



week two

New year, new workout

The benefits of a new exercise regime go beyond your waistline, says Nalisha Patel, a personal trainer with mobile service HealthMastery. "You sleep better, it's great for stress management, it helps with mental clarity and your energy goes through the roof once you start working out. Shaping up also gives you endurance."

The exercises Designed to be able to be done from home, this workout will kick-start your motivation. You'll need two 3kg weights (dumb-bells or tin cans). A Swiss ball is a useful extra. Perform the exercises circuit-style, where you do the first exercise, then move on to the next. Rest for one minute between each set.



Target upper-arm flab, chest muscles and arms with push-ups:

- In a push-up position on the ground, resting on your knees, place your hands apart with fingers turned slightly inwards.
- Holding your abs tight and keeping your body aligned from knees to head, lower your chest to the ground until your elbows are bent at 90 degrees.
- Push up and repeat for 10-12 reps or until your muscles feel fatigued.



Target upper-back flab with bent-over rows (using dumb-bells):

- Place one foot about half a metre in front of you. Turn your back foot out slightly to protect your knee.
- Relax your neck, shoulders and head. Keep your abs contracted and bend from the waist to a 45 degree angle. Keep your back straight.
- Hold a dumb-bell at the side of your body, with your arm hanging straight down.
- Without allowing the dumb-bell to turn, bring it straight up alongside your rib cage, squeezing your back muscles as you lift up the weight to armpit level.
- Straighten your arm to return the dumb-bell to the start position. Repeat this motion for 12-14 reps or until your muscles fatigue.



Target upper-arm flab with tricep dips:

- Sit towards the front of a chair with knees bent and feet hip-width apart and slightly in front of you (or use a Swiss ball).
- Place your hands on the chair near your hips, then straighten your arms and lift your hips, bringing them slightly in front of the chair.
- Bend your elbows behind you about 90 degrees to lower your butt towards the floor.
- Press back up and repeat for 12-14 reps.



Target your butt and legs with free squats (use a Swiss ball if you can):

- Stand up straight. If using the Swiss ball, raise it in front of you at chest level. It will help you keep your torso upright.
- Keep your back straight and bend your knees, lowering yourself down as if you're going to sit in a chair.
- Keep your upper body straight and push back with your butt. Hold for 3 seconds as you squeeze your butt muscles, then raise your body back to the starting position. Repeat for 12-16 reps or until you fatigue.



Target your tummy with the Mason Twist:

- Sit on the floor with your knees pulled in.
- Lean back so your feet and legs come off the floor. Balance on your bottom while your hands are clasped in front of you. Use your abdominal muscles to stabilise yourself.
- Twist all the way to the left and touch your clasped hands to the ground. This is the first repetition. Keep your feet off the ground for the entire exercise. Make sure you twist into the movement so that your hands touch the ground and you feel your abs contracting.
- Twist to the other side and touch the ground. Keep going until you have done 25-35 repetitions or until your muscles fatigue.



Mix it up

Day 1 Push-ups, bent-over rows and tricep dips. Do two sets of each exercise.

Day 2 Free squats and Mason Twists. Add 20 minutes of cardiovascular exercise such as walking, using the cross-trainer or running on the treadmill.

Day 3 Repeat exercises as for Day 1. Add mountain steps in between each exercise (as pictured above). Start in a push-up position and jump one foot forward at a time for 12-18 reps at a fast tempo to increase heart rate.

Day 4 Free squats and Mason Twists. For cardio, try skipping. Skip for 1-2 minutes, break for 1 minute then continue. Gradually increase the length of time you skip for, aiming to skip for 10-15 minutes as you get fitter.

Day 5 Repeat exercises as for Day 1.

Day 6 As Day 4. For cardio, brisk walk for 35 minutes or use cardio equipment at a low intensity level.

Day 7 Rest day.

Ongoing programme: Each week, increase your cardio by 5 minutes until you reach 35-45 minutes of brisk exercise per session. Stick to between 12-18 reps per weights exercise, and as they get easier, increase the weight you lift, or perform each exercise a little slower. Keep motivated by reassessing your goals each month. Your 'why' could be a sports event you want to compete in or a dress you'd like to fit into.

Keep it moving

- If you're a beginner, get the advice of a professional before you start. For at-home fitness programmes, visit www.healthmastery.co.nz or call 0508 742 736.
- Pair exercise with something you enjoy, such as listening to music while you run on the treadmill.
- Combine strength training (weights) with cardio.
- Don't get into a rut. Your body adapts quickly so you need to introduce something different every week or so. Try new activities such as tennis or swimming.

week three



Your personal wellbeing plan

At this time of year, it's tempting to look to the past. But while it's important to take stock and acknowledge our history, **Next** columnist and personal coach Sarah Laurie says we must know where we stand now before we can move forward.

"Knowing where you are now includes not just where you are in your career but really looking at who you are. If you know who you are, the good and the bad, you can move forward to where you want to be."

It's all about taking responsibility and being accountable for yourself, says Sarah. The danger, she says, of ending up by default in a relationship, a state of health or a job, is that a sense of dissatisfaction prevails. If at your inner core you've taken responsibility for your choices – whatever they are – you can take comfort in that because you're living aligned with your values.

Steps to creating a life you love

Day 1 Be yourself and know your priorities Who are you? Who do you want to be in your world? What kind of parent, friend, lover, career person are you? Write it all down, then look at your lifestyle and see if you're living in a way that's aligned with the person you've just described. If not, make a note of some changes to make.

Day 2 Be grateful Begin a gratitude journal – a checklist of all that's going really well in your life at this moment – to remind yourself of the good things in your life.

Day 3 Get organised To bring more of what you want into your world, you must first clear out what you don't want. Whether it's your car, your office, an over-stuffed cupboard... you'll be amazed at how refreshed you feel when you get rid of the clutter.

Day 4 Get going Drop the excuses. We all feel better about ourselves if we get some fresh air and exercise.

Day 5 Experience bliss Consider your five senses and how you can treat them to some bliss today and every day. Put some fresh flowers into a vase, play your favourite music, burn some fragrant oils, eat strawberries... whatever works for you.

Day 6 Give a little bit Spend time with someone who misses you, send a card to someone on your mind, or offer some kind words to someone who needs it. It'll make you both feel good.

Day 7 Dream a beautiful dream Without limits, write down what you'd love your life to be in five years time – where you'll be living, who your partner will be, what job you'll have, what you'll be earning, what car you'll be driving, where you'll travel to. Inspire yourself. →