

# 7 ways to

# TONE UP YOUR BUTT & THIGHS

While you can't magically make one part of your body shrink (sorry ladies), it's possible to tone the muscles underneath. Get busy with fitness editor **Martha Lourey-Bird's** easy exercises.



## 1 STEP LUNGES

Keep your back straight as you lead with your heel to take a big step forward onto a step. Make sure your whole foot is on the step and pointing straight ahead. Lunge down, keeping your front knee above your ankle and your back knee just above the floor. Push up through your front heel to return to the starting position. Alternate legs after each repetition.

**EQUIPMENT: LOW STEP OR STAIR**

## 2 NARROW SQUATS

Stand with feet parallel and directly under your shoulders. Bend knees and lower your bottom as if about to sit on a chair. Holding a bar across your shoulders, distribute weight evenly through your heels and keep knees above ankles. As you straighten up to the start position, squeeze your bottom.

**EQUIPMENT: WEIGHTED BAR OR BROOMSTICK**



## 3 WIDE SQUATS

Stand with your feet wider than hip width and hold a weight between your legs. Bend your knees as if sitting back into a chair, keep heels pressed into the floor, chest open and knees behind toes. Bend down to between a 45–90 degree angle at the knees and squeeze your bottom each time you straighten your legs to return to the starting position.

**EQUIPMENT: 1 X DUMBBELL, WEIGHT OR HEAVY BOOK**





#### 4 WALKING LUNGES

Keep your back upright, with dumbbells at your side. Take a big step forward. As you lunge towards the ground, your front knee should be above your ankle and your back knee should be above the floor. Push up through your front heel and take a big step forward with your other leg so you are moving forward in an exaggerated walk.

**EQUIPMENT: 2 X HAND WEIGHTS OR BOTTLES**



#### 5 PELVIC BRIDGES

Lie flat on your back with your knees bent and arms at your sides. Slowly raise your pelvis towards the ceiling at a 45-degree angle to the floor. Squeeze your bottom as you reach the top, hold it, then slowly lower back down.

**EQUIPMENT: MAT OR TOWEL**

#### 6 LEG EXTENSIONS

Get on your hands and knees, with your back parallel to the floor. Bring one knee to your chest, then slowly straighten it out behind you, leading with the heel. Really tighten your glutes as you fully extend. Repeat with the opposite leg.

**EQUIPMENT: MAT OR TOWEL**



## HOW OFTEN TO DO THEM

According to the American College of Sports Medicine, doing 8 to 12 reps and 1 to 3 sets of these resistance training exercises 2 to 4 times a week will help strengthen and tone muscles. Start out easy and progress gradually. Once you're doing the maximum number of recommended reps and sets, slightly increase the weight you're lifting for more of a challenge. For example, if you're holding 3kg weights in each hand and the exercise has become too easy, up the weights to 5kg. Weights should never be extremely heavy – having great form is more important than pumping serious iron.

#### 7 STEP UPS

Pump your arms and lead with your heel as you step up onto something sturdy between ankle and knee height. Keep the movement continuous and lead with your toes as you step back down again. If it gets too easy, you can hold a weight in each hand.

**EQUIPMENT: HIGH STEP OR STAIR**

