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GUIDE

# HIIT

## AN IMPROVER

# GUIDE

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interval training plan*

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ISSUE 32



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# Welcome



elcome to the second instalment of our high intensity interval training – **HIIT** for short – guide. You're about to embark on a fitness journey like no other!

If you've read **HIIT A Starter's Guide**, you'll already have some knowledge of the high intensity interval training method. If you haven't, here's a quick overview: **HIIT** training involves alternating between periods of maximum effort and short recovery, and it's hard!

Of course, interval training has long been popular so what's the difference between a circuit and a **HIIT** circuit? Typical interval training involves exercise efforts done at

various intensities, but not necessarily high intensities. A **HIIT** workout involves intervals done at an eye-wateringly all-out pace. It's great for improving endurance, increasing calorie burn, building muscle and even giving you a mental boost, and it needn't be complicated.

If you're looking for a beginner-friendly guide, then revisit **HIIT A Starter's Guide**. If you're ready to take your **HIIT** training to the next level, **HIIT An Improver Guide** is here to help you along the way. We'll show you how to go from **HIIT** starter to high-intensity pro in just 6 weeks and over two grades of exercise intensity – Level 3 and Level 4. Ready to reap the fast and fierce workout rewards? Then let's get going...

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## INTRODUCTION

How to use this book 6

5 ways to master HIIT 8

Got 5 minutes? 10

HIIT space 12

HIIT it 14

Your HIIT training plan 16



## THE WORKOUTS

Warm-up 18

LEVEL 3 20

The moves 22

LEVEL 4 34

The moves 36

Cool-down 60

Fuel your workout 62





# How to use this book

Are you ready for results? Then let's get started! To get the maximum from this guide, just follow the four steps below

## 1

### GET TO GRIPS WITH HIIT

*HIIT An Improver Guide* is based around a very popular form of cardiovascular exercise – high intensity interval training (HIIT). There's no doubt that this workout method is extremely effective, but it's also a little (okay, very) hard. The first part of the book reveals everything you need to know about interval training – how to do it, why you should do it and how fit you need to be to give it a go. Use this information wisely to decide whether high intensity exercise is the right workout for you.

## 2

### FOLLOW THE PLAN

This book includes a 6-week workout plan on page 16 that's been designed to take your HIIT training to the next level. The next stage from *HIIT A Starter's Guide*, the plan builds on the basic movement patterns with more advanced exercises that will push your body to the max. Decide whether this is the right level for you and get ready to begin.

## 3

### MIX AND MATCH

Got your own training plan? That's great! You don't need to follow the 6-week plan to enjoy this book. Whether you're looking for exercise inspiration or simply want to add a HIIT workout to your current regime, this book has the information you need to get going. So flick straight to the exercises on page 20 – now!

## 4

### FUEL YOUR FIT SESSIONS

If you want to build a fitter, stronger and healthier body, a smart diet is everything. Eat the right foods before your workout to get the energy to maximise your exercise efforts. And munch the best foodstuffs post-workout to give your muscles a chance to repair and re-grow. Even your rest days require the right nutrients. Swot up on exercise nutrition on page 62.



# 5 WAYS to master HIIT

**HIIT requires a smart approach. Here's how to ensure you get the results you're sweating for**



**High intensity interval training is consistently popular – and for good reason. It burns oodles of calories in**

**minutes and can even increase endurance fitness.** But could you HIIT it too hard? Actually, yes. While there are hordes of benefits to be had from high-intensity training, the downside is that it can increase the risk of injury. This form of training is hard – it floods your body with lactic acid, uses up fuel stores and puts a lot of stress on muscle and connective tissues. High impact HIIT (think intense intervals of squat jumps, sprinting or burpees) also puts a lot of strain on your joints, and daily sessions will make you far more prone to joint or muscle injury. But don't let this put you off! HIIT isn't bad for your body, it simply requires a careful approach that's targeted to your individual fitness level, health and exercise experience.

The first place to start is with your aerobic fitness. If you haven't conditioned your body to deal with moderate amounts (20-60 minutes) of aerobic exercise, you're not ready for HIIT. Endurance forms the solid foundation on which you can build shorter, harder efforts.

Without it, you'll start to burn out or perform moves with sloppy technique. Don't go overboard. To lessen your risk of injury, experts suggest that you do no more than three HIIT workouts a week and ensure there's 48 hours of recovery (rest or light activity) between each HIIT session. Even the super-fit shouldn't do HIIT training on consecutive days, as every person's body needs a chance to recover from high-intensity activity. Here's everything else you need to know to make it work for you.

**1** Plenty of people are concerned that HIIT will be too tough on their body, but studies show that those who are over 50 suffer no ill effects from doing high-intensity training. If you're fit and healthy, there's no reason not to give HIIT a go. Start slowly and gradually condition your body to it.

**2** Don't start with HIIT. You wouldn't run a marathon without first racing a half marathon, and you shouldn't try HIIT without mastering a low-intensity form of aerobic exercise. Make it move specific – for example, prepare your body for plyometric (jumping) squats by getting to grips with a

bodyweight squat first.

Alternatively, if you want to do HIIT on the bike or in the pool, ensure that you can cycle or ride for 30 consecutive minutes before giving HIIT a go.

**3** If you're fairly fit but new to HIIT exercise, learn how to perform the moves before increasing the intensity. Typical HIIT injuries occur from doing an exercise as fast as possible without first perfecting the technique. Speak to a gym instructor who can show you how to move properly.

**4** Maximise on the rest between high intensity intervals. For optimal recovery, science suggests that the best method for a new HIIT exerciser is a 1:3 workout-to-rest ratio. If you're a bit more accustomed to high intensity exercise, try the recommended 2:3 workout-to-rest method.

**5** Got bad knees? To reduce the pounding on your joints, opt for a low-impact version of HIIT. Choose moves that don't involve jumping or do HIIT during your favourite cardio workout. HIIT can be performed anywhere, even in the pool. Try doing 30-sec sprint intervals as you swim up and down the lane. You'll soon be working!





## GET RESULTS!

Consistent training is the key to great results! Make sure injury doesn't send you to the sidelines with these tips.

### 1 WARM UP

Don't go into a workout cold. Perform a thorough warm-up, such as the one in this book.

Alternatively, do gentle versions of the exercises in your chosen workout to warm your body and activate your correct muscles.

### 2 LEARN

Learn how to do the exercises properly. Make sure you can perform each one properly before increasing the intensity by adding weight or speed. If you're not sure how to do the move, consult an expert.

### 3 MONITOR

Pay attention to your form throughout the workouts. As soon as your technique starts to get sloppy, finish the set. Rushing through an exercise or pushing on regardless of poor form is how many injuries occur.

### 4 KEEP A DIARY

Create a workout diary. Write down how you feel after each workout – whether you're tired, energised, sore or strong – and how hard you worked. If you begin to notice a pattern of poor workout efforts and continuous feelings of fatigue, reduce the intensity or take a break.



**TOP TIP**

Popular fitness classes, such as Tabata, are based on science-backed, high-intensity exercise methods. Why not sign up for one and learn the ropes?

# Got 5 mins?

**Science says you can get fit in the time it takes to make a sandwich! Here's how to take the HIIT method from science lab to gym floor!**

**W**hat if we said you could squeeze all of your exercise into a few minutes and reap the same rewards? It's true – the latest science confirms this.

Apparently, gone are the days of hour-long slogs on the treadmill or three lots of 30-minute rides each week. High intensity interval training (HIIT) is about to rock your workout world with its time-efficient and fat-busting protocol. HIIT is based around short, sharp intervals performed at maximum effort, and it works because it overloads your body with an increase in exercise intensity.

This kind of interval training forms the foundation of many athletes' and seasoned competitors' training plans but a bank of science shows it benefits anyone

wishing to boost their endurance fitness or drop a few pounds. The original studies of HIIT are different from the HIIT that you'll practise in the gym, however. For starters, scientific HIIT looks at exercisers who only perform HIIT, and only HIIT, day after day. Pioneering studies, such as that led by Dr Martin Gibala at McMaster University in Canada, also involved working at a pace beyond the exerciser's theoretical maximum heart rate for 30-second intervals on specialised lab bikes.

These methods are a bit extreme for the outside world, and so HIIT has flourished into the super-tough yet humane workout that you know and love today. Here's some of the important science behind the interval training strategy.

## THE TABATA METHOD

Developed by Japanese scientist Izumi Tabata, the formula for Tabata – 20 seconds of intense exercise followed by 10 seconds of rest repeated eight times – lasts a mere four minutes and 20 seconds. Scientists from the National Institute of Fitness and Sports in Tokyo discovered that this training method increased both aerobic and anaerobic fitness. Further research years later discovered it also burnt an average of 15 calories per minute.

Wow!

## THE LITTLE METHOD

Back in 2009, scientists from McMaster University proved there were endurance benefits to be had from cycling at almost 100 per cent of maximum heart rate for 20-30 seconds and then resting for four minutes, four to six times. The research group showed stamina-related results, such as an increase mitochondria.

The group then tested 60 seconds of cycling as hard as possible and then cycling easily for 75 seconds, eight to 12 times. This is now known as The Little Method and it's super tough.

## THE 7-MINUTE WORKOUT

The HIIT method had truly taken off by May 2013, so the American College of Sports Medicine released an article that looked at HICT (high intensity circuit training), a combination of aerobic and resistance-style training.

Based on the latest science, the experts put together a bodyweight workout consisting of

12 exercises that took a mere seven minutes to complete. This is similar to the kind of high intensity interval training you'll find in this book. Phew!

# HOMIE KIT

**Amp up the intensity of your home workout with these simple bits of equipment**

## RESISTANCE BANDS

These stretchy bands are great space savers and very portable. Look out for the array of sizes, widths and resistance levels. Use the longer bands for squats and overhead moves and the shorter bands for glute work. Invest in a few different bands.

## DUMBBELLS

Once you've perfected the basic moves, dumbbells are staple kit that will up the intensity. Invest in different resistances to accommodate a variety of moves. Use light-to-moderate weights for shoulder and arm work; heavier weights for lower body moves.

## SKIPPING ROPE

One of the most portable bits of cardio kit you'll come across, the skipping rope can crank up your heart rate in a flash. Pack it in your work bag for lunchtime workouts, take it on holiday – you can even carry it to the park for outdoor training sessions.

**STEP**

Adjustable steps offer great versatility. Use them as a bench for prone moves such as bench presses and dumbbell flies. Hike them up a level to make a platform that's great for tricep dips, incline or decline push-ups, step-ups and even box jumps. Enjoy.

**GLIDERS**

Gliding discs are a great portable piece of cardio equipment. Place them under your feet or hand for sliding mountain climbers, lateral lunges or push-ups. Don't have a set of gliding discs? Paper plates will do the job nicely.

**MEDICINE BALL**

The medicine ball boasts a world of exercise opportunity. Move it in different planes of motion – back and forwards, side to side, around your body – to hit different muscles. It's perfect for twisting core exercises and explosive upper body moves.

**YOUR WORKOUT WARDROBE**

Too much bounce in your bra to focus on high-intensity training?

Here's how to ensure that your clothing doesn't ruin your workout.

