



Q&A
Personal Trainer
By Lokelani McMichael

Speed Running

What's the best way to cram for my 5-K next month?
—Tracy F., Hoboken, NJ

You want to train, not strain. Too much too soon is a fast way to get hurt. Start with an easy 10-minute run to warm up. Then pick up speed for 60 seconds and return to your easy pace for another 60. Repeat this 10 times, then finish with an easy 10-minute cooldown. Do this workout three times a week. It will maximize your aerobic function, which will help boost your strength and speed without injury.

Back in Shape

Is it okay to weight train even though I have lower back pain?

—Irene A., Auburndale, NY

Check with your doctor to rule out any major problems—back pain is a leading cause of disability. While weight training, work on strengthening muscles around your core, which supports the spine. Avoid exercises that make you round your back, like situps or crunches. Instead, work your core with the plank pose, chinups, and seated rows with an upright posture. Keep a slight arch in your lower back to help maintain proper alignment.

Rest Assured

Some days I have to work out before I hit the sack. Is that bad for me?

—Julia P., Denver, CO

Not if you don't mind counting sheep. Evening workouts can leave you too revved up to sleep. Finish your exercise with a relaxing yoga move like the corpse pose. Lie on your back, then let your arms and feet fall to either side. The light stretch will help calm your mind and body. Before bed, have a glass of milk or cup of chamomile tea, which both contain tryptophan. This amino acid helps produce serotonin, a hormone that contributes to restful sleep.



Womenshealthmag.com/personaltrainer
Submit your questions for superstar triathlete Lokelani McMichael today. Then visit her site at lokemcmichael.com.

FAST FACT

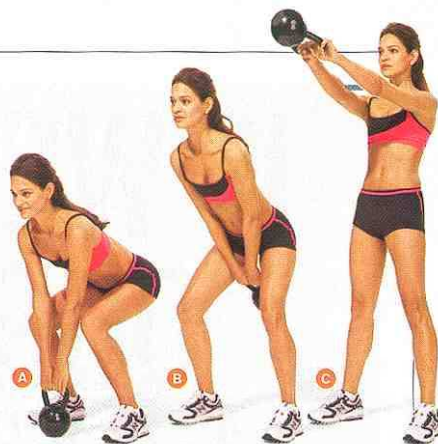
120

Number of minutes after strength training that your body burns calories at higher levels.
MEDICINE AND SCIENCE IN SPORTS AND EXERCISE

SWING

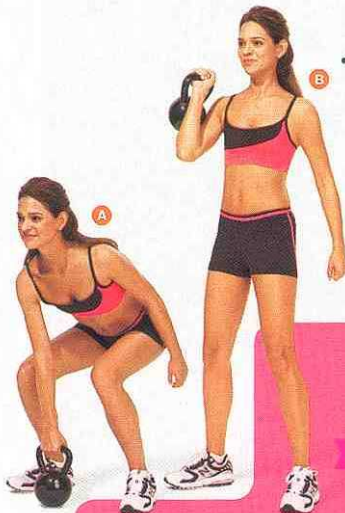
works glutes, hips, thighs, abs

Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart. Bend your knees, push your hips back, and grab the top of the kettlebell with both hands (A). Swing it back between your legs (B). As you stand up, snap your hips forward, squeeze your glutes, and swing the kettlebell to chest height (C). Let it fall back through your legs, but don't put it down. Repeat 10 times.



CLEAN

works glutes, hips, thighs, core
Standing with your knees bent and hips back, hold the kettlebell between your legs with your right hand (A). Swing it back no farther than your ankles, then forward toward your chest as you stand. Stop when your right hand reaches the right shoulder, keeping your elbow close to your abdomen (B). Lower it back to start. Do eight reps on each side.



bell curves

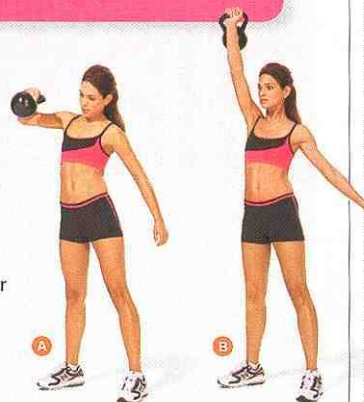
» Get leaner and stronger with one solid swing

THOSE CAST-IRON cannonballs in your gym are weapons of body-mass destruction. The target: your belly, butt, hips, and thighs. "Kettlebells work the entire body while giving you a cardio workout," says Sarah Lurie, founder of Iron Core in La Jolla, California. Start with a 6-kilogram (13-pound) kettlebell. Combine these exercises into a circuit and repeat three times, resting 30 seconds between moves. Do this three times a week.

SNATCH

works glutes, hamstrings, core

Standing with your knees bent and hips back, hold the kettlebell between your legs with your right hand. Swing it backward and, in one movement, stand up, squeeze your glutes, and raise your right arm past your collarbone (A). Punch your arm straight overhead, in line with your ear (B). Lower the bell to your collarbone, down your chest, and back to start. Do eight reps per side.



WINDMILL

works obliques, shoulders, hamstrings
Follow the instructions for the snatch, but this time stop when the weight is overhead. Turn both feet 45 degrees to the left and push your right hip out (A). Keeping your elbow locked and your eye on the bell, reach the left side of your body toward the floor past your toes (if you can) (B). Return to upright position and repeat without stopping. Do five reps on each side.

