



DENISE AUSTIN'S

# Shape, Strengthen & Sculpt Plan

Trim, Tighten & Tone in 12 Minutes a Day



YOUR 3-WEEK PLAN WITH BALL AND BANDS



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# About Denise





# About Denise

After almost 40 years of being a health and fitness instructor, I have seen my share of health trends come and go. Decades ago I started a morning workout show on a local Los Angeles television station. Since then, I have grown my brand online with a website and an online workout plan at [DeniseAustin.com](http://DeniseAustin.com), sold more than 25 million exercise videos and DVDs, authored 12 books on fitness, and starred in the longest running fitness show in the history of television!

Today, I like to focus my positive outlook and can-do attitude as a means to be an inspirational force and trusted resource for women who aspire to live an active, healthy, full lifestyle at any age.

As I grow older, I have come to understand that some exercise trends aren't trends at all - or shouldn't be, because they are so effective! That's why I put together this e-book... **I have found a stability ball and resistance bands to be some of the most effective workout tools you can own, no matter what your age.** They help to maximize every movement you go through, for a shapely, sculpted and strong body!

So let's embark on this 3-week plan together, to promote strong muscles, flexibility and balance, and a feeling of well-being and strength that comes with getting fit!

*Denise Austin*



# Balls, Bands and You





# Balls, Bands and You

As a mother, a wife, and a busy career woman, I know all too well how challenging it can feel to try to carve out a chunk of personal time to accomplish goals while balancing family, career, and other responsibilities. My secret to success, and what I'd like to share with you, is **placing quality ahead of quantity**.

I try to stick to this simple philosophy in every aspect of life. Each day, I strive for at least one good moment in which I can connect with my family in a meaningful way. In the kitchen, I cook up quick and easy meals by picking just a few fresh, healthful ingredients. During my workouts, **I concentrate on using the most effective equipment and routines, maximizing my results in a minimum amount of time**. I know that time is our most precious resource, so I want to make every minute work for me.

That is why I'm so happy to tell you that **you can sculpt your body and lose weight in just 12 minutes a day**, with the help of two pieces of equipment! Stability balls and resistance bands have revolutionized the fitness industry. I began using resistance bands more than 20 years ago and the stability ball more than 15 years ago, and have always been impressed with the results I've gotten since. When I combined the two pieces of equipment into a comprehensive, effective program, I was amazed at what they could do for me. After just 12 minutes with the ball and band, I had worked out every muscle in my body. It revolutionized the way I exercise!

Now I'd like to share this amazingly efficient system with you. My stability ball and resistance band program will help you **shrink your waistline, slim your hips and thighs, and flatten your tummy - all in just 12 moves per day... 12 minutes a day is all it takes!**



# Balls, Bands and You

You'll be astonished at how little time you'll need to experience dramatic results. Even more important, after you complete the 3-week plan, you'll feel the ultimate sense of accomplishment that comes from seamlessly integrating fitness into your life in a meaningful way that doesn't interfere with your roles as parent, companion, friend, and employee.

I am so excited you are embarking on this 12-minute a day workout routine... stick with it, and you WILL see results!

## Why Balls and Bands?

Let's take a closer look at the equipment you'll be using, the tools that make it all possible. Also called the Swiss ball, fitness ball, balance ball, and other names, this simple yet effective fitness tool got its start during the 1960's in the physical therapy industry. The stability ball was originally used to help children with cerebral palsy and adult stroke victims to regain muscle control. Over the years however, many physical therapists noticed that using the stability ball was also doing something else - it was helping these patients strengthen and tone their bodies, particularly the core muscles in the abdomen, back, waistline, thighs, and buttocks. Yet it produced zero pounding or jarring to the joints, serving as a safe, fun, and very effective rehabilitation tool.

Since then, the stability ball has rolled out of the doctor's office and into fitness centers and homes across the country, and for good reason. Stability balls have limitless potential to create efficient, effective, and fun workouts. **You will be able to tone your trouble spots while you improve your balance and coordination, all the while zeroing in on your core** - your abs, back, waist, hips, and butt - and working multiple muscle groups at once. In particular, the stability ball will help you to strengthen and tone those





# Balls, Bands and You

small, intricate muscles in your lower abdomen and pelvic girdle. That is important for women as it helps flatten the lower tummy, prevent incontinence, and even improve sexual satisfaction!



When you exercise on the ball, you're using muscles throughout your body just to remain balanced. So, for example, if you lie on the ball as if it were a bench and do a set of chest presses, you not only work the muscles you are targeting in your chest but also tone your abdomen, waist, and back muscles as they work to keep you balanced, and your thigh and buttocks muscles as they support your body weight. That's why I call this a total body exercise! Because the ball helps you use so many muscles at once in every single exercise, you can completely tone your muscles in much less time than with other exercise tools.

**When you combine the stability ball with resistance bands, you increase the effectiveness of your workouts even more.** Resistance bands provide the perfect complement to the stability ball; using them, you'll be able to simultaneously improve your flexibility and your strength.



# Balls, Bands and You

You can stretch these bands to do just about any traditional strength training or toning move that you would normally do with dumbbells, barbells, or exercise machines. As with dumbbells, the bands provide resistance, making your muscles work to overcome it. Because the bands stretch in any conceivable direction, however, you can tone and stretch your muscles through a greater range of motion than you could with traditional forms of resistance, creating a well-rounded workout.

The bands and the ball allow you to move your body through multiple planes - forward, backward, and sideways. You can rotate, twist, and move in arcs and circles. These multi-dimensional movements help to sculpt beautiful muscles from head to toe and inside and out.

The bands also improve your coordination because you must use your muscles in new ways to stay balanced as you stretch and release the band. What I really love about the bands is that they are **easy on the joints**. They are the perfect choice for people with arthritis and other joint discomfort because they provide gentle, yet consistent, resistance through a wide range of motion.

**I truly believe that the stability ball and resistance bands are the most important exercise accessories for busy women and men.** They enable you to reclaim your health and your life by allowing you to embark on a fitness and weight-loss plan that is entirely doable - you can and will get fit quickly and easily with this Plan! Best of all, you can do it in the privacy of your own home and even use your new fitness tools in many other ways. For example by sitting on my stability ball instead of using a desk chair, you are continually challenging your core muscles, getting exercise benefits while you type, talk on the phone, check emails... what could be a better use of time?!



# Balls, Bands and You

With ball and bands, less really is more.  
You'll be able to see fast results in a minimum  
amount of time. 12 moves in 12 minutes -  
it's that simple!

