

women's

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health & fitness

love your looks

Get gorgeous legs!

By Blane Bachelor

They're the only pair you've got, so you can't trade them. But we can show you how to make them just a touch more loveable.

Liven up the lunge and spice up the squat.

Exercise gurus have long touted lunges and squats as an excellent way to tone, strengthen and shape the legs. And even more effective are variations of those moves that incorporate various directions and dimensions of movement, such as reverse lunges with a kick and jump squats. "A lot of machines at the gym are working one plane of motion, and your body moves in a whole bunch of different directions," says Stacy Berman, certified nutritional and sports fitness specialist and founder of Stacy's Boot Camp in New York City. "So in order to maximize your results, you have to work your body in all the directions that it goes. Even with basic leg lifts, you can lie on your side and lift your leg up and forward and backward." Two super-effective exercises Berman recommends:

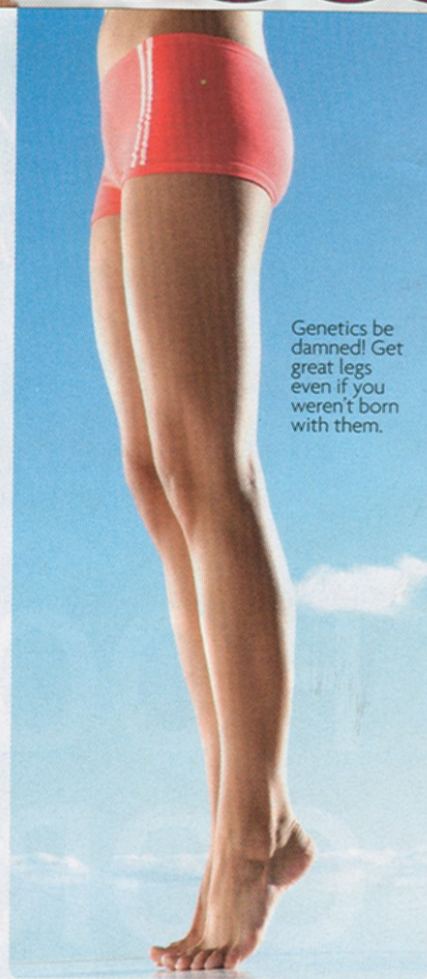
- **Reverse lunge with front kick:** Start with legs about six inches apart. Instead of stepping forward into a lunge, step right leg back and lunge downward, bending left leg and making sure left knee does not extend past toes. Pull right leg out of lunge and into a forward kick, leading with heel. For an extra shot of

intensity, lower kicking leg immediately back into the reverse lunge position. Repeat 15-20 times per leg and work up to two or three sets.

- **Jump squat:** Stand with legs shoulder-width apart and lower hips and butt into a squat, keeping knees above toes. Come out of the squat and spring as high as you can into the air, landing with feet shoulder-width apart, and immediately dip into another squat. The jump amps up the intensity of a regular squat with a dose of fat-burning cardio, Berman says.

Get a gorgeous glow — without the sun.

Many women focus on their face when it comes to sun protection, but one of the most crucial components in keeping those gams gorgeous for years to come is slathering on the sunblock to eliminate unsightly sunspots and discoloration and help skin maintain its elasticity. Even better, skip the sun altogether and go for a self-tanner or a tinted moisturizing lotion — bonus if it contains SPF. "Everybody wants tan legs, so the tendency of the younger generations is to be out in the sun all the time," says Dr. Steven Victor, a New York City dermatol-



Genetics be damned! Get great legs even if you weren't born with them.

ogist. "You're going to pay for [time in the sun] so badly later, you won't even believe it. There are millions of self-tanners out there that work very well."

Product Rx: Rimmel Sunshimmer Sexy Legs Instant Tan, Neutrogena Summer Glow Daily Moisturizer SPF 20, Estee Lauder Sunless SuperTan for Body

Discover the power of Pilates.

Your quadriceps — the largest muscle in your body — is actually made up of four different muscles, the smaller of which tend to get overshadowed in many strength-training regimens, says Tracey Mallett, a fitness expert and master Pilates instructor. Pilates, a form of training that evolved from workouts used by dancers, uses movements designed to elongate and stretch muscles, resulting in sleek, strong legs instead of short, bulky ones. "Pilates is wonderful for the legs," Mallett says. "It involves the smaller muscles that often cannot work because the larger muscles groups take over, and those muscles help shape the leg differently. That's why women, a lot of times, take up Pilates and yoga if they're athletic, because it leans them out."

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