

Caroline's Calorie Burners

Getting in great shape doesn't have to be a gruelling act of strain, deprivation and misery. With my expert ideas, creating a body you can be proud of is easy and fun. Here's how...

1. Stimulate Afterburn

Afterburn is the continued burning of calories by your body following exercise. To achieve maximal 'afterburn' and therefore maximise your fat loss, your exercise has to be intense with quick bursts rather than long and slow which is common if you just sit on a bike cycling for 30 minutes. The fact is your metabolism stays elevated for several hours after a tough workout such as circuit training or boxercise. Hourly calories burned post-workout equals up to 20 per cent of the total calories burned during your workout. So if you burned 400 calories during a spin class, you could burn up to an additional 80 calories afterwards. So, work smart with short, sharp efforts rather than working dumb with the long, slow boring stuff and lose weight fast!

2. Discover your Inner Child

Most kids just want to play all day long, so it's little wonder that active kids are lean kids. These childhood activities all burn 100 calories:

- 10 minutes of skipping
 - 15 minutes of hula hooping
 - 20 minutes of playing tag.
 - 25 minutes of playing catch
- Lets play!

3. Drink Up!

You can burn 50 to 100 calories a day by drinking half a gallon to a gallon of cold water a day. Try drinking a glass of water before every meal to avoid overeating. Often we mistake thirst for hunger so if you think you're hungry, see if a glass of water will do the trick before you stuff your face with food! And don't forget, added hydration will improve you workout performance too. Bonus!

4. Play some Tunes

Whether you're running, lifting or dancing, research shows that high-speed music increases your pace and therefore your fat burning. Create your own playlist of tunes to push your workout to the limit.

5. Take Notes

Logging your exercise in a journal is the best way to monitor and progress your fitness and weight loss. Record all details of your workout from cardio duration and level to weight reps, sets and recovery rates. Also note your energy levels and any

other activity that day to assess and learn from why you may have felt either super energetic or fatigued.

6. Sleep Well

Lack of sleep affects leptin and ghrelin, the hormones tied to your appetite, and may cause cravings. Sleep releases a growth hormone which helps with recovery and weight loss. Even if you're getting 8 hours, it's the quality of your sleep that's important. So, switch off your blackberry, shut down the computer and clear all 'chatter' in your mind related to work to ensure you feel restful and relaxed when your head hits the pillow. Oh and some low fat dairy such as cottage cheese or yogurt are great bedtime snacks, recommended by JustSlim.

7. Get Outside

Maximise your calorie burn on the treadmill of life – the great outdoors. Uneven ground enhances your workout by engaging more muscle fibres in your core and lower legs. And the more muscles you involve in your workout, the more calories you burn. Stick on a pair of trainers or shoes with built in stability and your stabilising muscles will go into overdrive.

8. Put on a Comfy Pair!

Most people will walk more and therefore burn more calories when they wear a comfy pair of shoes to work. Those high heels just don't encourage you to take the stairs or a midday stroll. If your tootsies must look smart then pack some comfies in your bag.

9. Core Essentials

Spend 5 minutes a day doing the plank abdominal pose. This is a relatively simple way to strengthen your core. And a stronger core will improve your posture and exercise performance. There are several ways to vary the traditional plank to increase its difficulty rating too:

- Raise a leg or an arm then opposite leg and arm for added instability.
- Tuck one knee to the opposite elbow and out again for some oblique action.
- Rock back on forth on your toes keeping your body straight to engage the lower abs.
- Rotate from front plank to side plank and back again for a more dynamic variation.

10. Team Up

Head over to your local playing field or sports hall for a few team sports. The time just flies and the calories are blasted when caught up in a good game. Try the following for burning 100 calories:

10 minutes of football

15 minutes of volleyball

15 inutes of rounders.

By Caroline Pearce