*Denise Austin*

## The Power Of 12

The Power of 12 is the whole-life strategy that will help you win the battle with the ticking clock.

The most exciting news about the stability ball and bands is that you can sculpt your entire body in just 12 minutes. No kidding! I have found 12 minutes to be the perfect amount of time for a toning workout. If you work out for less time, you won't see results. If you work out for more time, you may bite off more than you can chew, get discouraged, and be unable to maintain your fitness routine.

If you have struggled to fit in workouts at 30 minutes or longer, I designed this program with you in mind. Have you started and stopped exercising numerous times before? Perhaps you stuck with it for two or three weeks but then skipped a workout, then another, and then yet another. When you have a full schedule, it can be tough to find 30 minutes in a day to exercise. The good news is that you don't need to exercise for that long to see amazing results - you only need 12 minutes. I like to encourage people to set the alarm clock for 12 minutes earlier and get up for your daily toning session. Get your workout out of the way in the morn-



# Balls, Bands and You

ing, and you will feel good about yourself for the rest of the day! You'll also find that when you move in the morning, you tend to make better food choices throughout the day, and are more active throughout the day as well.

Another benefit of the balls and the bands is that you will be able to exercise anywhere, anytime. These two pieces of equipment allow you more convenience and versatility than any other type of exercise equipment. That convenience nearly guarantees that you'll keep your commitment to yourself. Not only are they packable so you can take them with you while traveling, you can use the stability ball as a chair, you can use the band anywhere you want, indoors or out, and both pieces of equipment can be moved from room to room with ease.





# Balls, Bands and You

## How My 12-Minute Ball and Bands Program Works

There are three crucial elements to my 12-Minute Ball and Band Program:

**1) THE 12-MINUTE TONING ROUTINE.** On Mondays through Saturdays you will spend about 12 minutes performing 12 efficient moves with the stability ball and bands. These “daily dozen” routines will tone and sculpt beautiful lean muscles in your legs, hips, tummy, arms, chest and back. They will also improve your balance and coordination, your overall body strength, and your flexibility. At the end of each week, you will have sculpted and stretched all of your muscles, from head to toe.

**2) A CUSTOMIZED CARDIO PLAN.** Cardiovascular exercise helps condition your heart and lungs and burns fat. You will choose from five levels of cardio based on your lifestyle and fitness goals.

**3) REJUVENATING REST.** During your 3-week plan I’ve selected Sunday as the day for a very important fitness function - rest. Use your Sunday to revitalize yourself for the week to come, to let your muscles recover, and to recharge and refresh your mind. And because preparation is half the battle, I’ll provide tips to help you get organized for the week ahead!

In addition, you will want to follow a healthy diet during your 3-week plan. Focus on fresh, whole foods, healthy fats such as olive oil, plenty of vegetables and some fruits, and lean protein. Make the commitment to your health to minimize unnecessary snacking, keep alcohol and sweets to a minimum, and eat thoughtfully, to really savor the nutrients, taste and texture you are delivering to your body.





# Balls, Bands and You

As you go through this guide, you will notice that first I walk you through my favorite exercises and stretches using the ball and bands. For many of these, I've included beginner, intermediate, and advanced versions, so you will always have options no matter what your fitness level.

I then take these instructions, and put them into a day-by-day, 3-week plan that takes the best moves you learned in each of the workouts and combines them into fun, unique, and challenging routines.

Each day during your three weeks, you will find a 12-minute routine and a daily wisdom tip. You can always add more exercises to the mix if you like, but 12 minutes is your daily minimum requirement. Make the small commitment and you will feel so great!





# Balls, Bands and You

Here are some additional motivational tips to help you lose weight and keep it off!

## Do Mini-Movements

I believe in what I call “Fidget-cizing,” performing little movements all day that add up to big results.

## Exercise At Home

Every little bit counts, so when you have a spare 5, 10 or 12 minutes, take advantage of it! I always say “If you rest, you rust!”

## Keep A Food Journal

Writing down what you eat and drink can help you stay on track.

## Mark It Off

Write down on a calendar the workout you plan to complete, including the type and length. Then give yourself a “star” when you complete it. This works for me to keep me motivated!

## Focus On The Intrinsic Rewards

In addition to helping you shape up and lose weight, exercise boosts your mood, releases stress, and generally makes you feel good all over!





# Balls, Bands and You

## Do It For Your Family

Getting fit does much more than help you look better, it also affects the health of your family. Your partner and children imitate what they see, so if you live a healthy lifestyle, you set the best possible example you can for your loved ones.

## Persevere

Don't give up if you don't see immediate results. You did not get out of shape overnight, and you won't get in shape overnight either. Remember that every little bit counts!

## Reward Yourself

A bunch of fresh flowers, a new workout top, or even a magazine and time in the bath can all help you remember you are doing good for YOU - and you are worth it!





# Balls, Bands and You

## Miracle Tools

### WHY BALLS AND BANDS GET FASTER, STRONGER, BETTER RESULTS!

I feel strongly that the stability ball and resistance bands are vital fitness accessories for busy people. The research is clear, they are some of the most effective tools you can use to firm up and slim down. The stability ball, in particular, has been shown in study after study to outperform the floor, chair, or weight benches as a workout aid.

For example one study completed at Memorial University of Newfoundland in Canada, and published in the *Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research*, found that exercisers more effectively toned their muscles when they completed their sessions while seated on a stability ball compared to while seated on an exercise bench or chair. The unstable nature of the ball required the exercisers to use more effort to perform each movement. Another study, published by the journal *Physical Therapy*, and completed by researchers in Spain, showed that exercisers used more muscle fibers in their abdomens to perform a curl-up abdominal exercise on a ball versus on the floor. Other studies reveal similar results, showing that the ball makes every type of routine, from stretching to toning, more effective.

When you combine the stability ball with resistance bands, you are able to stretch and tone your muscles in any conceivable direction. This combination is good for your appearance and your health. For example, to keep your spine healthy, you must be moving in all directions - forward, backward, to the sides, and in a twisting motion. Challenging your spine like this keeps it strong, healthy, and flexible. The same is true for the rest of your body. Other types of resistance only allow you to move linearly, ton-



# Balls, Bands and You

ing just the front and back of your muscles. The resistance band and ball allow you to move your body in arcs and circles, toning the front, back, and sides of your muscles. You'll use more muscle fibers, tone a larger area of each muscle, and sculpt the beautiful, firm curves throughout your body.

