

body bonus



Group dynamics: Exercise feels easier with buds; a study in Biology Letters indicates.

Burn calcs with pals



Instead of shelling out for private sessions with a pricey trainer, savvy fitness-istas are all about small-group training. **Meaghan B. Murphy**, SELF's fitness director, shows you how to team up and slim down!

Trend alert! "Small-group training is booming—it makes up 99 percent of my business," says Peg Pardini, a trainer in Mount Lebanon, Pennsylvania. "It's economical, for one thing, but the social aspect is what has women hooked." My own sister, Erin Kurdyla, owner of M&E Fitness in Bridgewater, New Jersey, trains a crew of 5 to 10 women, and she couldn't agree more. (That's Erin, above, surrounded by regulars.) "Women hire me to lead what I think of as an 'interactive coffee date.' We vent and swap stories while getting a supereffective workout." Key word: *effective*. Just ask Janet Turchi, a mom of three in Erin's group who lost 30 pounds. "I push myself much harder with the girls than I do alone, and the camaraderie keeps me coming back," she says.

How it works A group of 10 or fewer (more gets unwieldy) hires an expert and meets at a park or home. The pro maps out a circuit routine with 6 to 12 move stations. Each person cycles through one of the exercises for 30 seconds or more, rotating to the next when the trainer calls time. All fitness levels are welcome: Working out with a stronger partner propels you to dig deep, a study from Michigan State University reports.



SNAP TO WIN! One BodyMedia Fit Core ArmBand (\$179) with a one-year subscription to its online Activity Manager (\$83) See it at Self.com.

What you'll pay Depending on the size of the group, a fit club can run you as little as \$12 a person per session, compared with \$60 or more for one-on-one training, Pardini says. To nab a pro, she adds, search sites (such as ACEFitness.org) that guarantee certified trainers, gather the gals and get started!

YOUR TURN

No access to a pro? You can still give small-group training a go with this do-anywhere DIY routine.

Your expert Kurdyla polled her clients for their favorite firmers and compiled six standouts. Turn to the tear-out cards for the winning whittlers.

You'll need A pair of 5- to 8-pound dumbbells, a few fit-minded friends and a stopwatch

What to do Arrange six stations. Begin as a team with a five-minute warm-up. Jog, do jumping jacks—anything to get your heart pumping. Then split up at different stations. Do the indicated exercise, moving to the next after 30 seconds; have one teammate man the clock. Complete each of the six stations a total of three times and you're done. High-fiving is highly encouraged!

FROM TOP: LARSEN & TALBERT; STYLING: LIDA MOORE MUSSO; HAIR: CHRISTY MCCABE FOR KERASTASE; MAKEUP: JOYFENNEL FOR DOR BEAUTY; LARSEN & TALBERT; STYLING: LIDA MOORE MUSSO; HAIR: KATSUMI MATSUO FOR REDKEN; MAKEUP: JOYFENNEL FOR DOR BEAUTY; SEE OF-T-T GUIDE

Tone up anywhere!

Speedy shaper
HEEL CLICK
works abs, butt, thighs

Stand with feet hip-width apart, arms down. Bend knees and jump as high as you can, clicking heels together (as shown). Land in start position, knees soft. Repeat for 30 seconds.

See the video at Self.com/fitness.

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Speedy shaper
IN AND OUT
works butt, thighs

Start in a deep plié squat, toes turned out. Lower left knee to ground (as shown), then right knee, coming into a kneeling position. Reverse to return to a plié squat. Continue for 30 seconds.

Log this workout at Self.com/go/logs.

Speedy shaper
CRAB GRAB
works shoulders, triceps, back, abs, obliques, butt, thighs

Start in tabletop, facing up, hands under shoulders, fingers forward, hips lifted with knees bent. Hold pose as you extend right leg and reach left arm to meet right foot (as shown). Return to tabletop. Repeat with opposite arm and leg. Continue alternating sides for 30 seconds.

Log this workout at Self.com/go/logs.

Speedy shaper
AB THROWDOWN
works abs, shoulders, triceps, hips

Lie faceup with feet lifted, knees bent 90 degrees, a weight in each hand, arms extended toward sky, palms facing in, head lifted (as shown). Lower head to ground and bend elbows, bringing weights to ears as you extend legs at a 45-degree angle. Return to start. Repeat for 30 seconds.

See the video at Self.com/fitness.

Speedy shaper
CAT-DOG ROW
works back

Start on all fours, knees under hips, hands under shoulders, a weight in each hand. Drop chin to chest, tucking pelvis under and rounding back like a cat. Lift chin, arching back, then draw weight in right hand to rib cage (as shown). Return to start. Repeat on opposite side. Continue alternating sides for 30 seconds.

See the video at Self.com/fitness.

Speedy shaper
BALANCING ACT
works shoulders, arms, abs, butt, thighs

Stand on left leg and raise right leg, knee bent and thigh parallel to ground. Hold a weight in each hand, elbows bent and raised to chest level, palms in. Balance, then stack forearms in front of chest, right on top (as shown). Return to start. Repeat on opposite leg, reversing position of arms. Continue alternating sides for 30 seconds.

Log this workout at Self.com/go/logs.

SNAP TO WIN!
 One of four pairs of Summit Series HD snow goggles with an integrated HD 720P camera from Liquid Image (\$250 each).
See items at Self.com

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Page 76 From left: blue tank, \$60; Sugoi.com. C9 by Champion purple tank, \$15; Target.com. Capris, \$60; Nike.com. Purple tank, \$68; Zobha.com. Tonic Lifestyle Apparel shorts, \$46; MyTonic.ca for stores. Blue top, \$20; ShopAdidas.com. Capris, \$40; ChampionUSA.com. Lija blue tank, \$80; LijaStyle.com. Shorts, \$48; Lululemon.com. **Page 77** Tank, \$48; AloSport.com.