**SPORTS BRA:** High-intensity training involves jumping or explosive movements that can cause your breasts to bounce, and this can cause connective breast tissue to sag. The solution is to wear a sports bra that boasts high impact support.

**SWEAT-WICKING TEES:**

Fact – you'll get sweaty during high-intensity training. And when you're working up a sweat, water-wicking clothing is a must. Look for technical fitness kit made from sweat-wicking fabrics and breathable materials.

**CUSHIONED TRAINERS:** Jumping, sprinting and skipping – your joints can take a bit of pounding during a HIIT workout. Avoid wearing minimalist shoes and opt for a cushioned pair of trainers that will absorb some of the shock.

**WATER BOTTLE:** Science shows that dehydration can reduce athletic performance by as much as two per cent – don't let that happen to you. Make the most of your training time by keeping a bottle of water handy.

**SPORTS WATCH:** Timing is everything during HIIT workouts.

Take too much rest between exercises and you won't maximise results. Stay on schedule with a sports watch. Opt for a watch that has an in-built heart rate monitor and you'll take the guesswork out of how hard you're exercising as well.

# HIT IT!

Ready to start your journey into high intensity fitness? Then let's get going...



Want to spend less time exercising? Then it's time to make a pact. Before you embark on this pound-

pummelling workout plan, you must promise to take it easy. Yes, we know that sounds counterproductive – it's called a work out after all – but learning how to do an exercise properly is key to getting the best results. Why? Because if you're unfamiliar with the movement pattern, there's a risk of a technical trade-off – the faster you perform the exercise, the sloppier your technique will become. Not only does this impede the results, but it's also how injuries happen.

Our job is to make sure you work out safely, and the trick to doing this is to slow down your pace when you first perform a move. Once you've mastered the technique, you can then increase the speed of your movement. Many trainers call this the 'learn it, like it, love it, live it' rule. Many top trainers use this technique when teaching high-intensity workouts. Here's how it works: circuit 1 – get to grips with the moves (learn it); circuit 2 – speed up the pace (like it); circuit 3 – perform the move even faster (love it); circuit 4 – give it all you've got (live it). Stick with this rule to smash your sessions.

## YOUR FITNESS PLAN

At its very core, a good workout plan should include three things – cardiovascular exercise, flexibility work and strength sessions. This programme has it all. Here are your essential workouts:

### 1 ACTIVE RECOVERY

Take a break from tough exercise! While rest is key to recovering from hard exercise, an "off day" doesn't mean you should sit still. Make a conscious effort to move more and to do a stretch session, too. We recommend gentle yoga.

### 2 CARDIO WORKOUT

Whether it's running or road cycling, do some form of easy aerobic activity each week. Long, slow cardio increases your stamina by improving energy transfer, muscular endurance and the number of capillaries in your muscles – ultimately, boosting your HIIT performance.

### 3 STRENGTH SESSION

High-intensity workouts can be done with body weight, dumbbells, medicine balls, weight plates and kettlebells, but the workouts in this book use minimal kit. If you love training with barbells or weight machines, this is your opportunity to do some heavy strength training. Do a series of compound moves that work multiple muscle groups (deadlifts, pull-ups and rows) and you'll have a great full-body workout.

### 4 HIGH-INTENSITY WORKOUTS

We believe that an effective full-body routine should have an upper body push exercise, an upper-body pull exercise and a lower-body move. That's exactly what you'll find in the high-intensity workouts in this book). The workouts will wear you out, so be sure to include a rest day in between your sessions.





## MAX-INTENSITY METHODS

Don't want to follow the 6-week plan? That's fine. Try adding some of our favourite exercises into your existing routine. Alternatively, mix and match upper, lower, fat burner and core moves to make your own high-intensity session. Here are a few methods you might want to try.

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**AMRAP:** This means As Many Rounds As Possible. To do it, set your clock to a specific time, such as five minutes, and perform as many circuits of your chosen exercises as possible. And try not to lose count!

.....

**TABATA:** This popular form of high-intensity interval training follows a 2:1 work to rest ratio of 20 seconds of exercise at maximum effort and 10 seconds of rest. In layman's terms, this means do each of your chosen moves for 20 seconds and then rest for 10 seconds between the exercises.

.....

**EMOM:** This translates as Every Minute On The Minute. This workout involves doing your chosen exercises alternatively on the minute over the course of a set number of minutes. For example, 'EMOM for six minutes of five box jumps and five burpees' means do five box jumps on the odd minutes (one, three and five) and five burpees on the even minutes (two, four and six) for a total of six minutes. Rest when you can.

.....

**LADDER:** These workouts are great fun. Choose a series of exercises – it needn't be more than two moves to be effective – and do one rep of each move. Rest for 30 seconds and then do two reps of each move. Repeat for three then four and all the way up to 10 reps. Then reverse – nine reps, eight reps and so on all the way back down to one. Phew!

.....

**DEATH BY:** Don't be put off by the scary title! Death by workouts are great. To do them, choose a full-body move – look at our fat burner exercises – and complete one rep of the exercise in the first minute. Then do two reps in the second minute, three reps in the third minute and repeat the pattern until you can't do the set number of reps for that particular minute.

# TRAINING PLAN



## LEVEL 3

Do each exercise for 20 seconds. Follow with a 40-second rest. Repeat the circuit 4-5 times.

### MUSCLE SCULPTOR

- Toe Tap Squats p23
- No-Jump Burpee p28
- Dumbbell Thrusters p25
- Kneeling Renegade Row p26
- V-Sit p33
- Plank Punch p30

### CALORIE BLASTER

- Tuck Jump p29
- Dumbbell Squat Hold p24
- Lateral Bounding p22
- Plank Punch p30
- Renegade Row p27
- Squat Thrust p31
- Russian Twist p32



## LEVEL 4

Do each exercise for 30 seconds. Follow with a 60-second rest. Repeat the circuit 4-5 times.

### FAT BURNER

- Squat Jump p36
- Sprint on Spot p48
- Push-Up p42
- Renegade Row to Push-Up p46
- Plank Jacks p56
- Side Plank with Leg Raise p58

### BODY TONER

- 180° Lunge p37
- Skipping p51
- Glute Bridge March p38
- Diamond Push-Up p44
- Renegade Row to Push-Up p46
- Burpees p49
- Sliding Climbers p50

### MUSCLE SCULPTOR

- Low Squat Jumps p40
- Squat Thrust Climber p53
- Dumbbell Push Press p45
- Plié Squat Row p47
- V-Sit with Overhead Raise p54
- Advanced Bird-Dog p55

### CALORIE BLASTER

- Box Jump p52
- One Legged Squat p41
- Over-the-Bar Burpees p39
- Triple Punch p43
- Plié Squat Row p47
- Triple Squat Thrust p57
- Medball Twist p59



# TRAINING CHART

	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
WK 1	LEVEL 3 MUSCLE SCULPTOR	STRENGTH	ACTIVE RECOVERY	LEVEL 3 CALORIE BLASTER	ACTIVE RECOVERY	CARDIO	REST
WK 2	LEVEL 3 CALORIE BLASTER			LEVEL 3 MUSCLE SCULPTOR			
WK 3	LEVEL 4 FAT BURNER			LEVEL 4 BODY TONER			
WK 4	LEVEL 4 BODY TONER			LEVEL 4 FAT BURNER			
WK 5	LEVEL 4 MUSCLE SCULPTOR			LEVEL 4 CALORIE BLASTER			
WK 6	LEVEL 4 CALORIE BLASTER			LEVEL 4 MUSCLE SCULPTOR			





# Get started

**Don't begin your workout cold. Get blood pumping through your body with a dynamic warm-up!**

Fact – an effective warm-up need only last five minutes. That's according to prestigious exercise organisation, the American College of Sports Medicine. And yet research shows that a worrying five in six of us don't do the pre-workout ritual. Big mistake. Dynamic warm-up exercises are among the best tools you have to downsize your injury risk. These essential moves kick-start your cardiovascular system, wake up the muscles you're about to exercise, boost the mobility of your joints and get your brain in the right zone for working out. The best warm-ups begin with what the pros call a 'pulse raiser' – a move that slowly increases your heart rate – and then focus on moves that mimic those in the workout. For example, if you're going to run, you might perform high knee drills, if you're going to squat, you might perform bodyweight squats. This smart warm-up covers all bases.



### HIGH KNEES WITH HIGH ARMS

**REPS: 20 (each set)**

Stand and raise your right knee towards your chest. At the same time, raise your left arm up. Repeat on the other side (left knee, right arm). Try to get into a rhythm and increase the pace



### PRISONER ROTATIONS

**REPS: 10 (each way)**

Stand straight, hands behind your head and elbows out. Rotate your arms to the right, keeping elbows wide. Rotate to the centre, then the left. Alternate for 10 reps.



### LUNGE WITH ARM RAISE

**REPS: 10 (each side)**

Step your left foot back into a lunge and raise your arms straight up above your head. Pause. Return to the start and repeat on the other side.



### SIDE LUNGE WITH TOE TOUCH

**REPS: 20 (each set)**

Take a big step into a side lunge, swinging both arms across your body and aiming to touch your ankle. Step back to the centre, swinging your arms back to your sides, and repeat on right side.



### HIP CIRCLES

**REPS: 10 (each side)**

Stand with hands on hips. Raise your left leg up to hip height and then move it out to the side. Place it down and repeat. When you've done 10 reps on the left, repeat on the right.



### X SQUATS

**REPS: 10**

Stand and reach your arms up into a Y-shape. Bend into a squat and lower both arms across your body (right hand to left knee; left hand to right knee). Stand, reach arms back up, and repeat.



DAY 3

Look up 'HIIT training' on the internet and you'll notice a trend – it's intense, fast-moving and involves a lot of sweat. If the basic exercises no longer leave you gasping for oxygen, it's time to crank the intensity up a notch. Welcome to Level 3 – your workout just got tougher. This level focuses on heavier and more explosive moves that will boost your strength and power, preparing your body for Level 4 (L4).



