

## 4 weeks to knockout legs

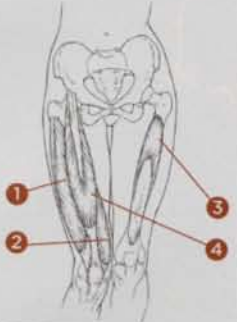
Say bye-bye to boring squats and hello to slim thighs with these three moves. BY JEANINE DETZ

### THIS MONTH'S GOAL

Up the ante at the gym to get a sexier lower body.

### Why these moves work

While squats, lunges, and leg presses are effective toners, eventually your muscles can do them on autopilot, which will halt your progress. The exercises here target one leg at a time and force your quads to adapt to different positions. Going "solo" makes your quads work harder because the opposite side can't pitch in. After a few weeks of doing this wake-up-your-muscles workout, you'll find yourself eyeing shorter skirts—while everyone else is switching to pants.



### PRIMARY MUSCLES TARGETED

#### quadriceps

1. vastus lateralis
2. vastus medialis
3. vastus intermedius
4. rectus femoris

### Anatomy lesson

Your quadriceps (or quads) include four muscles on the front of each thigh, all of which help extend your knee. The three vasti muscles—the **vastus lateralis**, **medialis**, and **intermedius**—connect at the top of your thighbone and your knee. The **rectus femoris** attaches at your pelvis and knee and also flexes your hip.

### Details

You'll need two 8- to 10-pound dumbbells, a 10-inch step, a 6- to 10-pound dual-grip medicine ball (or any weighted ball), a 2-foot-high plyo box (a steel platform), and a leg-press machine. Twice a

week, warm up with 5 minutes of cardio, then do 2 sets of 12 to 15 reps of each exercise; rest up to a minute between sets.



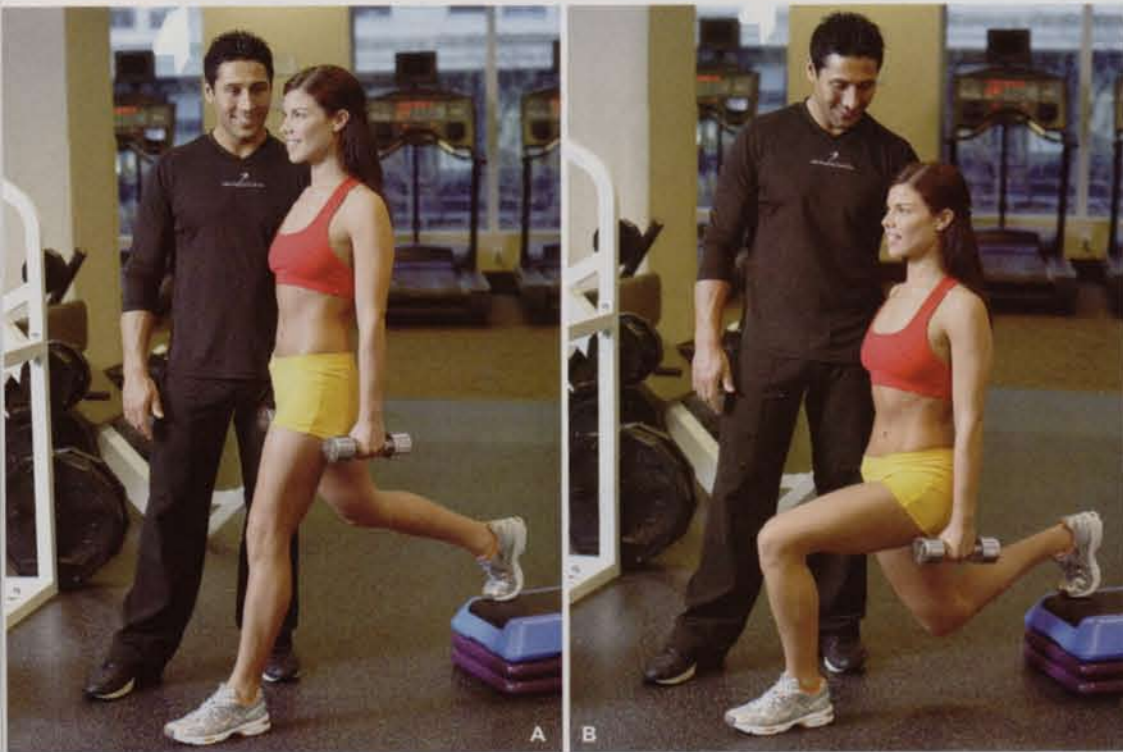
A step is the perfect tool for toning your legs

**Shape reader model** Lorin, 22, is a student at the University of San Francisco. "I do a strength workout twice a week and always include a few exercises that challenge my balance," she says. For cardio, Lorin gets her heart rate up by walking her two dogs (a Yorkshire terrier and a German shepherd) several times a day.