## Why The Ball Is A Great Core Workout

When you work out on the stability ball, you simultaneously tone the muscle you are targeting as well as your core - the group of muscles that form your abdomen, lower back, hips, and buttocks. For example, you'll feel many of the upper body exercises not just in your chest, shoulders, or arms but also in your tummy, buttocks, and thighs.

For many of us, the tummy is the toughest spot to tone, because few exercises target all the key muscles equally. Your abdomen is composed of three muscles:

- Your *rectus abdominis* forms the six pack along the front of your abdomen that reaches from your sternum to your pelvic bone.
- Your *obliques* form the sides of your waistline.
- Your *transverse abdominis* lies underneath your rectus abdominis, supporting your back and holding in your belly.

Just sitting on the ball - without performing any official exercises - gives your body a workout. You will feel your obliques and your transverse abdominis firm as they work to stabilize your torso.



# Balls, Bands and You

A strong transverse abdominis is the key to a flat tummy. When I work out on the ball, I can feel the deepest layer of my abdomen help me keep my balance. This critically important abdominal muscle goes unworked in many other forms of abdominal exercise, but my routines on the ball allow me to really feel the work and keep my abs in top shape.

Strengthening your transverse abdominis and other core muscles will do much more than flatten your tummy and shrink your waistline. A strong core supports your spine and holds your spine and pelvis in proper alignment. This helps improve your posture automatically and reduces lower back pain.

Your core is also your power center, the part of your body where all movement originates. A strong core creates power in your midsection, helping you to accomplish fitness goals you would never have dreamed possible before. A strong core allows you to whack a tennis ball with more oomph, improve your golf swing, spring higher off a diving board, do a headstand or handstand, and perform just about any type of exercise with ease. By working out with the ball and band, you'll also be developing the following:

**BETTER POSTURE.** The stability ball forces you to maintain proper spinal alignment, making it very difficult to hurt yourself or cheat on a movement. It encourages your spine and the muscles around it to maintain alignment, which will improve your posture. You'll find that after only a week of using the ball, you'll be standing taller and feeling more balanced and centered on your feet. This change in your posture will make you look slimmer, even if you have lost only a small amount of weight on the scale.



# Balls, Bands and You

**IMPROVED BALANCE AND COORDINATION.** Your balance can start to deteriorate in your forties as your muscles weaken and your nerve receptors lose sensitivity. The ball reverses this aging process by stabilizing your core. You'll work the small, deep muscles you use to keep your body steady while walking, and you'll also keep your spine supple and strong.

**WELL-ROUNDED FITNESS.** The curved surface of the ball and the flexible resistance of the band allow you to perform stretching and toning moves with a greater range of motion, targeting every muscle from every angle and creating a long, lean, toned appearance. You can move your body in all directions, targeting your muscles like never before!

**LESS STRESS ON YOUR JOINTS.** Resistance bands work with your body's own resistance through the whole range of motion. The elasticity of the band allows you to stretch and relax smoothly, preventing jerking that can damage muscles and injure the joints. There's never any strain - key if you've experienced trouble with arthritis or chronic injury.

**A MORE CONVENIENT WORKOUT PLAN.** Your ball and bands are easily stored, and neither takes up a lot of space or looks out of place in your living room. They are also easy to take with you when you travel. I love to pack my band into my suitcase or carry-on bag, and the ball is easily deflatable and inflatable if you want to bring that as well.





# Balls, Bands and You

## Caring For Your Equipment

Your balls and bands require very little care, and if you take some extra precautions, you can help extend their lives. With proper treatment, each of your new tools should last for years without breaking down.

**STORAGE AND SAFEKEEPING.** Store your ball and bands in a cool, dark place when possible. High temperatures and direct sunlight can wear down the latex and vinyl, causing your bands to rip and your ball to puncture more easily. Chlorine from a swimming pool will also reduce the lifespan of your equipment. When you're exercising, remove keys from your pockets, sharp jewelry, belt buckles, and anything else that could puncture the ball or rip your bands. Also, keep your ball and bands away from your family pets. Just one bite from a large dog can deflate your ball for good! See [page 150](#) for instructions on how to inflate your ball.

**INSPECT YOUR TOOLS.** Both your resistance bands and ball should last for years if you care for them properly. However, nothing lasts forever. The middle of your band - the part that you secure under your feet, hips, or back - will take the most abuse and will wear out first. Periodically examine it for small tears or cracks, and if you find any, replace it. And if your ball feels chronically under-inflated, it may have developed a small leak.

**CLEANING YOUR EQUIPMENT.** If your ball and bands get dirty, rinse them and then air dry them thoroughly. You can hang your bands from a drying rack, but not outside in the sun. Stay away from harsh chemicals, like cleaning products or water from a chlorinated swimming pool.



# Balls, Bands and You

## Designing Your Workout Space

Although balls and bands allow you to exercise anywhere, anytime, you'll definitely enjoy yourself more if you take care when planning your workout space. Chief among these considerations is giving yourself room to move! Make sure you have enough freedom to move around without hitting furniture. The following pointers can help as well:

- **COMPLETE YOUR WORKOUTS ON A SMOOTH, NON-SLIP SURFACE.** In the beginning, I suggest that you do your routines on a carpeted surface. This not only will feel more comfortable if you fall off the ball but also will steady the ball for you. After you've gotten more comfortable and confident, you can challenge yourself by moving your ball to a non-carpeted floor.
- **AVOID VERY HARD SERVICES.** Particularly in the beginning, while you get used to the movements, steer clear of concrete and ceramic tile floors. You don't want to bump your head. A simple fall could become a bit more painful if it happens on a hard surface!
- **USE A MAT.** If you can't find a non-slip surface in your home, use an exercise or yoga mat under the ball to stabilize your feet.

## Your Clothing

In most cases, the workout clothes and gym shoes that you already own will work just fine. You will want to wear clothing that allows you to move freely and does not bunch up. One caveat: Make sure you wear a top that covers your back and tummy. Exercising on the ball with just a sports bra can cause your skin to stick to the ball. This isn't dangerous, but it can feel uncomfortable.





# Balls, Bands and You

In addition to wearing comfortable clothing, you may need to experiment with your hair, especially if it is long. A plastic hair clip will dig into the back of your head when you lie against the floor, so I recommend that you not use one. A scrunchie or hair band will help keep hair out of the eyes and won't feel uncomfortable against the back of the head.

Because you won't be wielding heavy weights, you can safely exercise barefoot without worrying about dropping anything on the floor. Bare feet work just fine on almost all floor surfaces. If you find your feet slipping, however, definitely put on some shoes. Never work out while just wearing socks, as your feet will slide out from under you.





