

[IMAGE]

Make Shape-Up Simple: 3 Invigorating Exercises

By Editorial Staff

It's late April, months since you dedicated yourself to those New Year's resolutions, one of which was to get off the couch and get into the best shape of your life. So, how are you doing four months into 2013? Chances are you're like too many other resolvers who gave it their "best" shot for a few weeks in January, then hit a stumbling block and decided 2014 sounded like a better starting point.

Don't waste a whole year when a new body, a new attitude – a new you – is closer than you think. Get ready for summer fun and beyond with these three invigorating exercises you can do today (at least three times a week is even better!):

1. Burpees: Technically this exercise is called the squat thrust, but you'll remember it by it's common name – and by the fact that it's not just for the lower body; you'll get great full-body results from performing this four-part exercise. From a standing position, drop quickly into a squat position, hands on the ground. Then extend your feet back in one motion (essentially a push-up or plank position). You can do a push-up here first; otherwise, return to the squat position in one quick motion, then it's back to the standing position. To challenge yourself, you can also jump as high as possible, arms outstretched, at the end of each burpee (when returning to the standing position). Try to do as many as you can, building to sets of 15-20 with minimal rest in between sets.

exercise - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark *2. Sprinting in Place:* This is a basic exercise that yields big benefits, and you can do it just about anywhere. With arms and knees slightly bent, back neutral (don't round your low back or shoulders), run in place as fast as you can for 20 seconds. Stop for 10 seconds max., then repeat. Make sure you're keeping your knees bent and are using your arms during the movement. You're working not only your calves, hamstrings and glutes, but also your triceps and biceps. Feeling brave? Then alternate 20-second sprints with 20 seconds of jump rope or push-ups (see below) to get a true full-body workout.

3. Push-Up Variations: Everyone knows how to do a push-up, right? Well, try one of these fun, challenging variations: 1) Every time you lower your chest toward the floor, bend one knee up toward that side of your

body. Alternate knees / sides every push-up (do each repetition slowly at first until you get the hang of it.) Maintain form throughout, making sure not to bend your back or put too much weight on your shoulders. You'll get a chest / upper-body workout and a core-tightening, ab-crunching, glute-toning workout at the same time. 2) Set the timer on your smartphone or watch for 3 minutes. Your goal is to do as many push-ups as possible before the clock runs out. You choose the strategy, including how many to do for your first set, how long a break to take between sets, etc. But watch out: You'll find yourself fatiguing quickly after that first set!

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