

The Lazy Girl's Guide to Your Best Abs



Now that summer's heating up, it's hard to think about toning your tummy when all you want to do is lounge around. But with these no-sweat exercises and our speed-read of the latest ab-diet books, you can do both

Take a Break!

Experts say if you do these easy moves for 10 to 20 minutes, three times a week, you'll see results in less than a month

Read a novel while you ... Lie on your back on a floor mat with legs bent, feet flat. Exhale as you pull in at your navel and the abs just below it while curling your bottom slightly up, advises Hollywood trainer Jenna Phillips. Hold, then inhale as you release. Do two sets of 10 reps.

Surf You Tube and ... Sit back in your chair and tighten your abs as if bracing for a punch. "Don't suck in or push out—hold tight for five seconds," says Missy Beaver, who trains Katherine Heigl. Exhale, but don't slouch! Do two sets of five reps.

As your mani-pedi dries ... Sit tall on the edge of your chair with knees bent and feet on the floor. Contract your abs and use them (not your hip flexor) to raise one bent leg about four inches off the floor. Lower and alternate legs for 10 reps each. "This creates those pretty, vertical ab lines," says Kacy Duke, whose clients include Julianne Moore and Tyra Banks.

Watch TV while you ... Stand tall with your arms raised straight overhead. Contract your abs and then slowly draw a circle in the air with your outstretched arms. "Make the movement from your torso and you'll feel different areas of your abs engage," says Gabe Valencia of Manhattan's Focus Integrated Fitness, where Beyoncé has trained. Do eight reps in one direction and reverse.

Tan your back at the beach and ...

Put a beach ball between your feet. Keep your legs straight, forehead resting on crossed forearms. "Imagine pulling your belly button toward your spine as you squeeze the ball and lift until your thighs raise off the ground," recommends Sascha Ferguson, owner of Absolution in Los Angeles, where Faith Hill works out. Relax and lower. Do two sets of 10 reps.

Too good to be true?

Equinox Fitness now offers the ultimate lazy-girl lure: While you read a mag or doze, the Body Melt spa treatment uses low-level electrical currents to zap your abs as intensely as half an hour of crunches would—or so they say. "You won't do much damage, but there won't be significant positive results either," says Miami dermatologist Heather Woolery-Lloyd.

Better Belly Book Report

Can you really eat your way to a flatter tummy? We read three new ab-diet books so you don't have to

The Abs Diet for Women by David Zinczenko with Ted Spiker **Diet in a nutshell:** Six meals a day, focusing on healthy carbs, lean proteins and 12 key power foods that "trigger lean muscle growth and fire up your body's fat burner." Limit alcohol and caffeine and have one cheat meal per week and you could lose 12 pounds in two weeks. **Foods to eat:** Turkey, almonds, low-fat dairy, oatmeal, whey powder, spinach, eggs. **Experts say:** Good dietary info, but heavy on hype and promises—12 pounds in two weeks just isn't realistic.

Mastering Cortisol by Marilyn Glenville

Diet in a nutshell: A combination of food and the stress hormone cortisol causes belly fat. To avoid too much cortisol, have small meals every three hours, including a protein to stabilize blood-sugar levels. **Foods to eat:** Lean meats, whole grains, broccoli, goat cheese, berries, walnuts, essential fatty acids from fish. **Experts say:** Technical and educational, but you don't master stress hormones so much as manage them.

OUR PICK!

The Flat Belly Diet by Liz Vaccariello with Cynthia Sass **Diet in a nutshell:** Eat mild-flavored foods to banish bloat and a monounsaturated fat (aka MUFA) with every meal to help flatten your stomach.

Take in 1,200 calories for the first four days, followed by 1,600 calories for the next 28. **Foods to eat:** MUFAs like nuts, avocados and olives, as well as hummus, skinless chicken breast, cooked veggies and prepared dinners from brands like Amy's and Kashi. **Experts say:** The food options may be bland, but the diet is simple and effective.

Our experts: James O. Hill, University of Colorado-Denver; Pam Peeke, M.D., author of *Body for Life for Women*; Judith Stern, University of California-Davis



Zone Balance Pro, \$150
vewdo.com

Celebrity Test Drive

Jennifer Esposito of *Samantha Who?* discovers a fun way to rock her core without doing a single sit-up

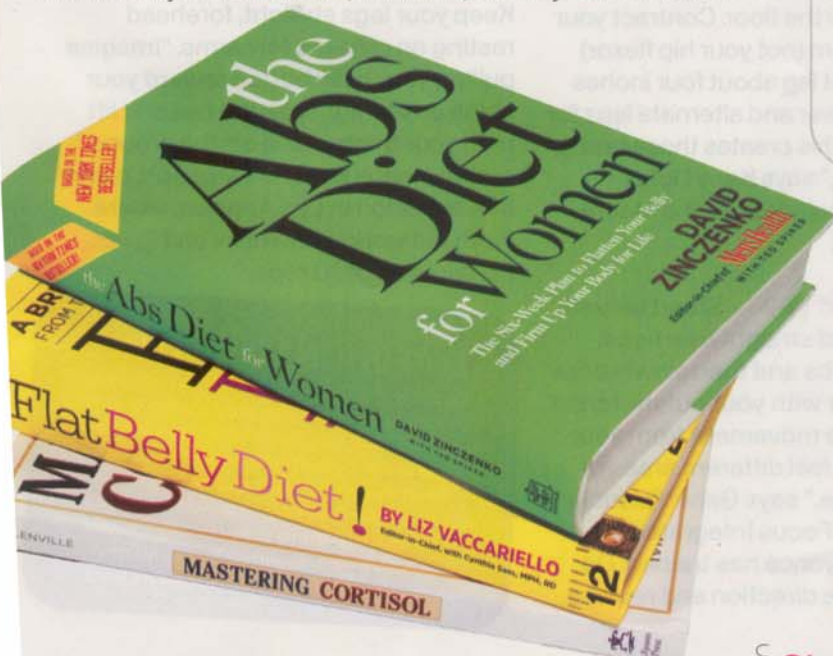


"It's a great way to switch up your tired old routine," says Esposito.

What it is: A balance board. It's like a skateboard, but instead of wheels, the platform is perched on top of what is basically a rolling pin. You stand on it and rock back and forth, trying not to fall off, which challenges your stomach muscles.

Benefits: If you're consistent, 10 minutes of balance boarding three days a week will give you better ab definition than 10 minutes of straight crunches, says fitness expert Gabe Valencia.

Jennifer says: "I love it. I was a gymnast and an ice skater, so my balance is good, but this is hard! You can do some serious toning. As you improve, concentrate on different areas—using your stomach more or keeping your weight in your heels to work the legs and butt. But don't try this in Prada wedges like I did the first time. Sure, you'll look stylish, but no one will be checking out your shoes if you have a broken neck!"



Beat the Bloat!
Mix 2 cups of Epsom salts into your bath and soak for 20 minutes to draw excess water out of your skin.

—*The Black Book of Hollywood Diet Secrets*

—Wendy Schmid