# LATERAL BOUNDING

**Focus:** works your hip abductors – teaches your body to be powerful in a lateral motion



A



B

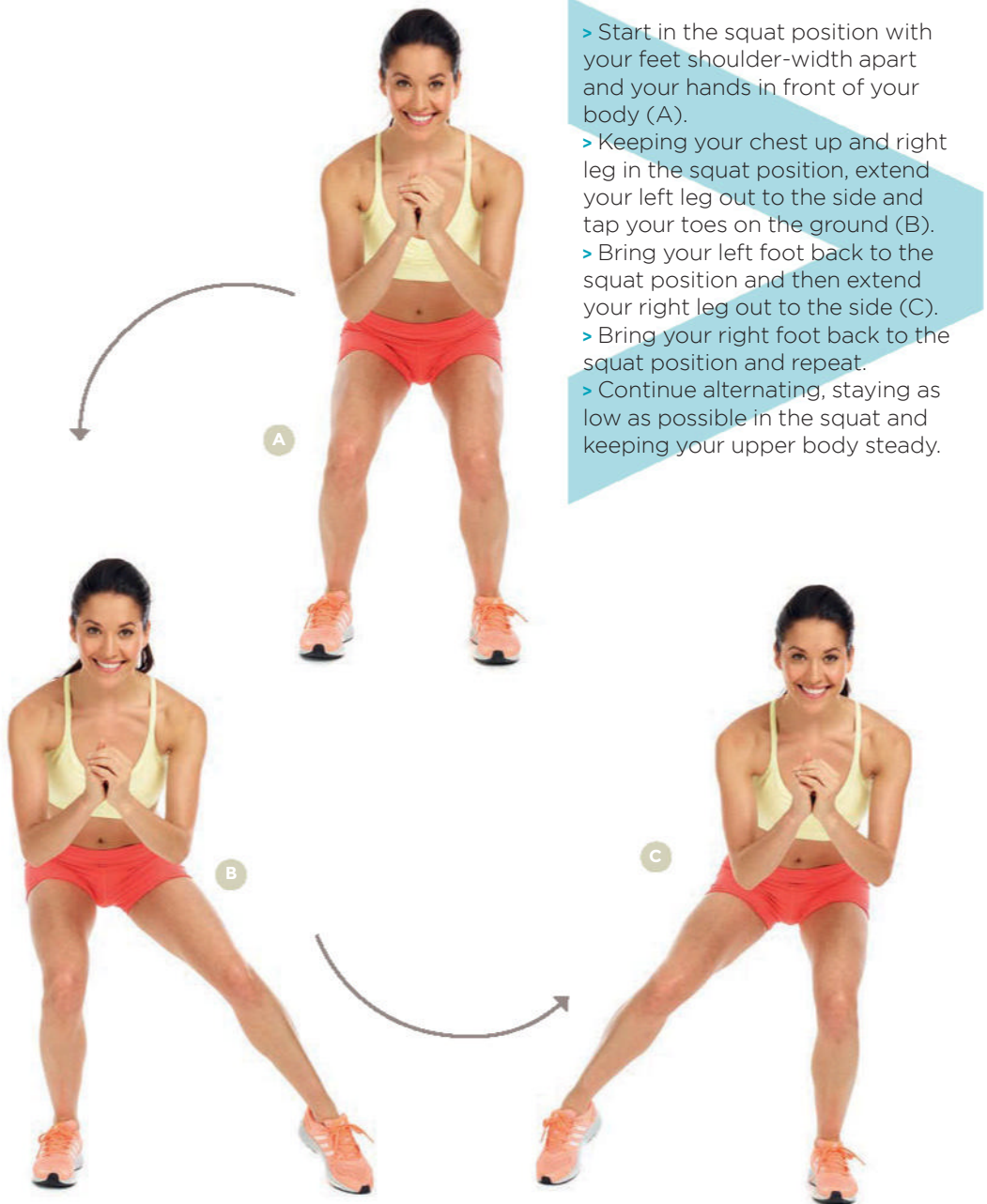


C

- > Begin in a semi squat position with your weight on your right foot and your arms in a running action (A).
- > Leap sideways to the left. Try to explode into the air by imagining that you're jumping over a hurdle (B).
- > Land on your left foot and immediately bring your right foot next to it (C).
- > Drop back down into a semi squat and repeat on the other side. Continue jumping from side to side.

# TOE TAP SQUATS

**Focus:** pumps up your glutes, while toning your quads and outer thighs



## DUMBBELL SQUAT HOLD

**Focus:** hits your lower body muscles in an isometric way – great for endurance strength



- > Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and hold one end of a dumbbell in both hands in front of your chest, with your elbows bent.
- > Keeping your chest up and your weight through your heels, bend your knees and push your hips back to squat down as far as you can.
- > Hold the squat position for as long as you can handle and then stand back up.
- > Lower yourself back into the squat and repeat if there's still time left on the clock!



# DUMBBELL THRUSTERS

**Focus:** works your shoulders – the squat motion means your legs help drive the movement

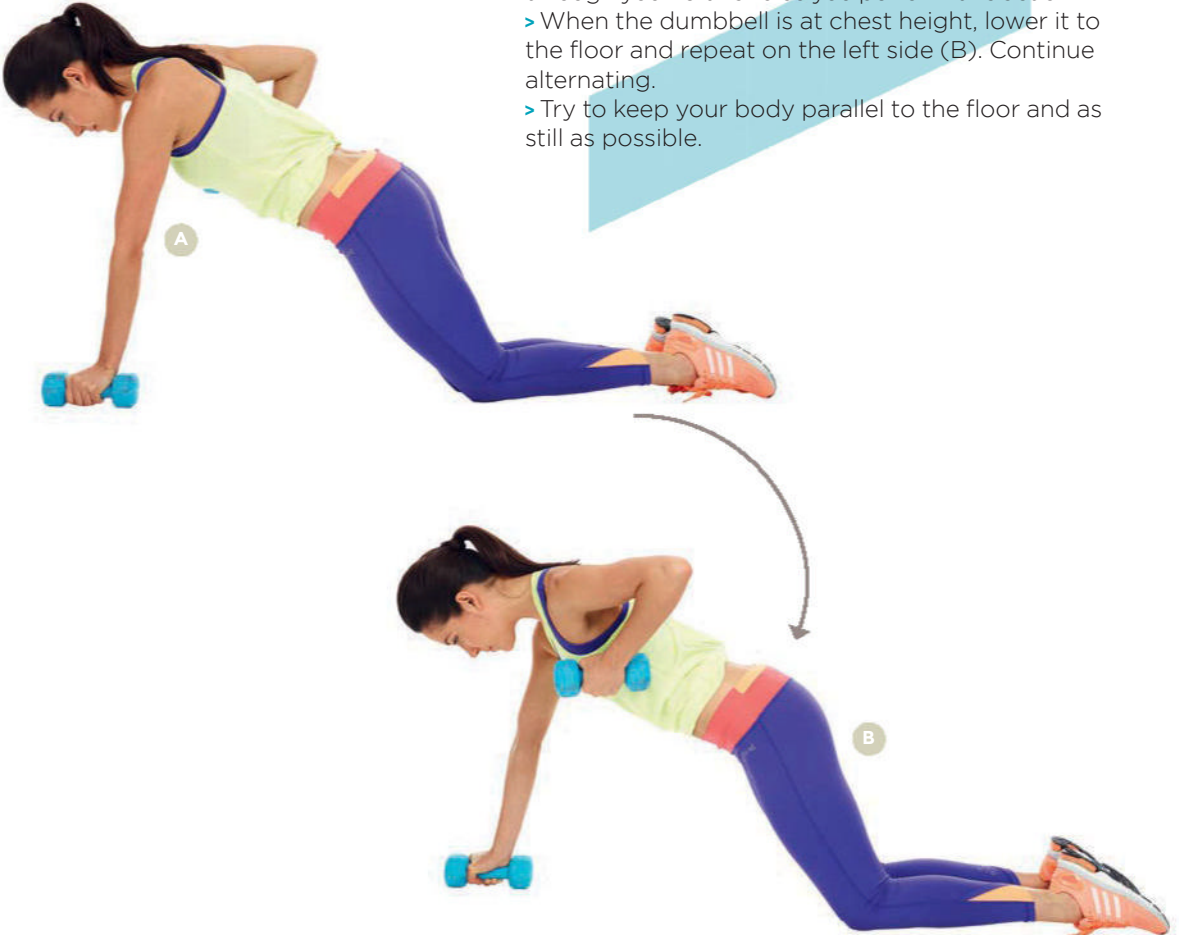
- > Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart. Hold a medium weight dumbbell in each hand at shoulder height with your elbows bent and your palms facing each other.
- > Squat down to a 90° position (A), then explode back up, driving the dumbbells overhead (B).
- > Hold for a second then lower the dumbbells as you squat back down to repeat the sequence.



## KNEELING RENEGADE ROW

**Focus:** pumps your back muscles and works your core

- > Start in a high plank position with your wrists under your shoulders and your body in a straight line. Feet should be apart. Drop to your knees.
- > Place a dumbbell under each hand. If the dumbbells are too small to grip in this position, place a dumbbell on either side of each hand.
- > Gripping the dumbbell (grab one if you haven't already), pull your right hand up towards your chest with your palm facing in towards your body (A). Push through your left hand as you perform this action.
- > When the dumbbell is at chest height, lower it to the floor and repeat on the left side (B). Continue alternating.
- > Try to keep your body parallel to the floor and as still as possible.



# RENEGADE ROW

**Focus:** a great upper-body exercise – a bit tougher than kneeling renegade row

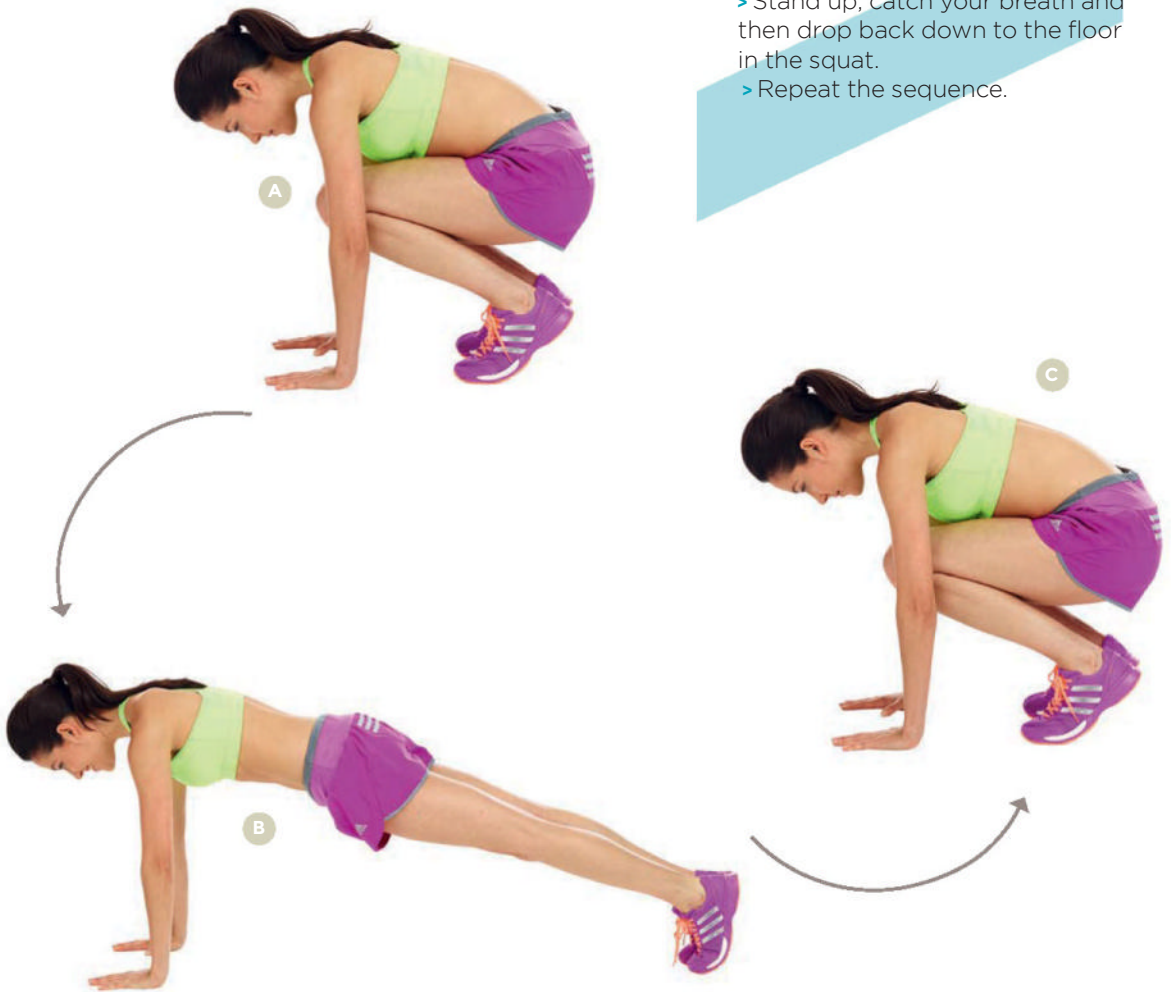
- > Start in a high plank position with your wrists under your shoulders and your body in a straight line. Your feet should be apart.
- > Place a dumbbell under each hand. If the dumbbells are too small to grip in this position, place a dumbbell on either side of each hand.
- > Gripping the dumbbell (grab one if you haven't already), pull your right hand up towards your chest with your palm facing in towards your body. Push through your left hand as you perform this action (A).
- > When the dumbbell is at chest height, lower it to the floor and repeat on your left side (B). Lower that to the floor and then immediately return to the right side. Continue alternating.



