

Step right up

Take the stairs to sculpt a sexier and stronger lower half.

By Mallory Creveling



DRIVING FORCE
Pump your arms, elbows bent 90 degrees, for more power as you run up the stairs.

Think coaches send athletes running up stairs as punishment? On the contrary: The workout is a supercharged strengthener for the hamstrings, quads, and glutes and helps boost performance on even ground too. "You have to get in a forward-leaning position and drive your feet down and back," says Paul Juris, executive director of the Cybex Research Institute in Medway, MA, who has led pro basketball players through bleacher routines. "That's the form you need to take off and run fast on flat land, so it'll improve your speed and acceleration." Sprinting stairs is also a serious calorie scorcher; you'll zap at least 10 per minute. Do this fun yet challenging plan, created by Juris, on any staircase to get fitter and more toned in no time.

YOUR WORKOUT PLAN

▶ **WORKOUT INTENSITY:** Hard

▶ **TOTAL TIME:** 25 minutes

▶ **EQUIPMENT NEEDED:**
A staircase or stadium steps

▶ **CALORIES BURNED:** 250–300*

TIME (mins)	WHAT TO DO	RPE** (1–10)
0–3	Warm up: Jog, do jumping jacks, and march in place for 1 minute each	3
3–5	Walk up, skipping every other step if you can; jog down	4–5
5–8	Side step up; jog down	4–5
8–11	Repeat minutes 5–8 facing the other way	4–5
11–12	Run up, skipping every other step; walk down	5–7
12–13	Do incline push-ups (see below)	5
13–15	Repeat minutes 11–13	5–7
15–19	Jump up every step, feet together (for an extra challenge, hop on one foot; switch legs halfway through); walk down	8–9
19–22	Do deep, walking lunges up on every second or third step, depending on height and depth; jog down	6–7
22–23	Run up every step, lifting knees to waist height; walk down	6–7
23–25	Cool down: Jog at an easy pace	3

*Calorie burn is based on a 145-pound woman. **Rate of perceived exertion; see page 195 for chart.

UPPER-BODY BURN

Incline push-ups work a bigger range of motion than ones done on the ground. The angle makes it easier to lower your chest farther, toning your arms and core even more.



Start in plank position with your feet on the ground and hands on the third or fourth step so your body is straight from head to feet [A]. Bend elbows until your chest touches the step [B], then extend arms to push back up to starting position. Continue for 1 minute, resting as needed.

Photograph by Chris Farnings; hair by Natasha Libel/ADFP.com; makeup by Clarissa Luno/ADFP.com; illustrations by Paul Oakley