**TRAINER'S STRATEGY** "Working one leg at a time prevents your stronger side from compensating for your weaker one and forces all the supporting muscles of your lower body to engage," says David Alexander, a trainer at the Sports Club/LA in San Francisco, who designed this routine. ▶The bottom line Mix some one-legged moves into your lower-body workout and while you're lifting your way to sleeker legs, you'll also lower your risk of hip, knee, and ankle injuries.

## target training



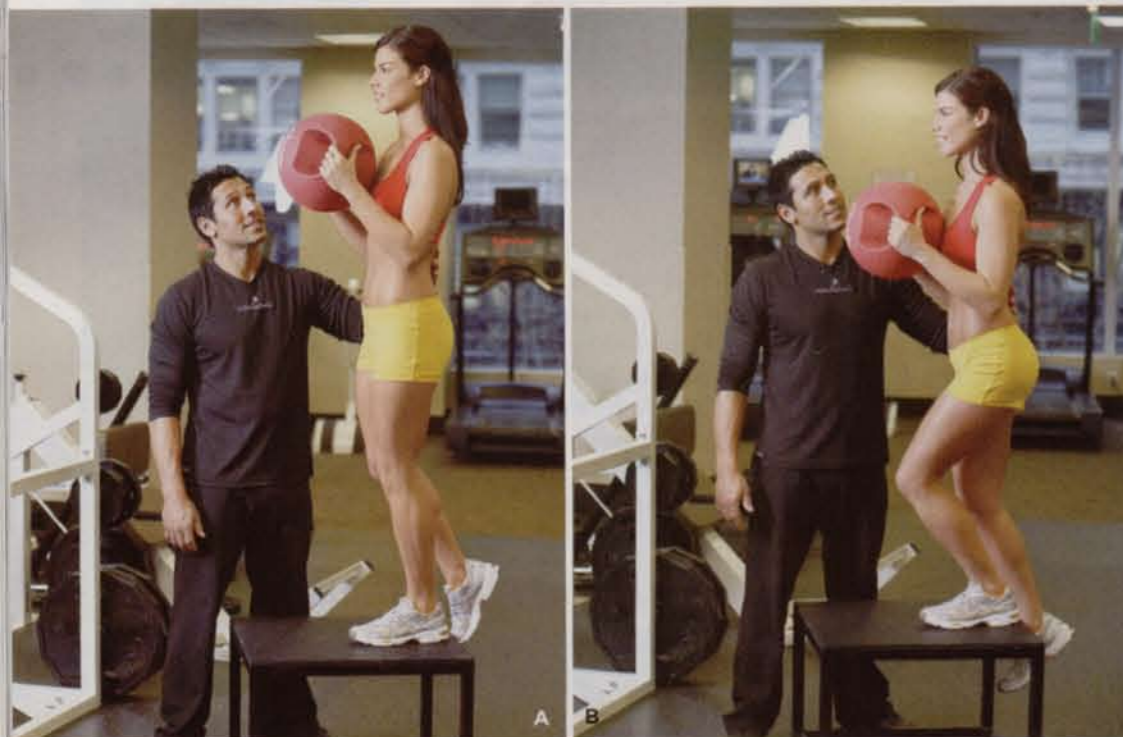
➤ **Trainer's tip** Keep hips squared forward throughout the move; this will help balance the weight between your legs.

### elevated split squat

Works quads, butt, and hamstrings

➤ **Hold a dumbbell** in each hand at sides, palms facing body. Stand a stride length (or about 2 feet) in front of a 10-inch step, feet hip-width apart. Extend right leg behind you, knee slightly bent, and place toes on top of step [A].

➤ **Bend left knee** until left thigh is parallel to the floor [B]. Rise up to starting position and repeat. Switch sides to complete set.



➤ **Trainer's tip** To avoid leaning too far forward, imagine a string pulling the top of your head toward the ceiling.

### box squat

Works quads, butt, and hamstrings

➤ **Hold a medicine ball** with hands in front of chest, elbows bent and tucked at sides, and stand on a 2-foot-high plyo box with feet together. Bend right knee slightly, dangling toes off the back edge of the box [A].

➤ **Bend left knee** and, keeping torso straight and abs tight, lower right foot toward the floor behind you [B]. Straighten left leg to return to starting position and repeat. Switch sides to complete set.

## target training



### single-leg press

Works quads, butt, and hamstrings

➤ **Load 30 to 40 pounds** onto the leg-press machine, and if the back pad is adjustable, place it at a 90-degree angle to the weight rails. Sit with your back against the pad, left foot flat on the floor. Place right foot on the plate, knee bent 90 degrees.