# Balls, Bands and You

## What To Expect

When you first use your ball, you may feel a little awkward, silly, or even scared. Don't let those feelings deter you! No matter how fearful you are, no matter how awkward your first session, no matter how goofy you think you might look, trust that little by little, over time, you will get used to this new way of moving and you, too, will come to enjoy the stability ball as much as I do. To help reduce any apprehension that you might have about using the ball, take a moment to have a little fun and acquaint yourself with your new equipment. Rather than perform any official toning movements, just sit on your ball with your knees bent and both feet on the floor. If you feel wobbly, you can do this near a wall and place a hand on the wall for extra support.

Once you feel comfortable sitting on the ball, bounce up and down. You don't need to make a big movement. Just bounce high enough to take yourself slightly off-balance - never take your feet off the floor. As you bounce, pay attention to how your trunk and abdominal muscles respond. Feel them working to steady your body.

When you feel comfortable with bouncing, sit still and lift one foot. You don't need to lift it very high, just high enough that you feel your abdomen firm as it works to keep you balanced. Then lower that foot and lift the other one.

### Eating For Performance

Certain positions require you to lie with your belly on the ball. If you've just eaten a large meal, this can feel uncomfortable. I recommend doing your ball routine first thing in the morning, when your stomach is empty. If you feel that you don't have enough energy, drink a glass of juice first or have a light snack. If you do your ball workout later in the day, make sure you do so at least two hours after eating. Listen to your body and experiment with meal timing. Eventually you'll discover the system that works best for you.





# Balls, Bands and You

Next, try wiggling your hips around on the ball. Shift your hips back so that you feel a curve form in your lower spine and your body weight come forward on the backs of your thighs. Next, shift your hips forward, feeling your tailbone curl under. Then, try shifting them from the left to the right. Finally, move your hips in a circle. But now you should start to feel more comfortable on the ball. These other tips will also help you get started:

**FEEL THE MOVEMENT.** For each exercise in this program, I've explained where you should feel the movement. For example, if an exercise says that it targets the back of the legs, you'll want to focus on that area of your body, making sure you feel those muscles contracting as you move. As you focus inward and concentrate on the sensations in your muscles, you will tap into the internal wisdom of your body and intuitively be able to optimize each exercise.

**HAVE FUN.** If you lose your balance, laugh! Give yourself permission to have fun while your body learns this new skill. Each time you try it, your balance and coordination will improve.

**DO A TEST RUN.** If you feel intimidated by an exercise, break it down into slow movements. If the exercise combines the ball and band, omit the band during your trial run. Then, just bring your body into the basic position of the exercise. Hold for a few seconds and then come out of the position. For example, for the Chest Press, forget the band at the beginning, and just bring your body into the position, then come out of it. Do this a few times. Once you feel comfortable, try it with the band.

Now that you know everything you need to about caring for and familiarizing yourself with your equipment, you're ready to learn my favorite ball and band exercises. Remember: Give yourself permission to feel awkward. Give yourself permission to laugh. Give yourself permission to spend time focusing on you! Have a ball!

# Ball and Band Exercises





### The Core Workout: Sculpting Your Core Muscles

#### TRIM YOUR WAISTLINE, FLATTEN YOUR BELLY, AND LOSE THOSE LOVE HANDLES!

I love toning my tummy with the ball. I have to do only a few repetitions of any of these 17 core exercises and I really feel it. No matter what part of my body I'm targeting, I'm always feeling it in my core muscles - my abs, back, waist, hips, and butt - as they work to keep me balanced.

In addition to the core strength I get from balancing on the ball, I also do a series of very specific exercises that zero in on crucial midsection areas, working my abs, back, and sides from every angle. In this chapter, I'm going to share those exercises with you. Do them twice a week or more, and you will love the results!

If you look in the mirror and think, "Boy, my body needs a good dose of middle management," keep in mind that tummy flab could be the result of different things. First, simple lack of use allows your internal organs to press against your abdominal wall, creating a rounded appearance, even if you carry no extra fat in your abdomen. Second, pregnancy and menopause can also weaken your midsection. As a baby grows in the womb, the surrounding abdominal muscles stretch outward. If you don't tighten up those muscles after delivery, your abs will remain loose and weak. And third, and probably least fair of all, some people are just genetically predisposed to store fat in their midsections.

To turn things around, however, **you need to spend about 12 minutes, two or three days a week, to whip your abdomen into shape.** The exercises in this chapter will help you to target five specific core muscles.



# Ball and Band Exercises

## THE CORE WORKOUT

### Your Upper and Lower Rectus Abdominis

Fibrous bands of tissue break up this large muscle that runs from your pubic bone to your ribs along the front center of your abdomen, creating the six-pack appearance. So while the rectus abdominis really is one large muscle, I like to think of it as two distinct ones - one below the navel and one above it - since you must perform one type of exercise to tone the upper area and another exercise to tone the lower section of the rectus abdominis.

### Your Transverse Abdominis

The ball can really help tone this muscle. This deepest layer of the abdomen lies underneath your rectus abdominis and helps you contract your abdomen and draw your belly inward. Strengthening it creates a natural girdle for the front and sides of your midsection.

### Your Obliques

Internal and external obliques form your sides and waist. Your external obliques sit closest to the surface toward the front of your waist, with the internal obliques sitting deeper and closer to your back. Toning them shrinks your waistline and love handles.

### Your Lower Back

Your lower back contains numerous muscles. One group, called the erector spinae, attaches to your spinal column at different points along your back, allowing you to bend it forward and backward and from side to side. Toning these muscles helps prevent back pain, and it also tightens and firms your entire lower back. That's handy for shrinking love handles or any other back flab that may stick out over your bra, underwear, or jeans.



# Ball and Band Exercises

## THE CORE WORKOUT

The following pages show 17 exercises that zero in on the core muscles. When doing each exercise, pay careful attention to your body alignment. A few repetitions of an exercise done correctly, to completely work your abdomen, are better than 20 sloppy ones.

**Remember: Quality over quantity!**

For most exercises, perform up to 12 repetitions. In a few of the movements, you'll simply hold the posture for up to one minute. When multiple variations of an exercise are shown try the initial, beginner version first and then progress to the intermediate variation when you feel ready.

Some of these exercises are very challenging, but don't let that discourage you! With dedication and consistency, you WILL see and feel the results - a flatter belly, a defined waistline, a stronger back and better posture. You can do it!





