



Motivation is only a dumb-bell away

The X-Factor

Crossfit is a potent combination of high-rep strength moves and cardio exercise that'll torch your fat

Save yourself time by combining your weight training and cardio into one lung-busting session. By taking on the principles of Crossfit – a style of extreme training that has swept the States – you'll build muscle and burn fat in tandem, picking up looks of awe from your fellow gym-goers. It's used by everyone from Olympians and soldiers to police officers and even housewives, and they all use the same programme. The thing is everyone's needs differ by degree, not by kind. We're all the same – we all have to stand up, sit down, lift stuff off of the floor and push

things overhead, be they weights or babies. All that changes is the size of the weights. If a workout calls for 8 reps of your heaviest weight then the powerlifter might crank out reps using a 250kg weight, while your missus uses her shopping bags. The workouts – by Andrew Stemler, head trainer of Crossfit London (stemlerfit.com) – have been designed for everyone to burn fat, regardless of how fit you are. Do the workouts 2-3 times a week, alternating between them to ensure your body doesn't slack off. You'll be trimming your workout time as well as your waist.

The exercises

1 ROMAN CHAIR BACK EXTENSIONS

Muscles worked Lower back, hamstrings, abs

The Roman chair looks like a piece of medieval torture equipment and the way Crossfit uses it you'll be giving up your darkest secrets in no time. Rest your thighs across the front and hook your ankles under the pads. Fold your arms and bend forward at the waist (i). Slowly raise yourself up until your upper body is straight (ii). You'll isolate your hamstrings while strengthening your lower back and abs. Check for any dropped change then return to the start.



2 PULL-UPS

Muscles worked Lats, biceps, traps

The mighty pull-up is the best upper-body exercise. Grab the bar with a shoulder-width, overhand grip and hang at arm's length (i) – it's not a full rep if you go from half way. Bend your elbows to pull yourself up until your chin crosses the plane of the bar (ii). Pause, then slowly lower yourself to the starting position without swinging around like the star turn at Monkey World. Don't stress if you can't do all your reps at once – take a break when you need to or use the assisted pull-up machine. But you must do them all – it's the law for this system.



3 ROMAN CHAIR SIT-UPS

Muscles worked Abs

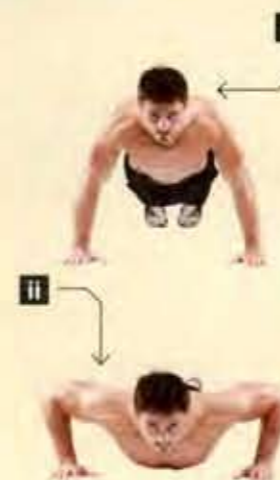
Make like a pancake and flip over on the Roman chair, tucking your ankles under the pads. Cross your arms and lower your upper body until it's almost parallel to the floor (i). Then rise up to the starting position while keeping your back dead straight, Dracula-style (ii). Keeping your back off the ground keeps the tension on your core for the entire rep – something that normal sit-ups don't do. The exercise itself will give your core a sound thrashing, and then there are all those reps to get through. ▶



4 PRESS-UPS

Muscles worked Chest, triceps, shoulders, abs

Lie face-down and support your body on the balls of your feet with your hands positioned slightly wider than shoulder-width apart (i). Bend your elbows to lower yourself, and just before your chest touches the floor (ii), explode back up to the start. Again, rest as and when you need to, but remember the aim is to crank out your reps in double-quick time. This will give you the power to win tussles on the pitch or in the queue for the bar afterwards.



5 BODYWEIGHT SQUATS

Muscles worked Glutes, hamstrings, quads, abs

Your glutes are your biggest muscles, so the more you work them, the more calories you'll burn. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart (i). Lower yourself towards the ground. Stop when your thighs touch your calves (ii). Going this low ropes in your glutes so your rear looks worthy of the tanga briefs your missus bought you last Christmas. Maintain a straight back and keep your knees in-line with your feet. Rise to the start but imagine you're pulling the ground apart with your feet to use more of your fat-burning glutes.



6 THE THRUSTER

Muscles worked Glutes, quads, abs

It sounds like a dodgy Marvel character, but this move will make a hero out of you. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and grab a bar-bell, sandbag or small child (ask first). Hold it at shoulder height (i), bend your knees and hips to squat down as low as you can (ii) then rise up and press the weight overhead (iii). Return to the start and repeat. At the top of the move, imagine that the weight, your arms and shoulders make a frame. Poke your head through it to slap some tension onto your abs. So while your glutes are stripping fat, your six-pack is being chiselled out, too.



Heed the PT call for fast fat-burning results

The workouts

The key is intensity. Crossfit won't just annihilate your fat stores – it's the fast-track to being an athletic all-rounder, equal parts weightlifter, gymnast and sprinter. Crossfit's speciality is not specialising. The sessions here have been designed for the gym but if you get the Crossfit bug, head over to stemlerfit.com and find yourself a local class.

CORE BURNER

"Perform 3 rounds as quickly as you can without rest and record how long it takes – then try to beat your time next week," says Stemler. The run warms up your core and performing the back extension first and sit-ups afterwards will cement your midsection with 360-degree strength.

CALORIES BURNT 254

1. Run 800m
2. 50 Roman chair back extensions
3. 50 Roman chair sit-ups

POWER BLASTER

"Perform the circuit just once," says Stemler. "Take a minimal rest whenever you need it because it doesn't matter how long this circuit takes you, the goal is simply to finish." If you can't do pull-ups then use the assisted pull-up machine. Alternating between running and weights moves will rope in all the muscle fibres in your legs, helping you to burn more fat.

CALORIES BURNT 478

1. 50 pull-ups
2. Run 400m
3. 21 Thrusters
4. Run 800m
5. 21 Thrusters
6. Run 400m
7. 50 pull-ups

SPORT STRIPPER

"Do this circuit as fast as you can," says Stemler. The 2km run fatigues your lower half so that when you do the squats you'll burn more calories than if you'd done them on their own. This will improve your sports performance by giving you gymnastic strength.

CALORIES BURNT 563

1. Run 2km
2. 20 pull-ups
3. 100 press-ups
4. 200 bodyweight squats
5. Run 2km

EXPRESS BURNER

"Do as many rounds of this circuit as you can in 20 minutes," says Stemler. The order of the exercises lets your upper-body rest while you're working your lower body. This will burn a titanic amount of calories for the amount of time spent exercising.

CALORIES BURNT 398

1. 5 pull-ups
2. 10 press-ups
3. 15 bodyweight squats