think outside the gym

TIPS TO TURN YOUR HOME INTO YOUR OWN PERSONAL TRAINER

BY TRACY BARTON

“Wax on, wax off,” instructed Mr. Miyagi in the memorable scene from *The Karate Kid*. He had the right idea when he assigned physical chores like waxing the car and painting the fence to condition his young student Daniel for martial arts training. According to Mindy Mar, D.C., B.S., of San Diego Center for Health, which specializes in sports medicine and corporate wellness, most housework utilizes all of the muscle groups in the body. Everyday activities increase strength, flexibility and endurance and potentially reach your target heart rate.

“Don’t have to break your budget on a home fitness center, or fight traffic driving to the gym every day to stay fit,” says Mar. “Concentrate on the simple things and maintain a healthy lifestyle by incorporating health and fitness into daily living at home.”

Mar offers some ideas for staying in shape that would make Mr. Miyagi proud...

THE BRIGHTER THE TUB, THE SLIMMER THE WAISTLINE
Scrub the shower or tub spotless while sweating away calories. Try making bathroom cleaning an intense cardio workout. Start scrubbing harder and faster than normal and do it twice over. This will make scrubbing the tub more aerobic and will increase your heart rate to burn more calories.

A CLEAN ROOM EQUALS TONED QUADS
Try lunging while picking up toys, clothes, post-party trash and the like from the floor. Remember to alternate from leg to leg. Bend and hold the position for a moment before returning to a standing position.

LOOK LIKE THE STARS AS YOU WATCH THEM
During commercial breaks try leaning against a wall, then work your way down into a seated position of 90 degrees with your back flat against the wall and stomach tucked in. Concentrate on holding up the weight of your body with your quadriceps, hamstrings and gluts through the entire commercial break.

BECOME A FIT AND FABULOUS COUCH POTATO
While sitting in a chair, keep one foot flat on the floor and raise the other leg straight up in the air approximately 90 degrees and hold for two seconds. Raise that leg up for a count of four and lower back down for a count of six. Alternate legs and repeat 12 times.

STRENGTHEN YOUR CORE ON YOUR OWN FLOOR.
A flexibility ball at home is a must-have. Core strength is easily achieved from a variety of exercises and stretches that can be performed on the ball. For abdominal strengthening, lie face up with your back against the ball, feet flat on the floor and arms under your head. Raise your arms, head and shoulders and hold for 10 seconds, then repeat.

DANCE, DANCE, DANCE
Don’t forget that the coffee table can be moved. Dancing is a great exercise for the body, mind and soul. Turn on your favorite tunes and turn your living room into a dance floor. Practice some new moves or try and imitate Beyoncé’s new video for an hour. You can get as sweaty as you want to since you’re AT HOME. Plus, you’ll be sure to impress everyone at the club the next time you go out.

GET BACK TO THE BASICS
With all the new fitness equipment technology, it is easy to forget the simple activities capable of producing equally beneficial results. Push-ups, sit-ups and lunges are some examples of simple exercises that can be done at home. Try doing a few sets each day in the morning and at night.