### Pelvic Tilt

**FIRMS YOUR LOWER BELLY**  
**STRETCHES YOUR LOWER BACK**

This is a great warm-up exercise. I like to do it at the beginning of an abdominal routine to ready my abs for harder movements.

- A** Sit on the ball with your knees bent and feet on the floor. Extend your arms in front of you at shoulder height.
- B** Exhale as you tuck your tailbone in, activate your abs, and bring your navel in toward your spine. Inhale as you release the tilt in your pelvis. Repeat tucking and releasing 12 times.





### Back Stretch

**OPENS YOUR CHEST**  
**RELAXES YOUR ABDOMEN**  
**ELONGATES YOUR SPINE**

I like to do this stretch periodically during my abdominal routines to give my tummy a little break.

**A** Sit on the ball with your knees bent and feet on the floor. Walk your feet forward as you slide your torso down the ball until your lower and mid back press into the ball, as shown. Exhale as you raise your arms over head.

**B** Continue to exhale as you lean back over the ball, allowing the ball to support the arch in your spine. Reach your fingertips toward the floor and fully extend your legs, as shown. Then inhale as you return to the starting position, lying back on the ball with your arms down. Stretch back over the ball two more times.





### Traditional Crunch

#### FIRMS YOUR UPPER AND LOWER TUMMY AREAS

If you've done any exercises on the ball before, this is probably one of the first movements you learned. The ball allows you to crunch against more resistance and through a greater range of motion than you would on the floor - but only if you do it correctly. It pays to zero in closely on your posture. A few small tweaks allow you to completely fatigue your abdomen in just a few repetitions, saving you lots of time!

**A** Sit on the ball with your knees bent and feet on the floor. Walk your feet forward as you slide your torso down the ball only until your hips start to clear the ball and the very bottom of your lower back presses into the ball. Cross your arms over your chest. Now here's where you really need to focus on your posture. Lie back on the ball so that your upper back also rests against the ball, as shown. Then tuck your tail bone in and lift your hips toward the ceiling. You should already feel your lower tummy and buttocks firm in this position - and you haven't performed a single crunch yet!



**B** Exhale as you lift your torso, pull your navel in, and contract your abdomen. Imagine you are curling the bottom of your rib cage and your pelvic bone toward each other, creating a firm arc with your lower body. Keep your chin up, as if you were holding an orange between your chin and neck. Inhale as you return to the starting position, lying all the way back on the ball. Do as many repetitions as you can up to a total of 12.





### Variations on the Traditional Crunch

C

#### INTERMEDIATE CRUNCH

To increase the challenge, interlace your fingers behind your head with your elbows out to the sides - this will add some weight to your upper body, creating more resistance for you to work against. As you crunch in this position, keep your elbows out to the sides - you should not be able to see them - and avoid using your hands to assist.



D

#### ADVANCED CRUNCH

To increase your resistance even more, extend your arms overhead with your palms together.



E

#### SUPER CRUNCH

With your hands behind your head, lift and extend one leg as you crunch. This will put you off balance, forcing muscles in your legs and core to shift and firm to steady you.





### Oblique Twist

**TRIMS THE SIDE OF YOUR ABDOMEN**  
**SHRINKS YOUR WAISTLINE**

As with the traditional crunch, proper posture is key to reaping the maximum effectiveness of the ball.

**A** Sit on the ball with your knees bent and feet on the floor. Walk your feet forward as you slide your torso down the ball until your lower back presses into the ball. Come into the crunch position. Tuck your tailbone in and reach out through your hips.



**B** Exhale as you lift and twist your torso, bringing your right shoulder toward your left knee. Keep your tailbone tucked in throughout. You should feel the muscles in your lower belly firm as they work to stabilize you. Inhale as you return to the starting position. Repeat lifting and lowering for up to 12 repetitions. Then switch sides.



**C** **ADVANCED OBLIQUE TWISTS**  
Lifting one leg will put you off balance, making muscles throughout your body work harder to hold you steady. Get into the crunch position, as described in the beginner version. As you crunch up, lift your opposite knee toward your opposite shoulder. As you release the crunch, lower your leg to the floor.





### Torso Toner

**STRENGTHENS YOUR CORE MUSCLES  
FIRMS YOUR THIGHS AND BUTTOCKS**

Now, here's an exercise that wouldn't exist if it weren't for the ball! The ball's round surface allows you to rotate your torso from one side to the other, strengthening the deepest core muscles. You'll feel everything from your feet to your shoulders working to steady you on this one!

**A** Lie with your upper back, shoulders, and head on the ball. Your knees should be bent at a 90-degree angle with your feet on the floor, a hips distance apart or wider. Extend your arms from your chest and press your palms together. Squeeze your knees together. Hold for 30 seconds as you breathe deeply.



**B** **INTERMEDIATE TORSO TONER**  
Once you can balance for 30 seconds in the beginner version, you're ready to rotate from side to side. Exhale as you bring your arms to the left and lift your right shoulder off the ball, as if you were swinging a bat. Inhale as you return to the starting position. Exhale as you "swing your bat" to the right. Continue to alternate sides up to 12 times.





### Lower-Tummy Firmer

**FIRMS AND FLATTENS YOUR LOWER BELLY  
TONES YOUR INNER THIGHS**

I love this exercise because it is so effective for both the lower tummy and the inner thighs, working below the belly button.

- A** Lie on your back with your arms down near your sides, palms facing down. Grasp the ball between your feet with your legs extended at a 90 degree angle to your torso. You'll really feel it in your inner thighs.
- B** Exhale as you curl your lower belly toward your upper belly, lifting the ball up and in. Inhale as you lower. Continue to lift and lower the ball up to 12 times.





### Tummy Flattener

#### FIRMS YOUR ENTIRE TUMMY

This is a great crunch position for beginners who lack the abdominal strength for the traditional crunch on top of the ball.

- A** Lie on your back with your knees bent and heels on the ball. Extend your arms toward your knees.
- B** Exhale as you lift your shoulders up toward the ball. The ball will shift and move slightly, forcing you to use your leg muscles to keep it from rolling away. Inhale as you lower. Repeat up to 12 times.



