

RECORD RESULTS

... *in just two weeks*

Get tight and toned – and look great – with this three-day push/pull workout. You'll burn off fat – torch 300 calories in just one workout in fact – and max your muscle development. BY PEGGY HALL | PHOTOGRAPHY ROBERT REIFF

Reader Letter

Dear Oxygen, I've heard a push/pull workout is an effective one that works all your muscles without the risk of overtraining. I'd love to get a week-long plan along with some exercises for my lower body. Thanks. – Kara, via email



Mind and Muscle

"Visualize the target muscle and consciously focus on making that muscle do the work throughout the exercise," says Brad Schoenfeld, a certified trainer and author. "This will improve results immeasurably as it forces the target muscle to carry the brunt of the work." In other words, put your mind where your muscle is, and get ready for the results!

If getting tight, trim and toned – in less time than you think it takes – is what you're after, then consider the tried-and-true push/pull approach where muscles with a similar function are grouped together. In this scheme, you train the pushing muscles of the chest, triceps and shoulders in one workout, and the pulling muscles of the back, biceps and posterior delts in another.

According to certified trainer Brad Schoenfeld, author of several books including *Sculpting Her Body Perfect* (Human Kinetics, 2007) and *Look Great Naked* (Prentice Hall, 2001), push/pull is a desirable split. "First, by training muscles that have similar functions in the same workout, you maximize the pump in these muscles which can aid in improving muscular development," he explains. "Moreover, since push muscles and pull muscles don't have much overlap in function, you can conceivably work out on successive days without risking overtraining."

Perhaps one of the most compelling

reasons for implementing the push/pull approach is that it can yield maximum results in minimum time. "Assuming the routine is properly executed," says Schoenfeld, "you should expect to see results quickly, generally within a couple of weeks."

The workout presented here employs the push/pull approach for the upper body two days a week and includes a complete lower body workout one day a week. "Push/pull doesn't work nearly as well for the lower body," Schoenfeld says. "The only true pulling muscles in the legs are the hamstrings. And because the hams are involved in co-contractions on any multi-joint thigh movement such as squats, lunges and leg presses, they would end up being trained twice as much as the quads in a push/pull scheme."

To shake things up after a few weeks, try doing a four-day split with squats and calf raises added to the upper body push day, and abs, deadlifts and lunges added to the upper body pull day. Alternate these workouts, ideally getting two days of rest before doing the same workout again.

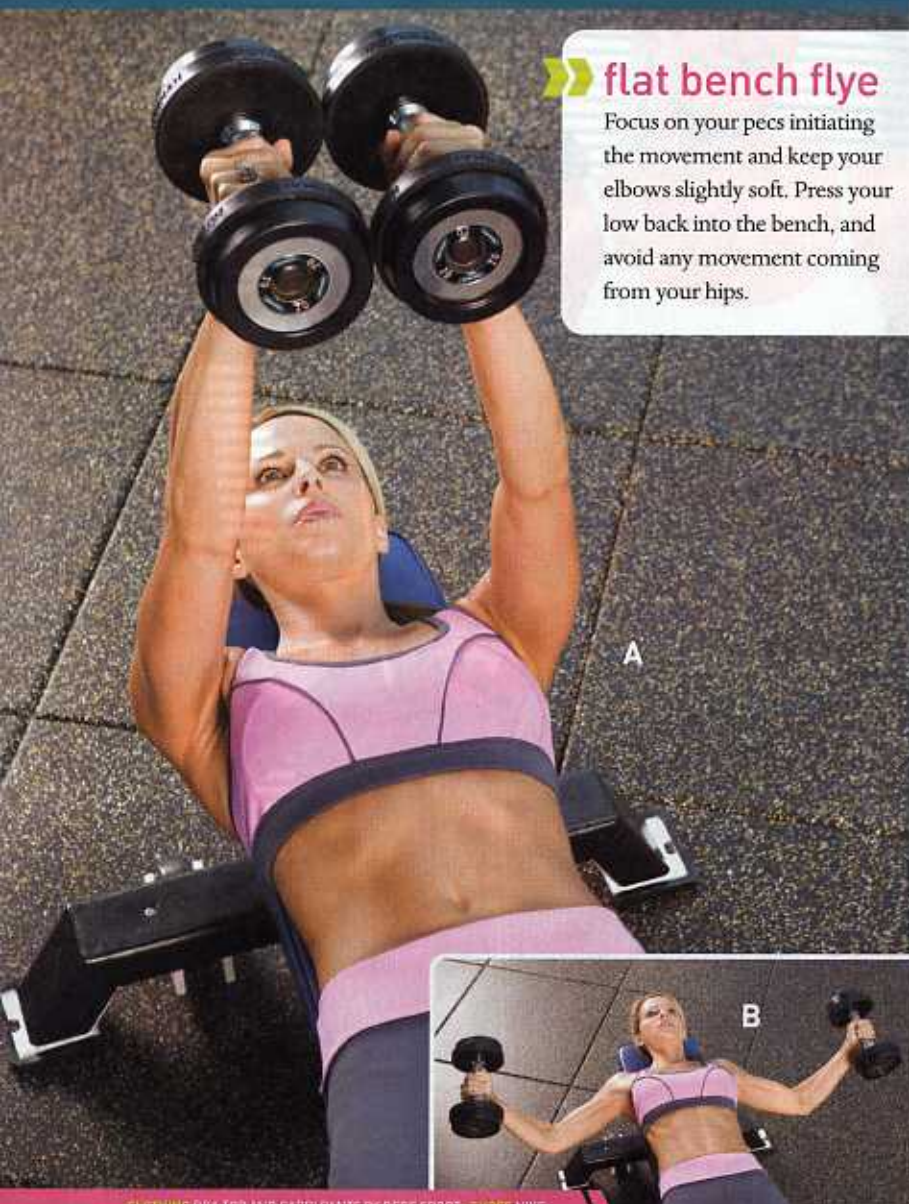
MODEL BRANDY FLORES | STYLIST JULIA PERRY | HAIR & MAKEUP NANCY JAMBAZIAN | ELISABETTA ROGGIANI AVAILABLE AT ROGGIANI.COM

