

8

IS ENOUGH

The best exercises
for getting strong
and sculpted in
no time

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CONSIDER STRENGTH TRAINING YOUR ticket to a long life and a lean body. Muscle-building moves do everything from burning fat and strengthening bones to fighting heart disease and arthritis. Despite the benefits, only about 25% of women do resistance exercises the expert-recommended two times per week. If you feel lost in the weight room or avoid it altogether, you'll be glad we tapped Jessica Matthews, exercise physiologist and senior health and fitness expert for the American Council on Exercise (ACE), to recommend eight essential moves every woman should do regularly. "When you don't strength train, your body loses up to a half pound of muscle each year," says Matthews. "And the less muscle you have, the slower your metabolism." Tighten your entire body by doing each exercise shown for 8 to 12 repetitions. Repeat the series once for a total of two sets—and soon you'll look trimmer on the outside and feel younger on the inside!



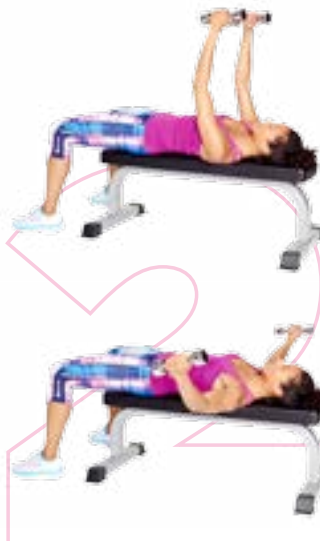
BICEPS

CONCENTRATION CURL

Grab a 5-pound dumbbell and sit on a bench with your feet a little wider than hips and upper body tilted forward. Place your upper arm against your inner thigh and curl the dumbbell toward your shoulder. Return to start and repeat. Then switch sides.

SCULPTING SECRET “With your arm against the thigh, the biceps is isolated and better targeted,” says Matthews. Strong biceps are key for picking up and carrying heavy items, like grocery bags.

BEGINNER MODIFICATION Use a 3-pound dumbbell and progress from there. Or perform a hammer curl: Stand with feet hip-width apart and arms down by your sides, holding a dumbbell in each hand. Your palms should face your body as you bend one arm at a time, bringing the weight to the front of your shoulders, then lowering it. Repeat with the other arm and continue alternating.



CHEST

DUMBBELL FLY

Lie on your back on a bench, feet flat on the floor. While holding 5-pound dumbbells, extend your arms toward the ceiling with palms facing each other and hands above your chest. Open your arms straight out to the sides and in

line with your chest. Keeping a slight bend in the elbows, bring dumbbells back to the start and repeat.

SCULPTING SECRET This move perks up your bustline. Plus, when pushing heavy doors or a loaded shopping cart, you’re using your chest muscles, so strengthening the area makes these everyday tasks a cinch.

BEGINNER MODIFICATION This exercise is much more manageable if you reduce the weights to 2 or 3 pounds. Or opt for moving only one arm at a time.

TRICEPS

TRIANGLE PUSH-UP

Get into a push-up position, but form a triangle by touching your index fingers and thumbs. Bend your elbows slightly out to the sides and lower your chest to the floor without arching or rounding your lower back. Return to the start and repeat.

SCULPTING SECRET This slight variation on a traditional exercise really fires up the triceps, making the back of your arms less jiggy. It also works the shoulders, chest and core, giving it even more shaping power than triceps kickbacks or dips.

BEGINNER MODIFICATION Place your hands on an elevated surface, like stairs or a bench, and keep your feet on the floor. This lessens some of the load on your upper body.



BACK

SINGLE-ARM DUMBBELL ROW

Stand with your right leg forward and slightly bent, left leg back, with a dumbbell in your left hand. Tilt forward at the hips, resting your right palm on a bench. Draw the left elbow back, keeping it close to your body as your hand reaches your midsection. Repeat until you complete one set. Switch sides.

SCULPTING SECRET Pulling is one of the body’s main motions, and a strong back makes it easier. It also counteracts the chest dumbbell fly move for a balanced upper body and better posture.