➤ **Release the machine's lock**, then hold the handles lightly and pull your abs in tight [A].

➤ **Straighten right leg**, but don't lock knee [B]. Slowly return to starting position and repeat. Switch sides to complete set.

➤ **Trainer's tip** Press through the heel of your moving leg to keep the workload on your quads.

### HOW TO DO THESE AT HOME

You'll need two dumbbells, stairs, and a resistance band (find gear at [target.com](http://target.com)).

➤ **Elevated split squat** Stand with your back leg on the lowest step of a staircase.

➤ **Box squat** Hold one dumbbell with hands in front of chest and stand on a step.

➤ **Single-leg press** Lie faceup on the floor with knees bent and left foot on the floor. Loop the center of the band around the arch of your right foot, hold ends in hands at waist, and raise your right leg so shin is parallel to the floor.

### take it up a notch

Advanced exercisers should add reps, weight, and/or follow these special instructions.

advanced program

what to do	elevated split squat	box squat	single-leg press
<b>sets</b>	3	3	3
<b>reps</b>	12–15	12–15	12–15
<b>weight range</b>	10–15 pounds	10–12 pounds	40–50 pounds
<b>special instructions</b>	Use a Bosu instead of a step.	Stand on a higher box.	Follow the original instructions.



live longer,  
live stronger

Being active every day  
is a good start to disease-  
proofing your body

# get slim, sculpted & healthy in one workout

You don't have to run marathons or spend hours in the gym to have a strong body. Follow this plan and reap the benefits now and for years to come.

BY MARTICA HEANER PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRIS FANNING

**SURE, FLAT ABS, SEXY LEGS, AND TONED ARMS ARE** perfectly good reasons to commit to a regular exercise program, but there's a more important benefit: It helps you live a healthier, longer life. "Overwhelming evidence shows that working out can reduce your risk of cancer—especially of the breast and colon—heart attack, stroke, dementia, depression, and more," says Tim Church, M.D., Ph.D., co-author of *Move Yourself: The Cooper Clinic Medical Director's Guide to All the Healing Benefits of Exercise*

*(Even a Little!)*. What's more, research shows that getting as little as 20 minutes of exercise three times a week can decrease your risk of dying prematurely by 27 percent. Follow all the exercise recommendations here and you can reduce your risk by up to 50 percent! We know it's easy to get confused when figuring out exactly how much activity is enough, so we made it super-clear by creating some step-by-step cardio and strength plans. Make these your go-to routines and you'll get your healthiest body ever!

# tone muscles—and your heart

## THE MOVES

### HOW IT WORKS

Warm up with cardio, then do the moves in order 2 or 3 times a week.

### YOU'LL NEED

An 8- to 20-pound Body Bar, a set of 5- to 8-pound dumbbells, a stability ball, and a resistance tube.

WHILE CARDIO GETS THE GLORY for protecting your heart, resistance training is no slouch. Studies have shown that it helps lower blood pressure, improve your cholesterol, and increase your bone density. "Lifting weights also boosts your insulin sensitivity, which can reduce your risk of type 2 diabetes," says Matthew Feigenbaum, Ph.D., a professor of health and exercise science at Furman University. And being stronger helps you get through daily life more easily. You can run up stairs, carry bags of groceries (or children), and do

routine household chores with little effort and less risk of injury.

✓ **HOW MUCH YOU NEED TO DO** The American College of Sports Medicine and the American Heart Association recommend targeting your major muscle groups at least twice a week with a minimum of 1 set of 8 to 12 repetitions per exercise. Disa Hatfield, Ph.D., a kinesiologist at the University of Rhode Island, Kingston, designed this plan to sculpt your entire body. If you have time, do 2 or 3 sets per move; rest for up to 60 seconds between exercises.