Stand taller and look leaner with a push/pull workout.



CLOTHING BRA TOP BY ELISABETTA ROGLANI, CAPRI PANTS BY BEBE SPORT, SHOES ASICS

DAY 1: Upper Body **PUSH**



flat bench fly

Focus on your pecs initiating the movement and keep your elbows slightly soft. Press your low back into the bench, and avoid any movement coming from your hips.



barbell bench press

Take a wide grip on a barbell, lining up your wrists and elbows. Be sure to keep your lower back flat against the bench and your hips still throughout the exercise. Placing your feet on the bench or raising them into the air with your knees bent will help you achieve this.



dumbbell incline bench press

Hold a pair of dumbbells at chest level with an overhand grip. Press them together above your chest, squeezing your pecs for an isometric contraction. **Variation:** at the top of the movement, rotate your palms to face each other to accentuate the triceps work.

CLUTHING BRA, TOP AND CAPRI/PANTS BY BEBE SPORT, SHOES NIKE

By the Numbers

PUSH WORKOUT	PULL WORKOUT	LEG WORKOUT
Flat bench fly	Dumbbell curl	Dumbbell squat
Dumbbell incline bench press	Roman chair raise	Barbell split squat
Dumbbell triceps extension	Chin-up	Barbell side lunge
Arnold press	Close-grip pulldown	Dumbbell side lunge
Dumbbell lateral raise	Supported barbell row	Seated calf raise

30
Minutes

Time to complete each workout

300
Calories

Amount burned in one workout

3
Days

Number of weekly cardio sessions

2
Weeks

Time frame to start seeing results



» Arnold press

Start with your palms facing you and rotate them to face out as you extend your arms overhead. Engage your abs and keep your spine straight throughout the movement.



» dumbbell triceps extension

Keep your elbows aligned with your shoulders and contract your abs to avoid arching your back. **Top tip:** Keep all movement below your elbows – your upper arms should remain as close to your ears as possible.

dumbbell lateral raise

(NOT SHOWN)