BEGINNER MODIFICATION Use a resistance band to do a seated row. Sit with your legs extended, knees slightly bent. Place the band around your feet, crisscrossing it at your hands. With arms extended and palms facing the floor, pull the band back so that your hands are in line with your chest. Re-extend your arms and repeat.



CORE PLANK

In push-up position, place your forearms on the floor, elbows in line with your shoulders and body straight from head to toe. Hold this position as long as possible—even if it's just 5 seconds at first. Don't tilt your hips toward the sky or floor or move your shoulders forward.

SCULPTING SECRET "The plank is one of the most effective exercises for challenging your entire midsection," says Matthews. That means it helps you beat the bulge. It's ideal for lower-back-pain sufferers too, because it strengthens the deep core muscles without putting pressure on the spine.

BEGINNER MODIFICATION Place your knees on the floor, keeping elbows in line with shoulders and maintaining your hips in a neutral position. Once you're able to hold this position for 30 seconds, it's time to move on to the next level.



BUTT DONKEY KICKS

Get on all fours, aligning wrists with your shoulders and knees with your hips. Engage your core and keep a neutral spine as you lift your left leg with knee bent. Press the foot up toward the ceiling, moving only at the hips, and back down. Complete one set, then switch legs.

SCULPTING SECRET Say hello to a firm tush that looks great in skinny jeans! This ranks number one for toning your gluteus maximus—the butt's biggest muscle. A particular must-do for frequent runners or walkers, it strengthens the muscles that surround the hips to help maintain an injury-reducing gait.

BEGINNER MODIFICATION Perform a glute bridge instead. Lie on your back with your knees bent, feet flat on the floor and hip-width apart. Engage your core and lift your hips toward the ceiling without arching your lower back. Slowly return your butt to the floor and repeat.



LEGS

SQUATS WITH DUMBBELLS

Stand with feet hip-width apart and hold 5-pound dumbbells just in front of your shoulders. Bend your knees and lower as if sitting down in a chair, keeping knees in line with ankles and chest up. Rise to the standing position and repeat.

SCULPTING SECRET An oldie but a results-guaranteed goodie, the squat works the front and back of your thighs plus multiple muscles across the hip and knee joints, making it a super-efficient exercise. It also copies movements from day-to-day life, like bending to pick up kids or taking a seat.

BEGINNER MODIFICATION Drop the weights and perform traditional squats using only your body weight.

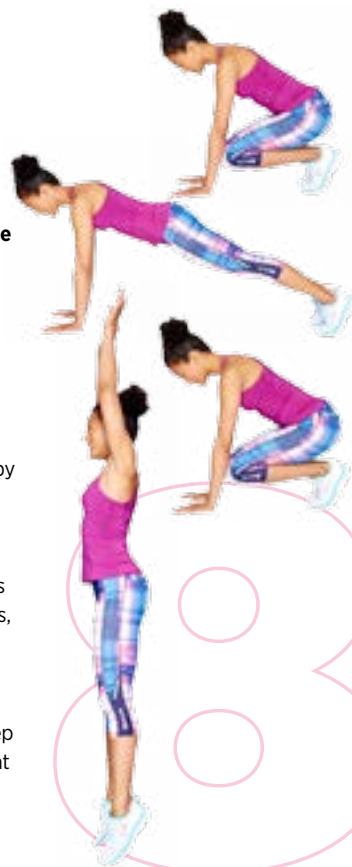
WHOLE BODY

BURPEE

From a standing position, squat down and place both hands on the floor. Jump the legs back into a high plank position. Lower your chest to the floor and push back up. Jump your legs back up to the hands and leap into the air. Repeat.

SCULPTING SECRET You'll get more done in less time by toning your arms, legs and core all at once. This move also adds a cardio element that research shows requires more energy (in other words, burns more calories) than other resistance exercises.

BEGINNER MODIFICATION Rather than jumping, just step back and forward, one foot at a time. Place your knees on the floor for the push-up or eliminate the last jump.



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