## 1 squat power clean

WORKS LEGS, BUTT, BACK, AND SHOULDERS

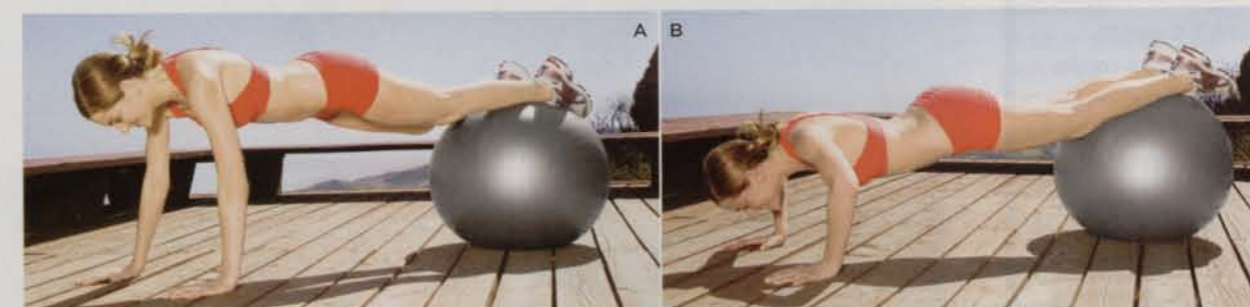
◆ Stand with feet shoulder-width apart and hold a Body Bar in front of thighs, hands shoulder-width apart and palms facing back. Squat half-way, maintaining the natural curve of your spine. Squat lower (keeping your weight in your heels) as you hoist the bar up so it rests on your shoulders, elbows pointing forward and palms facing up [A]. Squeeze glutes to stand up quickly, then press bar overhead [B] to complete 1 rep. Hold for 1 count, then return to starting position and repeat. Do 8 to 12 reps.



## 2 chest press

WORKS CHEST, CORE, AND SHOULDERS

◆ Holding a dumbbell in each hand, lie with your shoulders centered on a stability ball so head is supported. Place feet shoulder-width apart and extend arms over chest, palms facing each other [A]. Simultaneously bend your right elbow to lower the weight next to your right shoulder as you lower left arm out to the side to shoulder level, elbow slightly bent and palm facing up [B]. Hold for 1 count, then bring both arms over chest again and repeat, switching arm positions, to complete 1 rep. Do 6 reps.



## 3 moving push-up

WORKS CORE AND ARMS

◆ Lie facedown on a stability ball and walk hands out [A] until shins are resting on top of ball and hands are

shoulder-width apart. Keep hips lifted so body is aligned from head to heels. Bend elbows and lower chest toward ground [B]. Push up and walk hands back until thighs are on ball; walk forward again and repeat. Do 8 to 12 reps.

STYLING: AMBER SELLERS; HAIR AND MAKEUP: MEGHAN MCCLAIN/ARTHEX BEAUTY; TONIC TOP AND SHORTS: ASICS; SHOES: ASICS



#### 4 dynamic lunge

**WORKS LEGS, BUTT, AND CORE**  
 ♦ Stand with feet hip-width apart and hold a Body Bar lightly across your upper back and shoulders with hands slightly wider than shoulders, palms facing forward.

Keeping torso upright, lunge forward with right leg, knee aligned over ankle [A]. Push off your right foot and lunge back with right leg [B] to complete 1 rep. Hold for 1 count, then repeat. Do 8 to 12 reps; switch legs for next set.

#### STRAPPED FOR TIME?

Turn this weight routine into a cardio-sculpting combo by adding 2-minute cardio bursts (moderate to high intensity, you choose) between each exercise. Then finish with 10 to 15 minutes of moderate cardio. Voilà! You've done two workouts in one.



#### 6 triceps dip on ball

**WORKS TRICEPS AND CORE**

♦ Sit on a stability ball with knees bent, feet flat, and hands resting on ball next to hips. Straighten elbows to lift hips, shift forward slightly, and move feet farther away from ball [A] (the straighter your legs, the harder the move). Bend elbows and lower hips toward ground [B]. Press up and repeat. Do 8 to 12 reps.

#### 5 side plank

**WORKS CORE AND BUTT**

♦ Lie on right side with legs straight and feet stacked and hold a dumbbell in left hand on top of left thigh. Place right elbow directly under right shoulder and prop yourself up on your right forearm. Lift hips and pull abs in tight so body is aligned from head to heels [A]. Keep core muscles tight and avoid sinking into your right shoulder as you lift left leg to hip height [B]. Lower leg (keep hips up) and repeat. Do 8 to 12 reps, then switch sides to complete set.





## 7 banded dead lift

WORKS BUTT, BACK,  
HAMSTRINGS, AND BICEPS

◆ Hold a handle of a resistance tube in each hand at sides, palms facing in, and stand on the center of the tube with feet hip-width apart. Lean forward from hips about 45 to 90 degrees, maintaining natural curve of spine. (If tube is loose, choke up on it until it's taut.) Bend elbows and draw hands to your sides [A]. Keeping arms still, squeeze glutes to return to standing position [B]. Lower arms; repeat. Do 8 to 12 reps.



## 8 hopscotch

WORKS LEGS AND BUTT

◆ Stand with feet hip-width apart and lower into a half-squat. Keeping arms at sides or out slightly to aid your balance, lift left foot off ground. When you feel stable, jump forward and slightly to the left on your right foot [A], then forward and to the right, still on right foot. Do 8 to 12 zigzag hops, then turn around, switch legs, and hop back to starting position [B].