# NO-JUMP BURPEE

**Focus:** works your entire body – a regression from L4 burpee

- > Squat down and put your hands on the floor in front of you (A).
- > Jump or step your feet back – right and then left – and hold a plank position (B).
- > Immediately, step or jump your feet back to squat position (C).
- > Stand up, catch your breath and then drop back down to the floor in the squat.
- > Repeat the sequence.



# TUCK JUMP

**Focus:** a tough cardio move that will build explosive power

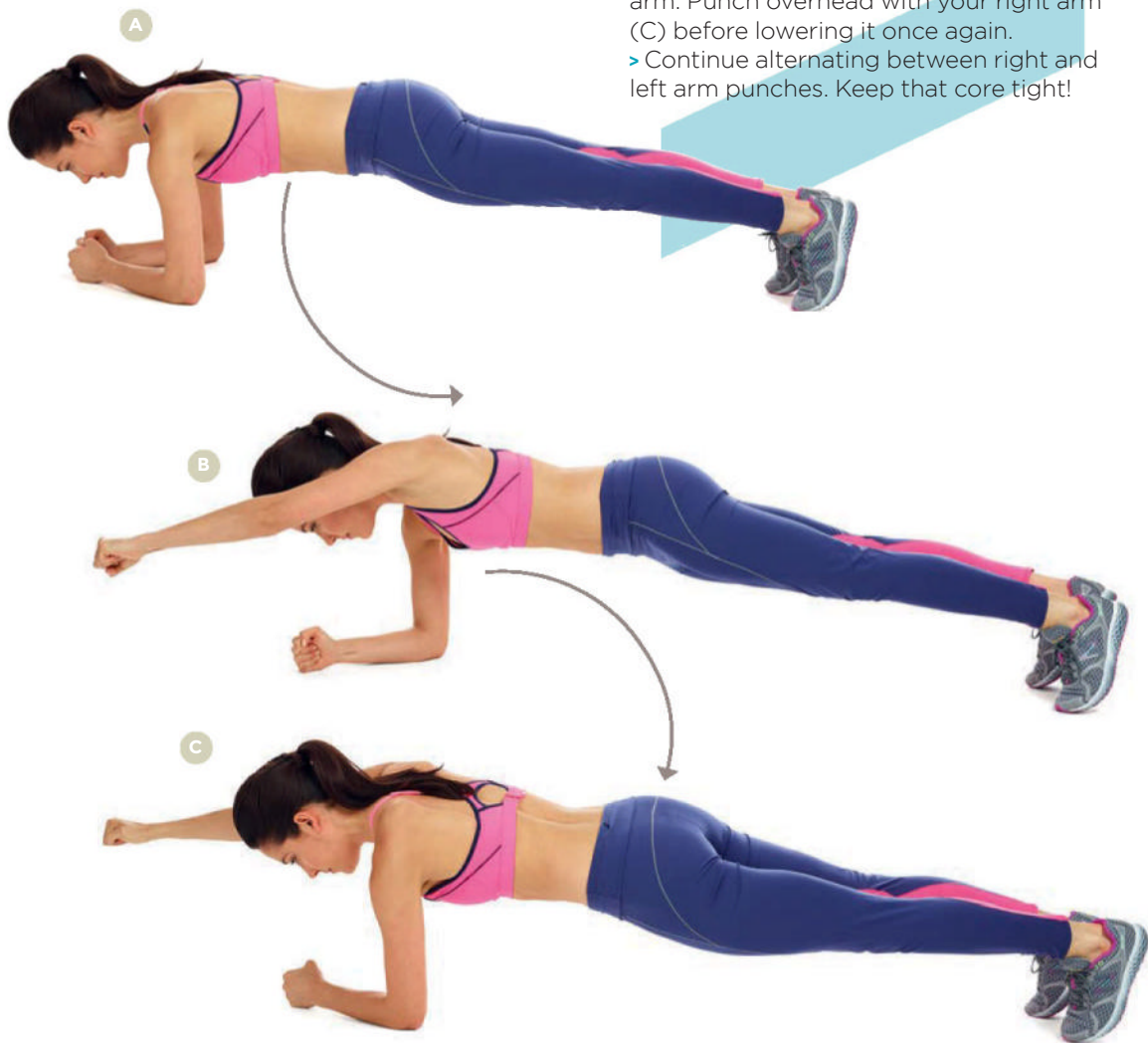
- > Stand with your feet hip-width apart and drop into a semi squat. Bring your arms up to your chest and clasp your hands (A).
- > Swing your arms back and then forward as you explode up into the air.
- > As you rise into the air, bring your knees to your chest in a tuck position (B).
- > Land on soft knees and drop back into the squat again.
- > Repeat immediately. Try to build up a bit of momentum.
- > If you lose your rhythm, take a few small jumps and prepare to start again.



# PLANK PUNCH

**Focus:** sculpts your abs while working your upper body muscles

- > Start in a high plank position with your wrists under your shoulders and your core engaged (A).
- > Squeeze your tummy as you raise your left arm and punch overhead (B). Keep the movement slow and controlled.
- > Lower your left arm and raise your right arm. Punch overhead with your right arm (C) before lowering it once again.
- > Continue alternating between right and left arm punches. Keep that core tight!



# SQUAT THRUST

**Focus:** a full-body move that squeezes your abs – a great cardio move

- > Start in a high plank position with your hands on the floor and in line with your shoulders (A).
- > Your tummy should be tight and your body in a straight line from your shoulders to your feet.
- > Jump your feet under your body towards your elbows (B) and then jump back to the start.
- > Continue jumping under your body and back to high plank until the time is up.



## RUSSIAN TWIST

**Focus:** hits your side abs – teaches your body to move in a rotational plane

- > Sit on the floor with your knees bent. Extend your arms fully, engage your abdominals and move your upper body back, so it's at a 45° angle to the floor.
- > Keeping your focus on your hands and your spine straight, twist your torso to the left (A).
- > Return to the start position. That's one rep.
- > Repeat on the other side (B). Continue alternating.
- > Start without a weight and then hold a dumbbell in both hands as your strength improves.





## V-SIT

**Focus:** an intermediate-level ab exercise – great for six-pack strength

- > Lie on your back on the floor with your legs straight out and your hands extended over your head (A).
- > Engage your core and crunch your upper body upwards until your body makes a V-shape (B).
- > Keep your shoulders relaxed and try not to strain your neck as you do this movement.
- > Lower yourself back to the floor – don't let your feet touch the ground and repeat.





4 DAY

Say 'hello' to level four. By now, you'll be pretty used to high intensity training exercises and be ready to push your body to its absolute maximum. Good news – you've come to the right place. This level focuses on heavier, harder and more technical exercises that will rev up your heart rate, burn oodles of calories and improve your strength. You'll break a sweat just thinking about how tough this level is! Ready? Let's get started...



# SQUAT JUMP

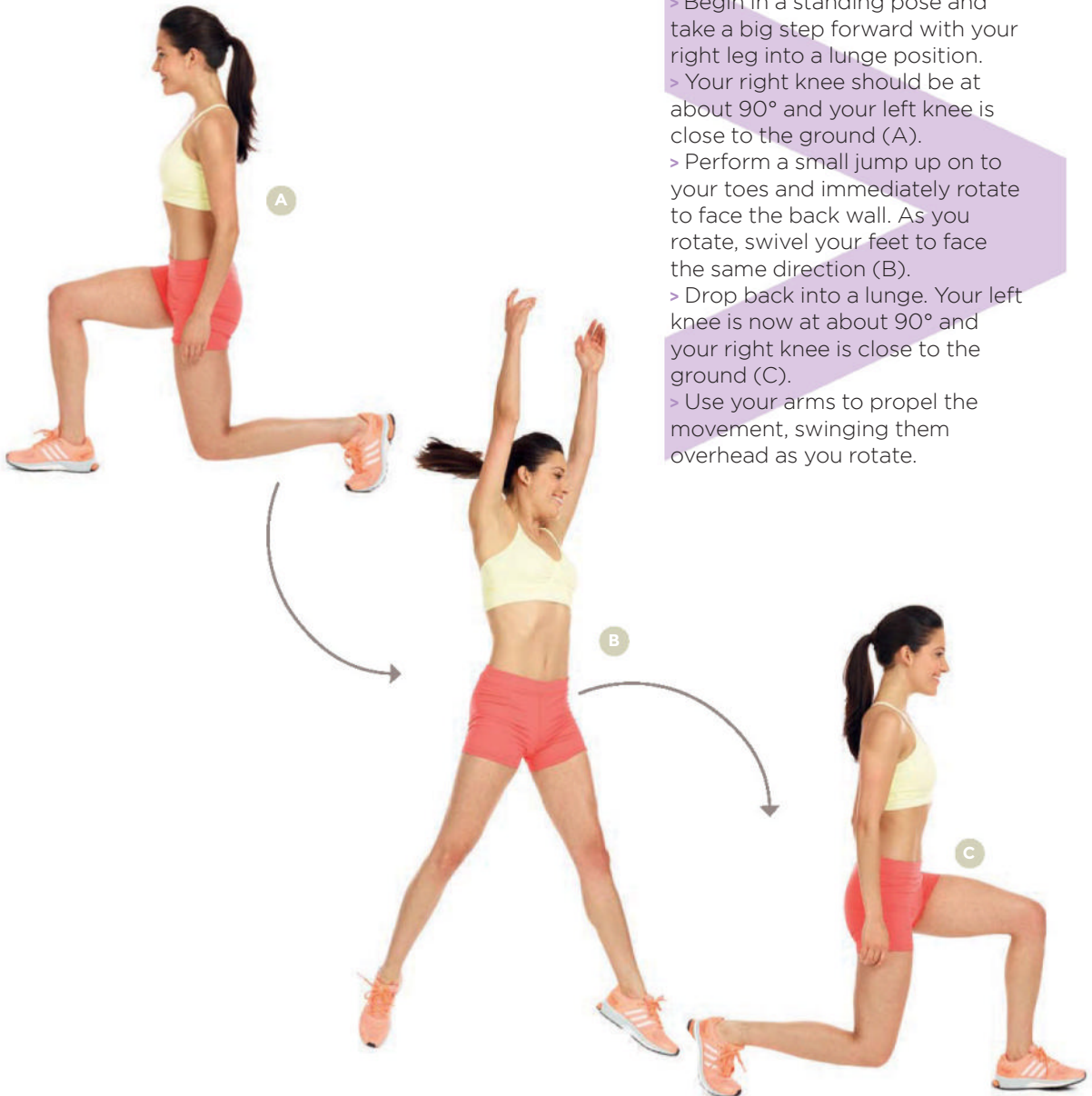
**Focus:** shapes your gluteal muscles – great for fat loss

- > Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and your hands clasped in front of your chest.
- > Bend your knees and shift your hips back to squat down as far as you can (A).
- > Swing your arms back and immediately jump up into the air (B).
- > Use your arms to propel you upwards.
- > Land in the squat position and jump back into the air. Repeat until the time is up.