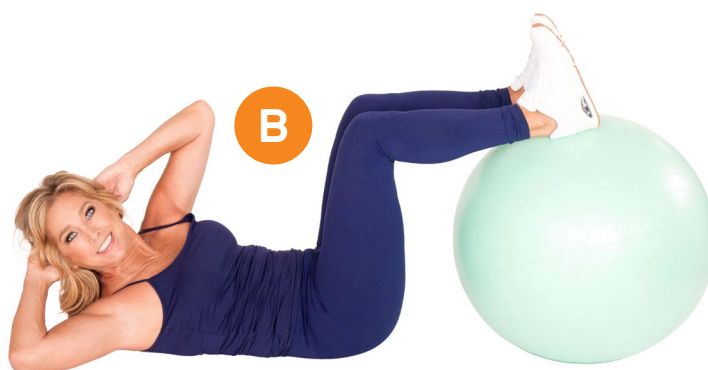


### Waistline Trimmer

**FIRMS THE SIDES OF YOUR TUMMY**  
**SHRINKS YOUR WAISTLINE**

As with the tummy flattener, this is a great option for beginners who lack the abdominal strength for the oblique twist.

- A** Lie on your back with your knees bent and heels on the ball. Interlace your fingers behind your head with your elbows out to the sides.
- B** Exhale as you lift your left shoulder toward your right hip. The ball will shift and move slightly, forcing you to use your leg muscles to keep it from rolling away. Inhale as you lower. Then lift your right shoulder toward your left hip. Repeat up to 12 times.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## THE CORE WORKOUT

### Plank

**STRENGTHENS YOUR CORE MUSCLES**  
**IMPROVES BALANCE AND COORDINATION**  
**TONES YOUR UPPER BODY**

In this exercise, the ball will shift under your body weight, causing your abdominal and leg muscles to firm as they steady you. You will feel the deepest layer of your abdomen working. This is what will help keep your abs flat!

- A** Kneel with the ball about one foot in front of you. Place your forearms on top of the ball with your palms together and fingers interlaced. Pull your navel up and in. Contract and “zip up” your abs.
- B** Exhale as you lift your knees and extend your legs, balancing on the balls of your feet and your forearms. The closer together your legs the harder it will be to balance. Hold for up to one minute as you breathe normally.





### Natural Tummy Tuck

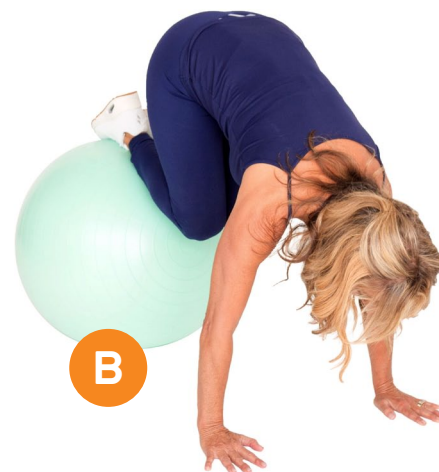
**STRENGTHENS YOUR CORE MUSCLES**  
**IMPROVES BALANCE AND COORDINATION**  
**TONES YOUR UPPER BODY**

This challenging move can really boost your metabolism. It targets your transverse abdominis muscle, to retrain your tummy muscles.

**A** Start in a pushup position with your shins on the ball and your hands on the floor under your chest. (Note: positioning the ball so that your thighs are against it makes the exercise easier.) Firm your abdominals and lift your hips so that your back is flat.

**B** Exhale as you tuck your knees in toward your chest, moving the ball along the floor as you do so. Inhale as you return to the starting position. Continue to tuck and then uncoil up to 12 times.

**C** **INTERMEDIATE TORSO TONER**  
Position your legs at a 90-degree angle with the tops of your feet on the ball. Then exhale as you move the ball along the floor so your legs are parallel to the floor. Inhale as you return to the starting position. Continue up to 12 times.





### Ultimate Tummy Trimmer

#### FLATTENS YOUR TUMMY BELOW THE WAISTLINE

The flexible resistance of the band will make your torso work harder to remain stable in this exercise.

- A** Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet on the floor. Lift your feet toward the ceiling and place the middle of the resistance band across your arches. Hold the ends of the band with your hands. Form a 90-degree angle between your legs and torso. Lift your upper body until your shoulder blades hover just above the surface of the floor.



- B** Exhale as you slowly lower your legs. Keep your hands stationary, stretching the band. Stop once you can no longer keep your spine against the floor. Inhale as you rise to the starting position. Repeat up to 12 times.





### Bicycle

**FIRMS YOUR LOWER TUMMY**  
**IMPROVES SPINE STABILITY**

Similar to the Single Leg Stretch in Pilates, this exercise zeros in on the lower tummy as you lengthen your legs away from your torso.

**A** Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet on the floor. Hold the ball above your chest. Lift your feet and bring your knees in toward your chest. Exhale as you extend your right leg. Pull your belly button in and tighten your abs.

**B** Inhale as you bring your right leg into your chest and simultaneously extend your left leg. Keep your lower spine against the floor and the ball motionless as you move. Repeat up to 12 times.

**C** **INTERMEDIATE BICYCLE**  
Lift your head and shoulders to help you simultaneously target your upper- and lower-tummy areas.





### Toe Tap

#### FIRMS THE LOWER BELLY

This is a great way to target the lower belly area - you will feel this one when you are done!

**A** Lie with your back flat on the floor and your feet on the floor, with knees bent at a 90-degree angle. Hold the ball over your head. Exhale as you bring your left leg up to “tap” the ball, keeping your right foot on the floor.

**B** Simultaneously move your left leg down and bring your right leg up to “tap” the ball, inhaling as you do. Keep the ball as steady as possible throughout. Repeat the left then right leg movement for up to 12 repetitions per side.





### Back Toner

#### STRENGTHENS YOUR LOWER BACK

The back toner is perfect for beginners with weak back muscles.

**A** Lie with your tummy on the ball, your knees bent, and your shins against the floor. Interlace your fingers behind your head with your elbows out to the side.

**B** Exhale as you lift your head, arms, and upper torso toward the ceiling. Stop rising when your spine is flat. Inhale as you return to the starting position. Repeat up to 12 times.





### Lower-Back Strengthenener

**STRENGTHENS YOUR LOWER BACK  
IMPROVES COORDINATION**

As you lift and lower your legs during this exercise, the ball will shift under your tummy, forcing your ab muscles to work hard to stabilize your torso. Tighten your abs and pull your navel in and up toward your spine.

- A** Lie with your tummy on the ball. Extend both arms and place both hands against the floor. Extend both legs behind, balancing on the balls of your feet.
- B** Exhale as you lift your left leg as high as you can. Inhale as you lower it. Repeat with your right leg. Try to keep your torso stable as you lift and lower each leg, to prevent any wobbling. Continue to alternate legs for 12 repetitions.
- C** Now do the same exercise with your arms out to the side, starting with your left leg and right arm, then switching back. Repeat 12 times per side.





