



Thigh Blasters

Tone, trim and shape your lower body with the following workout from Sue Stanley.

The muscles of the lower body get quite a workout on a daily basis. We use our legs and our rear ends when we walk, sit, jump, stand, or kick. The lower body has the largest muscle groups of the body. Exercise will not only strengthen these muscles but will also increase our endurance. As an added bonus, firming these large muscles increases our metabolism so that we burn more kilojoules.

Muscles in the lower body

The lower body is made up of many large muscle groups such as the gluteus maximus, which is the large muscle that spans across your rear end, the quadriceps, these are the large muscles that make up the front of the thigh, the hamstrings which include the three muscles that run down the back of your upper thigh, and the calf muscles that run along the back of your lower leg.

1 Squat

Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, knees slightly bent and place the straps through each foot holding the gymstick behind your upper shoulders. Bend your knees into a squat position, no lower than 90 degrees, keeping your heels on the ground throughout the movement. Return back to the start position. Then repeat. Perform 2-3 sets of 10-15 repetitions.

Targeting your lower body

If you have a little lower body-flab, you have to lose body fat to get rid of it. The quickest way to do that is with cardio exercise, strength training and a healthy diet. Cardio is a must if you're trying to drop fat, so choose activities that allow you to burn the most amount of kilojoules in the least amount of time, like these:

1. Do something completely different than usual (if you're a runner, try swimming ... a walker, try cycling).
2. Increase your intensity – going faster

and harder burns more kilojoules, but watch your heart rate.

3. Do strength training regularly – build muscle, increase your metabolism and burn more kilojoules. Challenge your muscles!
4. Target your butt, hips and thighs by trying these activities: hiking, stair-climbing, cycling, and step aerobics. Here are some exercises using the gymstick that is designed to target the muscles in the lower body. Some of them are multi-muscle exercises, and others focus more on a particular area.



2 Lunge / Press Diagonal

Stand with your feet slightly apart and place both straps on your left foot. Hold the gymstick across your upper chest. Take a large step forward with your right foot into a lunge position simultaneously pressing the gymstick in a forward diagonal line. Keep your mid-section tight throughout the movement. Push off through your right foot to return back to the start position. Simultaneously return the gymstick to the start position. Perform 2-3 sets of 10-15 repetitions each leg.



3 Lunge Twists

Start with feet together. Hold the gymstick behind your upper shoulders, with both loops on the left foot. Take a large step forward with your left foot, as you bend your knees into a lunge position. Simultaneously rotate your torso to your left side. As you push back through your left foot to return back to feet together your torso will rotate back to the start position simultaneously. Repeat, leading with your left foot. Perform 2-3 sets of 10-15 repetitions each leg.

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4 Side Lunge

Stand with your feet slightly apart with the straps through each foot. Hold the gymstick behind your upper shoulders. Keep your toes facing forward. Take a large step with your right foot directly out to the right side. Bend through your right knee, keeping your left leg straight. Do not bend at the waist; gently push off through your right leg to return back to the start position. Repeat using your left leg. Perform 2-3 sets of 10-15 repetitions each leg.



5 Adduction

Stand with your feet slightly apart with the straps through each foot. Hold the gymstick behind your upper shoulders. Transfer your weight onto your right foot and bring your left foot across in front of your body. Keep your hips facing the front and your toes facing forward. Return back to the start position and repeat 10 times. Change legs and repeat another 10 times. Perform 2-3 sets of 10-15 repetitions each leg.



6 Abduction

Stand with your feet slightly apart, cross the loops and straps through each foot holding the gymstick behind your upper shoulders. Transfer your weight onto your right foot as you lift your left leg out to the side. Keep your hips facing the front and your toes facing forward. Return back to the start position and repeat 10 times. Change legs and repeat another 10 times. Perform 2-3 sets of 10-15 repetitions each leg.

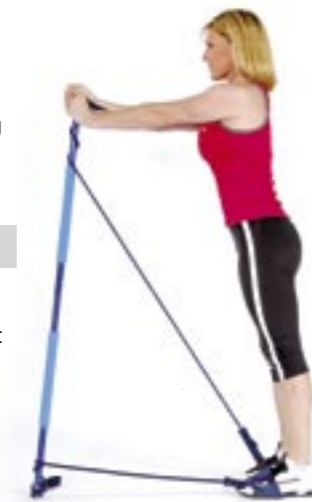


7 Donkey Kicks

Knee on all fours on the floor and place the straps through each foot. Hold the gymstick under the palms of your hands. Gently extend your right foot back behind you, keeping your head, shoulders, and hips through to your heel in a straight line. Slowly return back to the start position, then repeat using your left foot. Perform 2-3 sets of 10-15 repetitions each leg.

8 Kick Backs

Stand with your feet slightly apart with both straps attached to your right foot. Hold the gymstick at one end out in front of you. Lean forward slightly to transfer your weight onto your left foot then slowly lift your right foot behind you. Maintaining your posture, return back to the start position. Repeat 10 times. Change legs and repeat using your other leg. Perform 2-3 sets of 10-15 repetitions. **F**



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