# 180° LUNGE

**Focus:** targets your lower-body muscles – a fun progression from the jump lunge



## GLUTE BRIDGE MARCH

**Focus:** hits the glute, quads and hamstrings – a hard glute bridge that isolates each leg

A



> Start by lying on your back with your knees bent. Then place your feet flat on the floor an inch or so away from your bottom.

> Squeeze your bottom and raise your hips, so that your body is in a bridge position (A). Hold this position.

> Raise your right leg into the air (B), then place it back on the ground.

> Raise your left leg into the air (C) and place it back down.

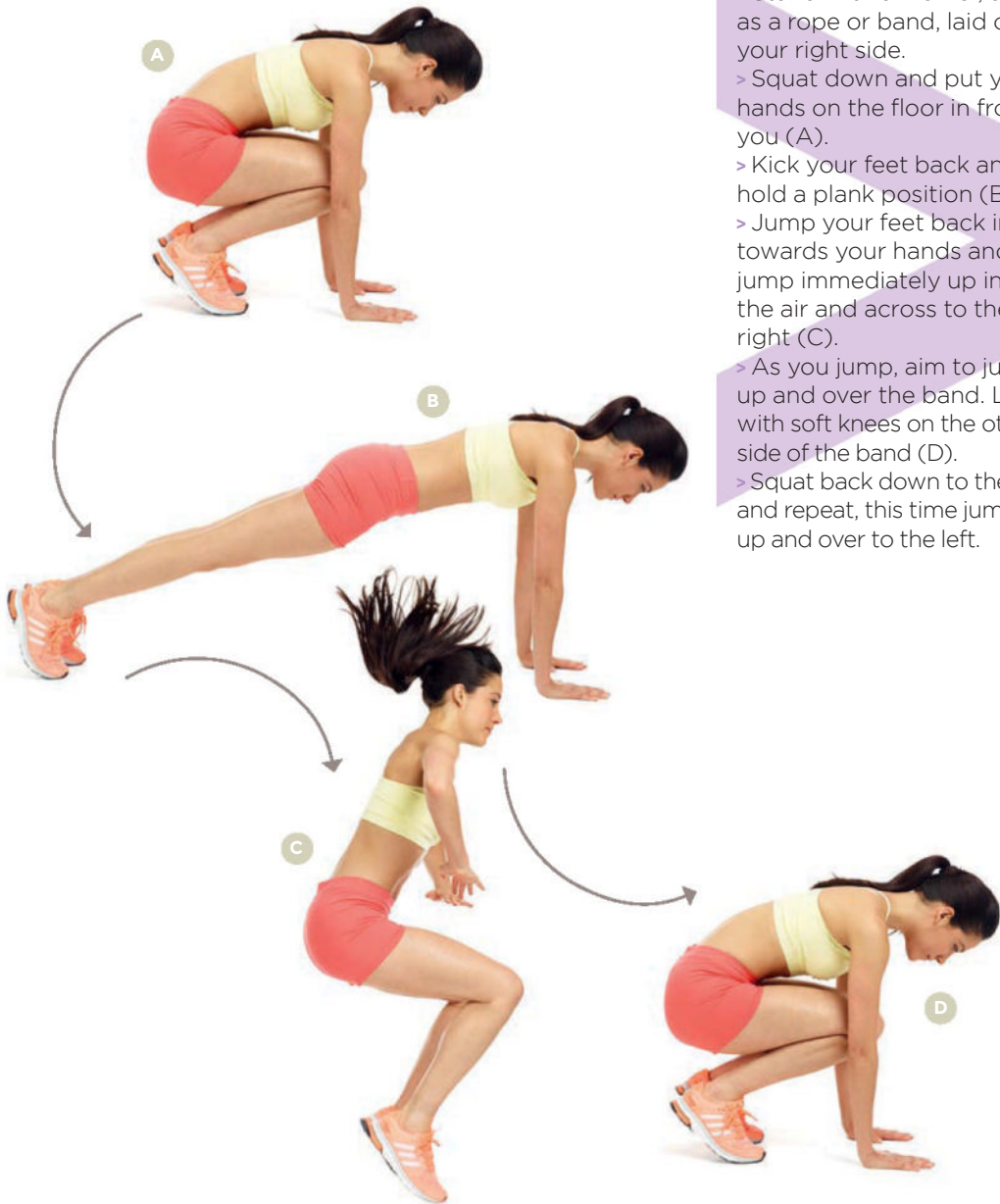
> Continue marching until the time is up.



# OVER-THE-BAR BURPEES

**Focus:** works your entire body from head to toe – teaches lateral movement

- > Stand with a marker, such as a rope or band, laid out on your right side.
- > Squat down and put your hands on the floor in front of you (A).
- > Kick your feet back and hold a plank position (B).
- > Jump your feet back in towards your hands and jump immediately up into the air and across to the right (C).
- > As you jump, aim to jump up and over the band. Land with soft knees on the other side of the band (D).
- > Squat back down to the floor and repeat, this time jumping up and over to the left.



## LOW SQUAT JUMPS

**Focus:** targets your inner and outer thigh – a great progression from toe tap squats

- > Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and your hands clasped in front of your chest.
- > Bend your knees and shift your hips back to squat down as far as you can (A).
- > Staying low in the squat, jump both feet out wide into a sumo squat stance (B).
- > Staying low in the squat, jump both feet back into the shoulder-width position.
- > Continue jumping your feet out and in, keeping your upper body as still as possible.





## ONE LEGGED SQUAT

**Focus:** hits your glutes, quads and core – isolates each leg for balance and strength



- > Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and your hands clasped in front of your chest.
- > Bend your knees and shift your hips back to squat down as far as you can.
- > Engage your abs and lift your right foot into the air (A). You may only be able to lift your foot a few inches off the ground – that is fine. Hold.
- > When the time is up, put your right foot down and lift your left foot into the air (B). Keep the movement slow and controlled. Hold.



# PUSH-UP

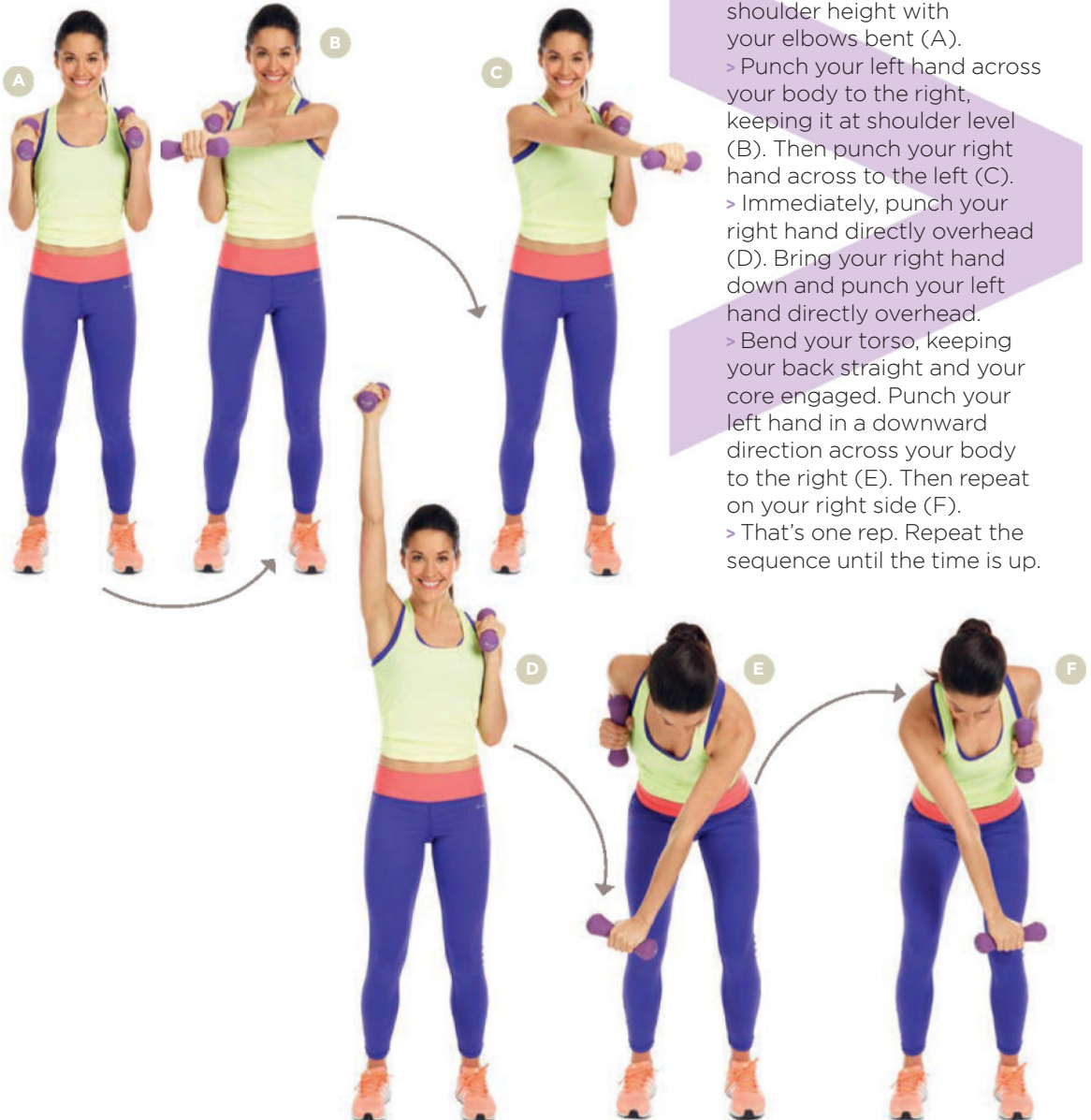
**Focus:** hits the chest muscles – great for core activation

- > Lie facedown on the floor with your hands under your shoulders, fingers pointing forward, palms down and shoulders slightly wider than shoulder-width apart.
- > Engage your core and push your chest off the floor until you're in a plank position (A).
- > Bend your elbows to lower your body back down to the floor – your chest should be nearly touching the ground and your elbows shouldn't flare out (B).
- > Pause and repeat.



