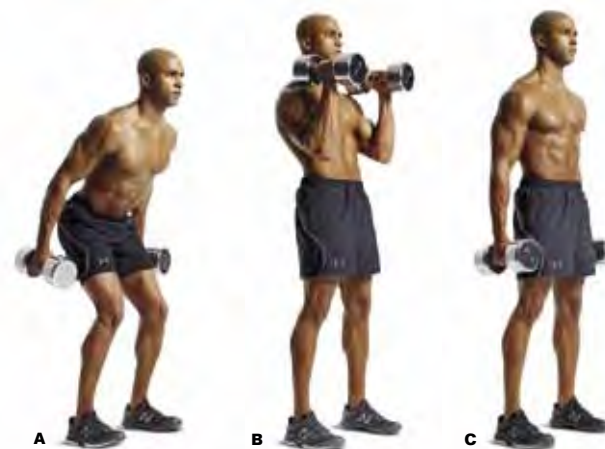
### HOW IT WORKS

Sitting at a desk most of the day closes your hips, which can strain muscles in your thighs and lower back. This move forces your thighs out and opens up your hips. Pressing your upper arms against your thighs keeps the movement at your elbows, preventing other muscles from assisting.

## ECCENTRIC CURL

Select a pair of dumbbells that are 5 to 10 pounds heavier than what you'd typically use for 5-rep sets. Hold them at your sides and assume an athletic stance, your feet hip-width apart and your ankles, knees, and hips slightly bent **[A]**. "Cheat" the dumbbells to the top

position with a dumbbell clean: Explosively stand up straight while bending your elbows to draw the weights to your shoulders **[B]**. Take 5 seconds to lower the weights **[C]**. Do 3 sets of 5 reps, resting 90 seconds between sets.



### HOW IT WORKS

Your muscles can lower more weight than they can lift. That's why eccentric (or negative) reps, which lengthen muscles, can spark new growth. Plus, the dumbbell clean improves total-body power. Of all the exercises in this section, this one may be the best all-around biceps builder.



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