Fit Forecast

Little Moves That Make a Huge Difference

Can’t get to the gym? Try these easy anytime, anywhere toners.

by Megan McMorris

ON HECTIC DAYS, THE GYM TENDS to drop off your to-do list. Rather than feeling guilty about skipping your workout, try slipping in these mini moves to increase your energy, soothe stress and tone up from head to toe. Leigh Crews, a spokesperson for the American College of Sports Medicine, and Michael George, owner of Los Angeles’s Integrated Motivational Fitness, share their favorite stretching and toning moves to sneak into your daily routine. You’ll look slimmer and sexier without even breaking a sweat!

In the shower: Shoulder reach
STRETCHES SHOULDERS
Lift right arm overhead, bending elbow and bringing right hand to the center of upper back. Place back of left hand on middle back, wriggling it up to touch right hand. Clasp hands behind back (use a washcloth if you can’t reach). Hold for 5 seconds; switch arms. Perf for 1 minute.

In line at the coffee shop: One-legged heel raise
STRENGTHENS CALVES
Standing on right leg, wrap left foot around back of right calf. Rise onto right toes; hold for 1 count, then lower. Do 20 reps; repeat on second side.

While blow-drying hair: Forward bend
STRETCHES HAMSTRINGS
When you flip your hair over, bend forward at the hips, keeping knees slightly bent. Place one hand on floor next to feet, feeling stretch in back of legs. Hold for 5 breaths; repeat on other side.

At work: Seated torso twist
STRETCHES LOWER BACK
Sitting in a chair, turn torso to the right, grabbing right edge of chair back with both hands. Take a deep breath and exhale as you look over your right shoulder, twisting as far as you comfortably can. Hold for 5 breaths; release and repeat on other side.

Reading the newspaper: Wall sit
STRENGTHENS QUADS
Standing with back against wall, scoot down until your knees are bent at a 90-degree angle, thighs parallel to floor. Keep your back flat against the wall and don’t let your knees come past your toes. Hold for 1 minute; rest for 30 seconds and repeat.

Cooking dinner: Standing push-up
STRENGTHENS CHEST, SHOULDERS, TRICEPS
Standing a little more than arm’s length from kitchen counter, place hands on edge of countertop, shoulder-width apart. Bend elbows, bringing chest closer to countertop, then extend arms, moving away. Keep body straight from head to heels. Do 2 sets of 25 reps.

Brushing your teeth before bed: Low squat with pulses
STRENGTHENS QUADS, HAMSTRINGS, GLUTES
Squat, bringing butt back as if you’re sitting in a chair, making sure knees don’t go past toes. Squeeze glutes as you pulse up and down slightly for 10 reps.