# TRIPLE PUNCH

**Focus:** targets your arms, chest, shoulders and obliques – a step up from dumbbell punches

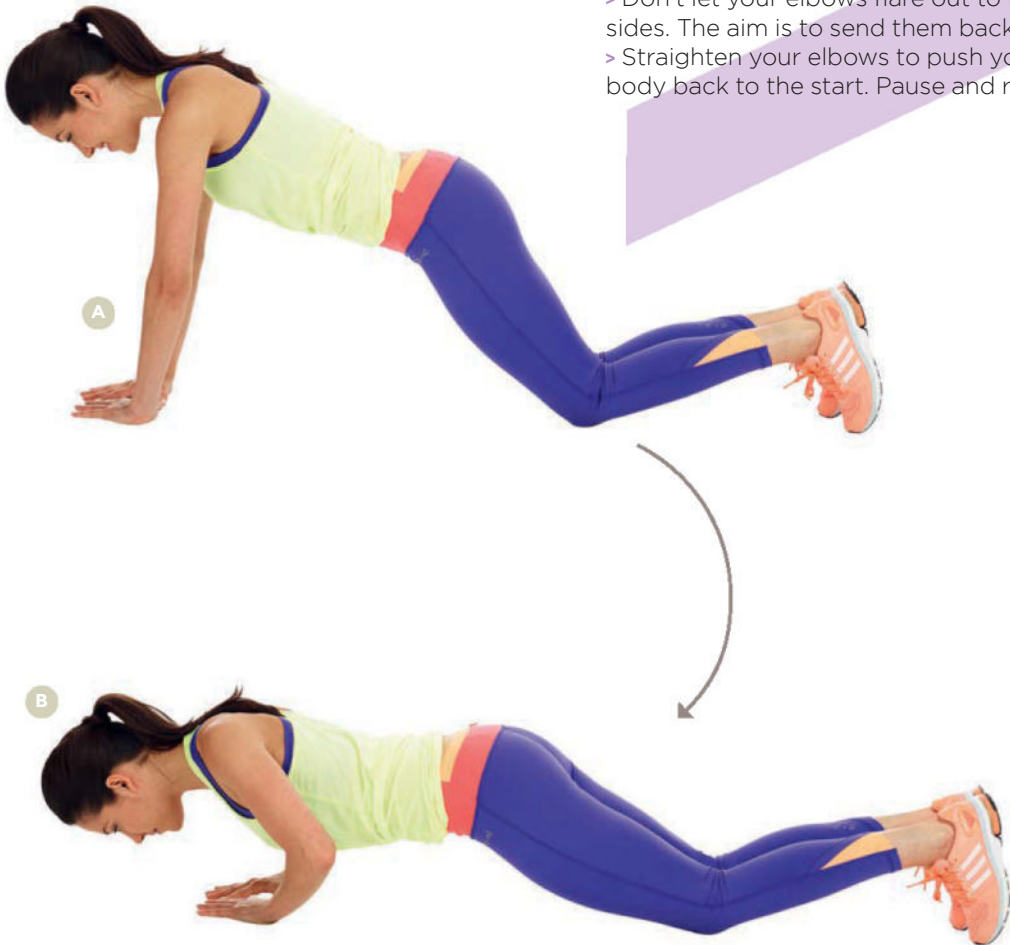


- > Start standing. Hold a pair of light dumbbells at shoulder height with your elbows bent (A).
- > Punch your left hand across your body to the right, keeping it at shoulder level (B). Then punch your right hand across to the left (C).
- > Immediately, punch your right hand directly overhead (D). Bring your right hand down and punch your left hand directly overhead.
- > Bend your torso, keeping your back straight and your core engaged. Punch your left hand in a downward direction across your body to the right (E). Then repeat on your right side (F).
- > That's one rep. Repeat the sequence until the time is up.

## DIAMOND PUSH-UP

**Focus:** targets your tricep muscles and upper chest – a tough and advanced exercise

- > Assume a modified push-up position with your knees on the floor.
- > Place your hands on the floor about two inches apart in a diamond shape (A).
- > Engage your core and gradually lower to the floor until your chest nearly touches the ground (B).
- > Don't let your elbows flare out to the sides. The aim is to send them back.
- > Straighten your elbows to push your body back to the start. Pause and repeat.



## DUMBBELL PUSH PRESS

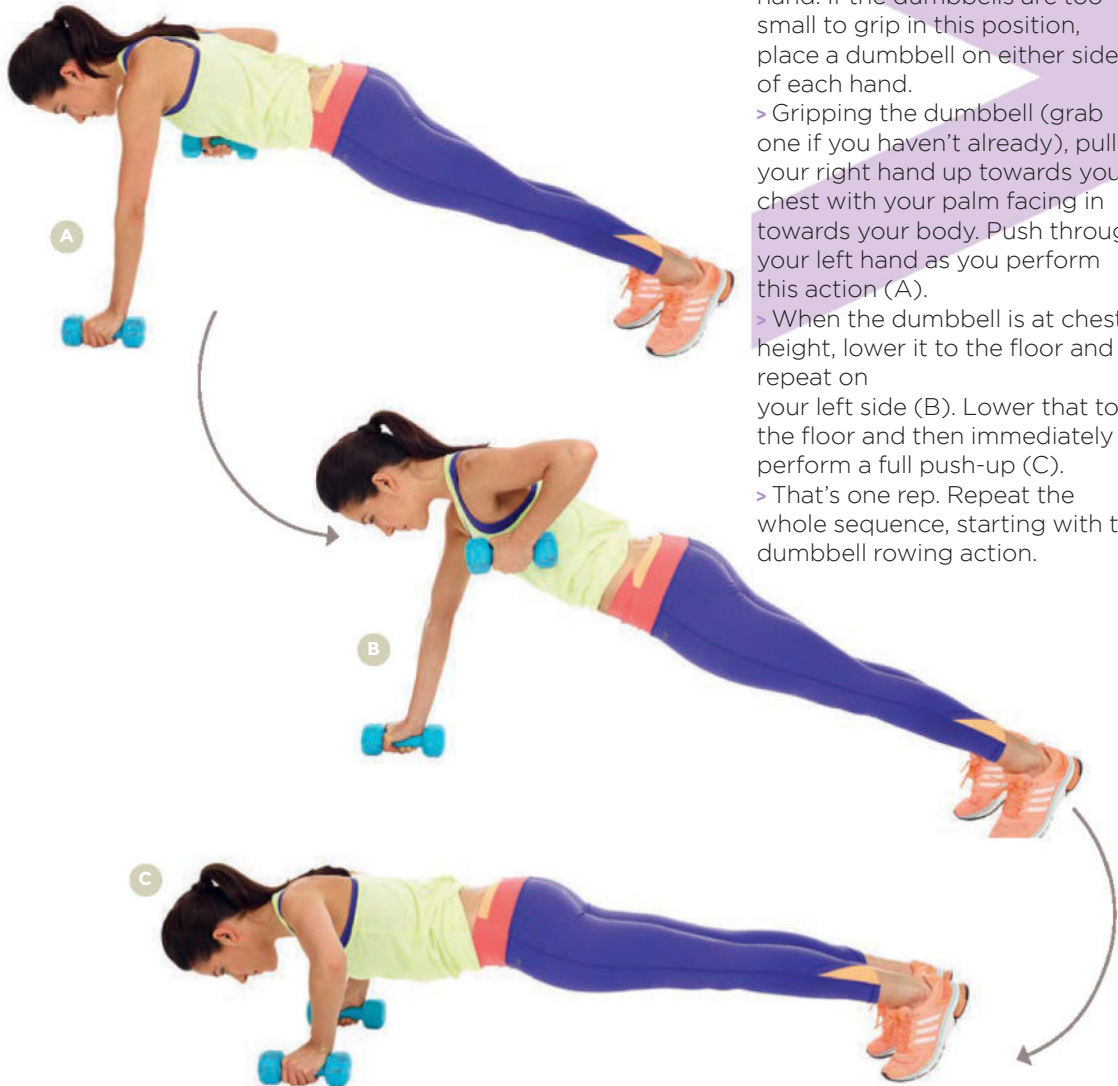
**Focus:** works your shoulder muscles - requires quite a bit of technique



- > Stand with your feet hip-width apart and hold a dumbbell in each hand.
- > Raise the dumbbells until they're just above your shoulders - your upper arm should be just below and parallel to the floor.
- > Squat down a quarter of the way (A), then quickly extend your legs and use the momentum to raise the dumbbells overhead (B).
- > Lower the dumbbells and repeat.

# RENEGADE ROW TO PUSH-UP

**Focus:** a great upper-body exercise – a bit tougher than the basic renegade row



> Start in a high plank position with your wrists under your shoulders and your body in a straight line. Your feet should be apart.

> Place a dumbbell under each hand. If the dumbbells are too small to grip in this position, place a dumbbell on either side of each hand.

> Gripping the dumbbell (grab one if you haven't already), pull your right hand up towards your chest with your palm facing in towards your body. Push through your left hand as you perform this action (A).

> When the dumbbell is at chest height, lower it to the floor and repeat on your left side (B). Lower that to the floor and then immediately perform a full push-up (C).

> That's one rep. Repeat the whole sequence, starting with the dumbbell rowing action.

# PLIÉ SQUAT ROW

**Focus:** hits your upper back and lower body – also works your calf muscles



- > Hold a dumbbell in both hands between your legs and step out into a wide stance.
- > Your feet should be wide apart with your toes pointing outwards. Your back should be straight and your chest out.
- > Squat down by bending at your knees, keeping your core engaged and your back straight (A).
- > Pause for a few seconds. Then extend your knees and pull the weights up until your elbows are even with your shoulders. Continue to rise all the way until you're on your tip toes (B).
- > Pause. Lower the weights to the start position and repeat.



