

[IMAGE]

# Welcome to Boot Camp

## The New Era of Aerobic Fitness

By Editorial Staff

Long gone are the days of reaching in your closet for a French-cut leotard and dance shoes before a heart-pumping workout. In fact, even traditional fat-burning strategies like running, swimming and conventional aerobics classes seem outdated compared to the latest craze: boot camp-style workouts. "Boot camps" have become increasingly popular among fitness enthusiasts in search of a more rugged approach to their exercise routines. These challenging workouts incorporate a series of high-intensity aerobic and strength-training exercises performed one after the other. And we do mean one after the other!

How effective are boot camps? A recent study from the American Council of Exercise (ACE) and conducted by the University of Wisconsin, La Crosse, suggests that boot camp-style workouts compare favorably to other rigorous activities such as spin classes or cardio-kickboxing classes. According to the study, boot camp cardio enhances aerobic capacity, improves muscle fitness and promotes significant calorie burning - sometimes up to 30 percent of your daily calorie intake.

According to Cedric Bryant, ACE's chief science officer, enlisting in a boot camp class can do more than just help you fit back into your clothes after too many holiday treats. "During a boot camp workout, you can burn up to 600 calories per hour, which is obviously going to help with weight loss. But in addition to a great cardiovascular workout, you are also getting the muscular fitness benefit from exercises such as pushups, squats and lunges that you wouldn't get from a typical aerobic exercise." Boot camp-style workouts provide a full-body workout without having to stock your closet with fancy gizmos. Most of the routines include military-style moves that only require balance, endurance and a good pair of shoes. So if you're looking for a fun new workout (or if you're feeling guilty about those extra servings of sweet-potato pie this holiday season), sign up for a boot camp class in your area or pick up an instructional video for at-home use.

- Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark **Sample Boot Camp Exercises**

For an idea of what you might expect during a boot camp workout, do these fat-burning, muscle-toning exercises one after the other. Start easy; after only a few repetitions you might find it hard to get out of bed in the morning!

### **Leg Outs**

Lie on your back and bend your knees, raising your legs to a 45-degree angle. Place your hands behind your head and lift your head and shoulders off the ground. (Keep your lower back pressed to the floor and your shoulders raised during the entire exercise.) Extend your legs out and suspend them just above the ground; hold for 3 seconds. Slowly return your legs to the starting position and repeat. Start with 10 repetitions.

### **Bear Crawl**

Set markers about 15 to 20 feet apart. Starting from one marker, crawl on all fours - keeping your knees off the ground and your bottom in the air - to the other marker. Then turn around and repeat.

### **Crab Walk**

Kind of like a reverse bear crawl, a crab walk requires you to be on all fours - only facing upward. Set markers about 15 to 20 feet apart. Sitting on the ground, place your feet and palms flat on the floor (fingers should be pointed toward you). Lift your butt off the ground, tummy tightened, and begin "walking" backward from one marker to the other. Turn around and repeat.

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