### Rise and Shine

#### STRENGTHENS YOUR LOWER BACK

Similar to the Back Toner, the Rise and Shine takes back strengthening to the next level. The curved surface of the ball helps keep your pelvis in the ideal position for your back, reducing strain to the joints in your lower spine.

- A** Lie with your tummy on the ball, your knees bent, and your shins against the floor. Rest your palms on the floor in front of the ball with your arms in a wide angle. Exhale as you lift your head, arms, and upper torso toward the ceiling, as shown. Squeeze your buttocks muscles at the top of the motion. Inhale as you return to the starting position. Repeat up to 12 times.



- B** **INTERMEDIATE RISE AND SHINE**  
Extending your legs behind will challenge your balance as you lift and lower your torso.



- C** **ADVANCED RISE AND SHINE**  
Placing your feet against the wall and your hands behind your head will help you to lift just a bit higher.





### Reciprocal Reach

**STRENGTHENS YOUR LOWER BACK**  
**IMPROVES COORDINATION**

You may have done Reciprocal Reaches without the ball during one of my [DeniseAustin.com](http://DeniseAustin.com) workouts...doing them on the ball helps keep your pelvis properly aligned, preventing the lower back from arching. It also will challenge your balance as you lift and reach with your opposite arm and leg.

- A** Lie with your tummy on the ball. Extend your legs and rest the balls of your feet against the floor. Extend both arms and place both palms against the floor, under your chest.
- B** Exhale as you lift and extend your right arm and right leg. Inhale as you lower them. Exhale as you lift and extend your left arm and right leg. Inhale as you lower them. Continue to alternate sides for 12 repetitions on each side.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## LOWER BODY

### The Lower Body Workout: Make Your Lower Half Your Better Half!

#### SLIM YOUR THIGHS, LIFT YOUR BUTTOCKS, AND SHRINK YOUR HIPS

My 17 favorite lower body moves will help you to lift your buttocks, slim your hips and thighs, and form and shape your entire lower half. Try these exercises, and you'll soon make your lower half your better half! To understand how the ball and band exercises in this chapter work, let's first take a look at the anatomy and physiology of your bottom half.

If your lower half is currently not your better half, the culprit may be a combination of several factors. Most often it's due to genetics. Some of us, myself included, have inherited a set of genes that directs the cells in our bodies to deposit excess fat on our hips, thighs, and buttocks. We gain weight in this area first and lose it here last.

My personal trouble spot is my thighs. When I snack a little too much or slack off on my fitness routine, I definitely see it in my thighs. Fortunately, the balls and bands have allowed me to fit in quick and effective routines that target muscles in my lower half from every angle, helping to shape and firm thighs in a minimum amount of time.

To turn things around, we must focus on the following specific areas of the lower body.



# Ball and Band Exercises

## LOWER BODY

### Inner Thighs

Numerous muscles along your inner thighs work together to stabilize your knees and hips as you walk. Collectively these muscles are known as your adductors. They include the adductor magnus, minimus, longus, and brevis. Toning these muscles will help prevent your inner thighs from jiggling or rubbing when you walk.

### Outer Thighs and Hips

The muscles that help you do the standard leg lifts are called your abductors, and they include the gluteus medius and minimus along your hips. Toning these muscles helps you smooth away saddlebags. It also helps to draw them inward, creating indentations in your outer hips.

### Front of Thighs

The muscles that form the front of your thighs include your quadriceps, a series of four muscles that help you extend your knee and lift your leg. Near the top of the front of your thighs is another series of small muscles collectively called your hip flexors (the psoas major, psoas minor, and iliacus), which also help you lift your leg as well as propel your leg forward when you walk or climb stairs.

### Rear Thighs

Your hamstrings form the backs of your thighs, from your knees to your buttocks. Toning these muscles creates a great rear view and helps prevent cellulite.

### Buttocks

Collectively called your gluteals (glutes), your buttocks are formed by your gluteus minimus, medius, and maximus. You will firm these muscles and shape and lift your buns.



# Ball and Band Exercises

## LOWER BODY

The following exercises target those important lower body areas. You'll notice that I've included the band strategically in a few exercises, where it can really help you target your lower body.

Perform up to 12 repetitions of each exercise. In a few movements you'll simply hold the posture for up to one minute. If multiple variations of an exercise are shown, try the initial, beginner version first. Also, as I mentioned with the abdominal exercises, some of these exercises can be challenging at first, but don't let that stop you! During your 3-week plan, I start you off slowly with beginner exercises during week 1 and gradually build up to some intermediate and advanced moves by week 3.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## LOWER BODY

### Ball Tap

**IMPROVES COORDINATION AND BALANCE**  
**TONES YOUR THIGHS AND BUTTOCKS**

- A** Stand with your feet slightly wider than your hips. Place your ball about 1 foot behind your lower legs. Cross your arms over your chest (this will prevent you from using your arms to create momentum on the way up).

Inhale, bend your knees, and sit back onto the ball. As soon as your hips touch the ball, exhale and rise to the starting position, as if the ball were too hot to sit upon. Do this slowly at first. As you get used to the motion, you can move more quickly. Repeat up to 12 times.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## LOWER BODY

### Floor Tap

**TONES YOUR THIGHS AND CORE MUSCLES  
IMPROVES BALANCE AND COORDINATION**

This challenging exercise is great for those of you who ski or play sports that require you to constantly shift your body weight. Be gentle with yourself and have some fun. Your balance will improve over time.

- A** Stand on your right foot. Bend your left leg and lift your left foot off the floor. Hold the ball with your arms extended in front of you. Engage your abs.
- B** Inhale as you bend forward and bring the ball toward the floor. Just as the ball taps the floor, exhale as you return to the starting position. Repeat up to six times and then switch legs.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## LOWER BODY

### Hamstring Curl

**FIRMS THE BACKS OF YOUR THIGHS**  
**RESHAPES YOUR BOTTOM HALF**

Hamstring curls are a perfect complement to the Bottoms-Up exercise (next). I like to do them one after another in my routines.

- A** Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet against the wall. Rest your arms at your sides with your palms facing down. Exhale as you lift your hips and back off the floor, as shown, balancing on your upper back and heels.

Inhale as you bend your knees and pull the ball toward your hips. Exhale as you extend your legs. Continue to extend and curl the ball 12 times.