## SPRINT ON SPOT

Focus: a great cardio drill - revs up your pulse in seconds

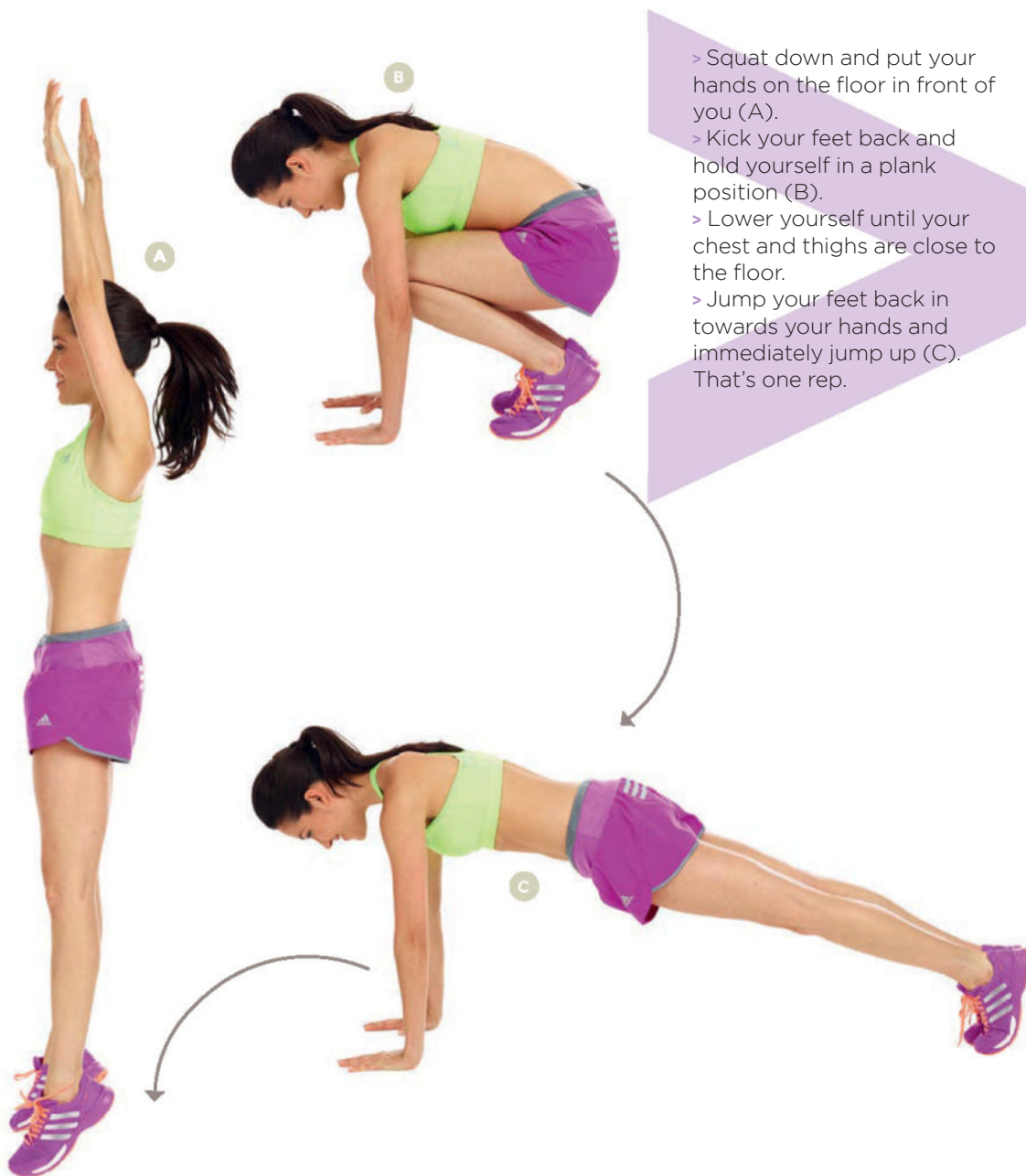


- > Start by jogging in place.
- > Start to pump your arms quickly, driving one knee (A) and then the other knee (B) up towards your chest.
- > Aim to keep your chest up and get your legs as high as possible.
- > Continue sprinting for the set amount of time.



# BURPEES

**Focus:** a full-body move – will build your stamina and strength



## SLIDING CLIMBERS

**Focus:** targets your whole body – challenges your shoulders and quads

- > Begin in a high plank position with a gliding disc or plate under each foot. Your hands should be on the ground slightly wider than shoulder-width apart.
- > Hold your upper body in place and pull your right leg forward and under your body (A).
- > Extend your leg back into plank position and repeat on other side (B).
- > Continue alternating for the set amount of time.



# SKIPPING

**Focus:** a whole-body exercise - uses your abs to stabilise your legs and arms

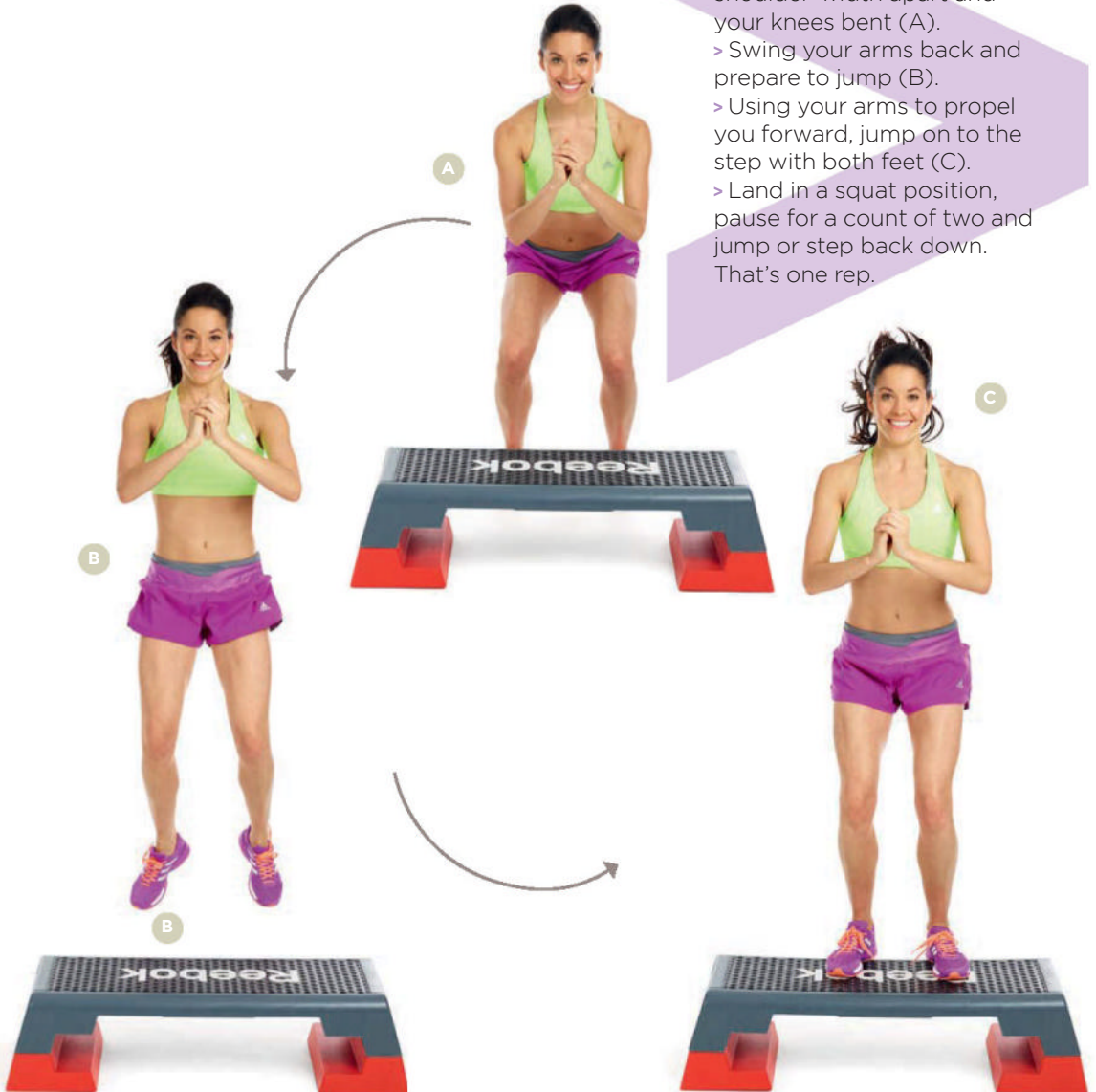


- > Stand tall with your body in front of the rope and a handle in each hand
- > Using a large arm movement, swing the rope forward and over your head (A).
- > As the rope moves towards your feet, jump and let it hit the floor (B).
- > After the first jump, try to drive the rope round with small wrist movements. When you've mastered single skips, try to do double unders (letting the rope pass under your feet twice).

# BOX JUMP

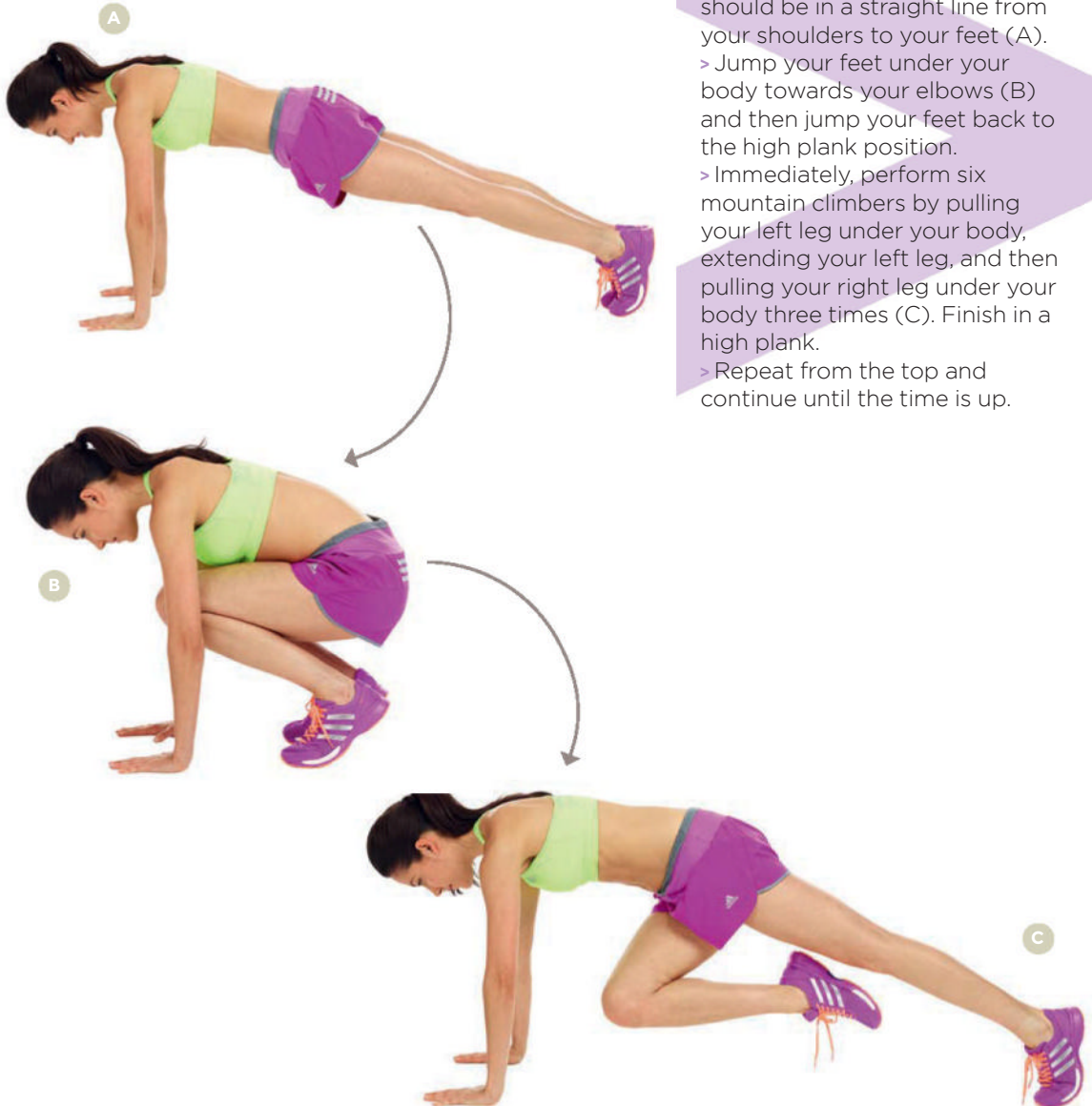
**Focus:** an iconic HIIT move – requires skill and explosive power

- > Stand less than a foot away from a step with your feet shoulder-width apart and your knees bent (A).
  - > Swing your arms back and prepare to jump (B).
  - > Using your arms to propel you forward, jump on to the step with both feet (C).
  - > Land in a squat position, pause for a count of two and jump or step back down.
- That's one rep.