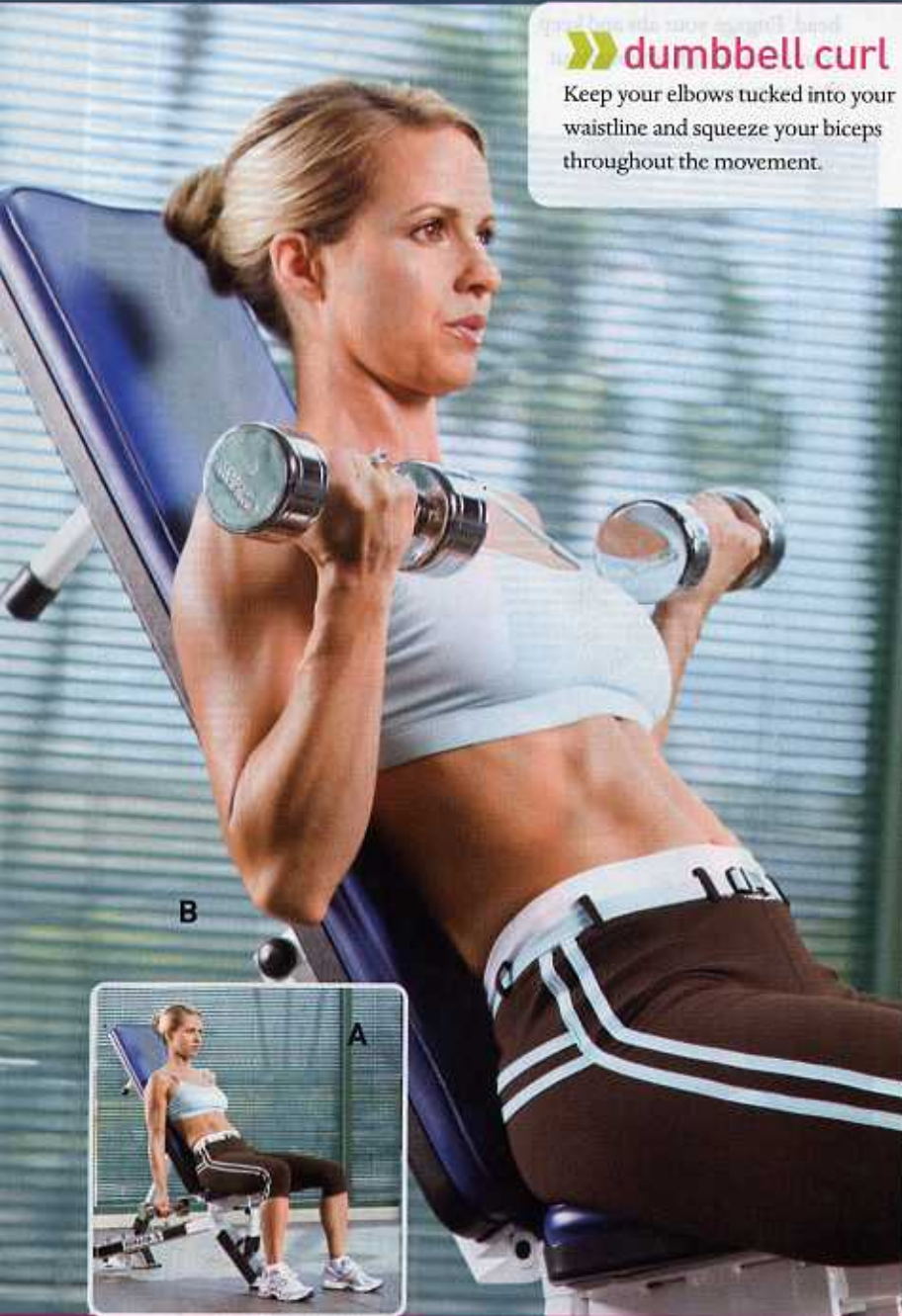
Keep your elbows relatively straight to increase the load on the muscle. Lift and lower dumbbells out to your sides with control, avoiding any swinging of the weights.



TOP TIP:
Always lift facing a mirror – you can correct your form far more easily.



DAY 2 : Upper Body » PULL



» dumbbell curl

Keep your elbows tucked into your waistline and squeeze your biceps throughout the movement.



Rev it up!

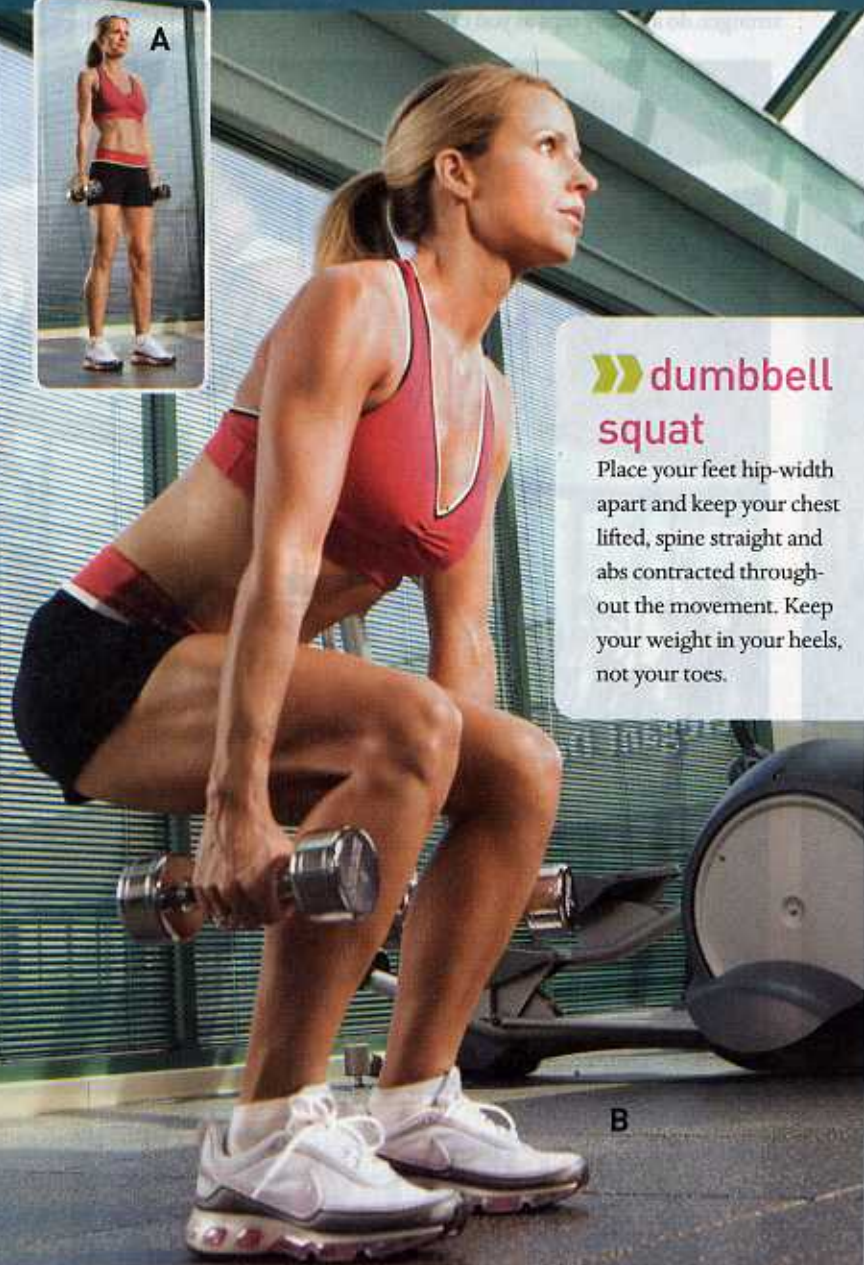
» **If you want to max your results, have another look at your cardio plan.** "The most effective cardio form for fat loss is interval training," says Brad Schoenfeld, certified trainer and author.