# SQUAT-THRUST CLIMBER

**Focus:** a full-body move that requires co-ordination – a great cardio move



## V-SIT WITH OVERHEAD RAISE

**Focus:** an advanced core exercise - great for six-pack strength

- > Lie on your back on the floor with your legs straight.
- > Hold a dumbbell in both hands and extend your arms overhead (A).
- > Engage your core and crunch your upper body, swinging your arms towards your body.
- > Pause when your body makes a V-shape and your arms are in front of your chest (B).
- > Keep your shoulders relaxed. Try not to strain your neck as you do this movement.
- > Lower back to the floor and don't let feet touch the ground. Repeat.



## ADVANCED BIRD DOG

**Focus:** trains your glutes and entire core – requires good balance

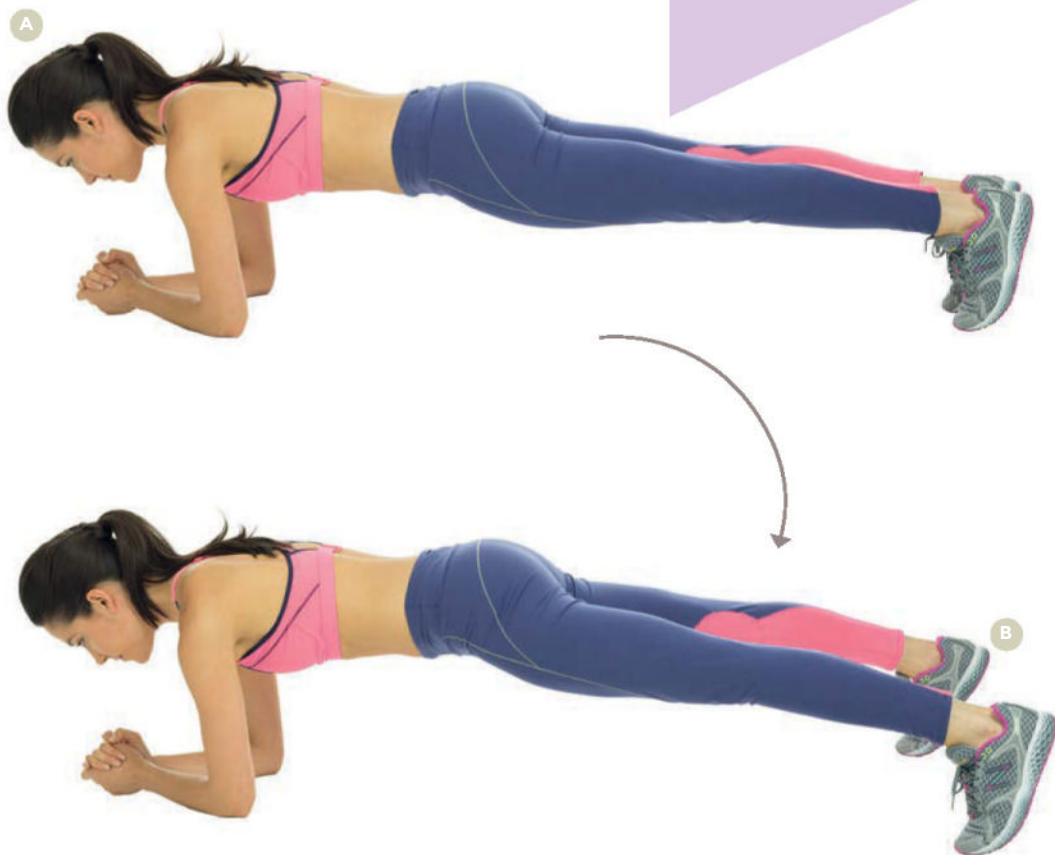
- > Start in a high plank, with your wrists under your shoulders and toes on the ground (A).
- > Engage your core and raise your right arm and left leg into the air at the same time.
- > Pause. Keep your hips stable and abs tight.
- > Hold for the set amount of time. Swap sides on the next round (B).



# PLANK JACKS

**Focus:** tightens your core muscles – also revs up your heart rate

- > Start in a plank position with your weight on your forearms (A).
- > Jump your feet out to the sides, squeezing your abdominal muscles (B).
- > Jump your feet back into the plank position.
- > Jump your feet back out again and continue jumping until the time is up.





# TRIPLE SQUAT THRUST

**Focus:** a full-body move that works your abs – a great cardio move



- > Start in a high plank position with your hands on the floor and in line with your shoulders.
- > Your tummy should be tight and body in a straight line from your shoulders to your feet (A).
- > Jump your feet under your body towards your elbows (B) and then jump them back to the start.
- > Jump your feet across to the side of your body, landing outside your left elbow (C), and jump back to the start.
- > Jump your feet across to the other side of your body, landing outside your right elbow (D), and jump back to the start.
- > Continue jumping in this pattern until the time is up.

# SIDE PLANK WITH LEG RAISE

**Focus:** an advanced side plank - works your obliques (side abs)

- > Start by lying on your side with your bottom hand on the floor.
- > Lift your hips into the air, so your body rests on your hand and your feet are stacked on top of each other.
- > Engage your core and raise your left arm and left leg into the air.
- > Pause until the time is up. Repeat on the other side.



# MEDBALL TWIST

**Focus:** a great twisting move – works your side abs



- > Sit on the floor with your knees bent. Hold a medicine ball in both hands
- > Engage your abdominals and move your upper body back, so it's at a 45° angle to the floor.
- > Keeping your focus on your hands and your spine straight, twist your torso to your left (A), then rotate back to centre.
- > Twist your torso to the right (B) and rotate back to centre.
- > Continue alternating until the time is up.





# Cool-down

**Want to train again this week?  
Here are six stretches that will help  
your body recover**

Let's be clear – a cool-down is the one thing that's standing between you and post-workout muscle soreness. Gentle cardiovascular exercise will not only bring your heart rate down, but also flush lactic acid (the stuff that causes muscle soreness) out of your system. As an added bonus, static stretches – that involve holding a stretch for a period of time – will lengthen your muscle fibres and tissues and bring them back to normal. A must-do after all of those exercise-induced, muscle-shortening contractions! The net result is that you're less likely to grimace when you get up from a chair the next day. Dedicate the last five minutes of your workout to doing the following stretches. It's the perfect opportunity to reflect on all the hard work you've put in.



### UPPER BACK

Stand with your feet hip-width apart and reach forward with your arms extended and your fingers linked with your palms facing inwards. You should feel a stretch in your back. Hold for 30 seconds then release.



### QUADRICEPS

Stand on your right leg. Grasp the ankle of your left leg and pull your heel towards your bottom, keeping your knees together. You should feel a stretch in your quad. Lean forward from your hips to increase the stretch. Hold for 15 seconds then repeat on the other side.



### CHEST

Stand with your feet hip-width apart and reach backwards with your arms extended and hands on top of one another. To increase the stretch, raise your hands towards the ceiling. Hold for 30 seconds.



### HIP FLEXOR

Kneel on your right leg and place your left foot on the floor in front of you with your knee at a 90° angle. Hands on your hips.

Keeping your body upright, shift your hips forward until you can feel a stretch in the front of your right hip. Hold for 30 seconds; repeat on the other side.



### PIGEON STRETCH

Start on all fours and slide your left knee towards your left hand while lengthening your right leg behind you. Keep your hips square to the floor. Stay upright on your hands and hold for 30 seconds. If you don't feel a stretch in your gluteals, lower on to your forearms and hold for 30 seconds. Repeat on the other side.



### HAMSTRINGS

From standing, stretch your right leg out in front of you with your foot flexed and toes pointing to the ceiling. Bend your left leg and push your hips back. You should feel a stretch in your hamstrings. Hold for 15 seconds, then point your toes to the right. Hold for 15, then point your toes to the left. Repeat on the other side.



# Fuel your workout

## Need energy to burn? Eat the right foods and you'll exercise even harder

### EAT CARBS

You might have heard that low carbohydrate diets will send your fat loss into the fast lane but here's the truth – swearing off bread, rice and oats entirely is not an option for sporty types. Carbohydrates are your immediate source of fuel, and they're entirely necessary to ensure that your body doesn't cannibalise your lean muscle tissue as an energy source when you work out. As a rule of thumb, aim to get about 50-55 per cent of your daily calories from healthy carbohydrate sources.

### THINK QUALITY

You can eat pasta and still build a lean body as long as you stick to healthy carbs. The better quality the food you put in your body, the better your body will perform when it comes to working out. Look out for slow-releasing carbohydrates that will keep your blood sugar levels stable between meals and leave you feeling satiated. This is the key to a great

performance. Good options include sweet potatoes and wholemeal pasta and rice.

### SNACK AWAY

If you are about to do a high-intensity workout, make sure your body is sufficiently fuelled. Eat an energy-giving snack at least 30-60 minutes before you exercise. This could be a banana with some nut butter, a sports drink, or pitta bread and houmous. A snack may not be necessary if you've had a meal one to two hours before your workout but it's worth having some handy just in case.

### DON'T FORGET ABOUT FAT

Here's a surprising fact – you need a bit of fat to fuel your workout, too. Fat is the most energy-dense nutrient, providing nine calories per gram (compared with four calories per gram for carbohydrate and protein). Fat is the body's stored fuel. It protects your organs and helps your body to absorb and process nutrients. It also provides many of your

body's organs and tissues with energy. Most of the fat you eat should come from unsaturated 'healthy' sources, such as oily fish, nuts, seeds, olive oil and avocados. Lean meat and low-fat dairy are also good options.

### FLUID MATTERS

During your workout it's important to stay hydrated. Aim to go into your workout hydrated and keep a bottle of water nearby for regular sips. Water is necessary for so many body functions. When you exercise, it helps to regulate your body temperature, maintain your blood pressure and circulate oxygen around your body. So, you see it's not smart to start a workout feeling thirsty. Plus by the time you feel thirsty, you're already dehydrated. Data shows that a mere two per cent of dehydration affects sports performance, so keep on top of your fluid intake before and after exercise. The American Council on Exercise suggests you drink 400-500ml of water 2-3 hours before exercise.

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