"Generally, three 30-minute sessions per week is optimal, trying to keep the high/low intervals at a one-to-one ratio after warming up." For example, after five minutes at a moderate intensity, work as hard as you can for 60 seconds, then rest and recover for 60 seconds. Continue in this manner for 20 minutes. [Beginners, increase the recovery intervals to two, three or even four minutes.] Give yourself another five minutes at the end of the cardio session for cooling down. You can perform your cardio right after your push/pull workout or on the days when you're not strength training.

» roman chair raise

Exhale and contract your abs to draw your feet (or knees) to hip level. Avoid swinging your legs as you lift and lower with control.

DAY 3 : Lower Body



» dumbbell squat

Place your feet hip-width apart and keep your chest lifted, spine straight and abs contracted throughout the movement. Keep your weight in your heels, not your toes.



» barbell split squat

Rest the bar across your shoulders, not your neck. Line up your front knee over your heel, not your toes. Press firmly through your heel to drive the weight back up.

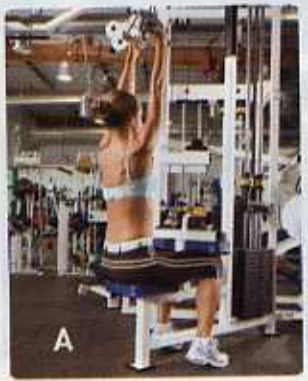
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Reps and Sets

- » **To tighten and tone**, turn up the heat (fat-melting metabolism, that is) by performing 15 to 20 reps for each exercise in the circuit.
- » **To focus on muscle building** (hypertrophy) do eight to 10 reps with a heavier weight and rest 30 to 60 seconds between each exercise in the circuit.
- » **To continue to see results**, mix things up from time to time by varying the order of the exercises, the amount of resistance, the number of sets and reps and your lifting cadence. "Changing your routine from time to time prevents adaptation, fostering better results," Schoenfeld says.

» chin-up

Take a wide overhand grip on the bar at the pull-up machine. Contract your abs and draw your chest (not chin) toward the bar. As you get stronger, do as many reps as you can on your own.



» close-grip pulldown

Take an underhand grip on the lat pulldown bar and lean back slightly, keeping your back straight and your abs engaged. Focus on pulling the bar down to your chest – squeeze at the top of the move for maximum results.



» supported barbell row

Depress your traps to keep your shoulders away from your ears and initiate the movement from your rear delts. If you take the time to set yourself up properly – by retracting your scapula – you'll reap the benefits.

» dumbbell deadlift

Point your toes straight ahead and keep your chest lifted throughout the movement.



» barbell side lunge

Stand in a wide stance, toes pointed forward, your back in a neutral position, holding on to a bar. Alternate sides, keeping both feet pointing straight ahead.

» seated calf raise

Sit straight with your feet resting comfortably on the calf raise step. Raise your heels and hold for two counts before returning to the start position. Rest a weighted plate across your thighs for added resistance and move through a full range of motion. ©