**B** **INTERMEDIATE HAMSTRING CURL**

Technically called the Hip Curl, this slight variation packs a big punch and will help zero in on and lift your buns. Start with your heels on the ball and shoulders and upper back on the floor. As you bend your knees and bring the ball in toward your hips, simultaneously lift your hips and torso, as shown, rising only until your shoulders touch the floor.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## LOWER BODY

### Bottoms-Up

**FIRMS THE BACKS OF YOUR THIGHS AND YOUR BUTTOCKS  
STRENGTHENS YOUR ABDOMEN**

I love this exercise because it really tones and shapes my legs. I don't have to dig my heels into the ball for very long before I feel it, right where I need it.

- A** Lie with your back on the floor and your arms down at your sides, about 45 degrees away from your torso, palms facing down. Rest your heels and calves on top of the ball.

Exhale as you raise your hips toward the ceiling and balance on the backs of your shoulders and your heels, as shown. Squeeze your thighs together and dig your heels into the ball. Do you feel it? Hold for 30 to 60 seconds, as you breathe normally and then release.

- B** **ADVANCED BOTTOMS-UP**  
To really feel it, try this exercise with only one leg on the ball. Extend the other leg toward the ceiling





# Ball and Band Exercises

## LOWER BODY

### Ball Squeeze

**FIRMS YOUR INNER THIGHS**  
**STRENGTHENS YOUR LOWER BELLY**

This exercise is so simple, yet so effective.

- A** Lie on your back with your arms down at your sides, palms facing down. Inhale and grasp the ball between your calves with your legs extended. Lift the ball off the floor as you exhale. Squeeze the ball between your legs as hard as you can, pulsing so that you alternate between squeezing and releasing, squeezing and releasing, for 20 to 30 seconds, as you breathe normally, and then release.



- B** **ADVANCED BALL SQUEEZE** Adding a twist to the ball squeeze will tone your lower belly and improve your coordination. Exhale as you squeeze your legs into the ball and rotate your feet clockwise. Inhale as you return to the starting position. Then rotate it counterclockwise. Continue rotating the ball left and right, bringing your feet in a semicircle motion, for 20 to 30 seconds.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## LOWER BODY

### Lower-Body Toner

**IMPROVES BALANCE AND COORDINATION**  
**STRENGTHENS ALL OF YOUR CORE MUSCLES**  
**TONES YOUR BUTTOCKS AND OUTER THIGHS**

This challenging exercise can be a lot of fun if you give yourself permission to laugh at your foibles!

- A** Lie on your back with your feet and calves against the ball, about 1 foot apart from each other. Rest your arms at your sides with your palms facing down. Exhale as you lift your hips and back off the floor, balancing on your shoulders and heels. Bring your feet toward the floor to the left, as shown, rolling the ball to the left as you do so. Go as far as you can without losing your balance.
- B** Inhale as you return to center and exhale as you repeat to the right. Continue alternating left and right for up to 12 total repetitions.





### Outer-Thigh Toner

**SHRINKS SADDLEBAGS**  
**STRENGTHENS YOUR ARMS**

When you lean your upper body against the ball to do the traditional leg lifts, you get two workouts in one. Your upper body will strengthen as it supports and balances your body weight against the ball. The sides of your waist get a workout, too.

- A** Kneel with the ball to your left side. Lean your left side into the ball and rest your left forearm on top of the ball for balance. Extend your right leg. Pull your navel in and contract your abs.
- B** Exhale as you lift your right leg as high as you can. Inhale as you lower it. Repeat 12 times and then switch sides.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## LOWER BODY

### Butt and Thigh Firmer

**TONES AND LIFTS YOUR BUTTOCKS**  
**FIRMS THE BACKS OF YOUR THIGHS**  
**STRENGTHENS YOUR ARMS**

As with the Outer-Thigh Toner, you get two workouts in one as you lean your upper body into the ball.

- A** Kneel with the ball in front of you. Lean forward and place your forearms onto the ball. Extend your right leg behind your torso, as shown. Pull your navel in and engage your abs.
- B** Exhale as you lift your extended leg as high as you can without arching your back. Inhale as you lower it. Repeat up to 12 times and then switch legs.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## LOWER BODY

### Deadlift

**STRENGTHENS ALL YOUR CORE MUSCLES**  
**LIFTS YOUR BUTTOCKS AND LENGTHENS YOUR LEGS**  
**IMPROVES YOUR BALANCE**

The ball allows you to do a traditional deadlift without hurting your knees.

**A**

Stand while holding the ball with your arms extended at chest level. Shift your body weight onto your right foot and extend your left foot behind your torso.

**B**

Inhale as you bend forward, extend your left leg behind and up, and touch the ball against the floor. Exhale as you rise to the starting position. Repeat up to 12 times and then switch legs.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## LOWER BODY

### Lunge

**TONES YOUR HIPS, THIGHS, AND BUTTOCKS**  
**IMPROVES BALANCE AND COORDINATION**

Adding the ball to the traditional lunge helps you work a greater proportion of muscle fibers in your thighs as the ball puts you off balance.

- A** Stand with the ball to your right side. Rest your right hand on top of the ball. Take a large step forward with your left leg.

Inhale as you bend your left knee and sink down into the lunge. Exhale as you rise to the starting position. Repeat up to 12 times and then switch sides.





### Leg Lunge

**FIRMS YOUR THIGHS AND BUTTOCKS**  
**WORKS YOUR ABDOMEN**  
**STRENGTHENS YOUR FEET AND ANKLES**

Performing the lunge with your rear foot on the ball increases the challenge to your balance.

- A** Stand with your left shin on the ball and your hands on your hips.
- B** Inhale as you bend your right leg and reach back through your left leg, extending your left leg as you move the ball along the floor. Exhale as you rise to the starting position. Repeat up to 12 times and then switch legs.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## LOWER BODY

### Back-of-Thigh Toner

**LIFTS YOUR BUTTOCKS**  
**FIRMS THE BACK OF YOUR THIGHS**  
**STRENGTHENS YOUR ARMS, BACK, AND ABDOMEN**

I was doing deadlifts with my ball one day when suddenly I had the idea for this exercise. Once I tried it, I loved it. This little gem tones just about every muscle in your body.

**A** Stand while holding the ball with your arms extended at chest level. Shift your body weight into your right foot and extend your left foot behind your torso. Bend forward and place the ball against the floor, as shown. Keep your abs engaged.

**B** Exhale as you raise your left leg and then inhale as you lower it toward the floor. Try to keep your hips level as you move. Repeat up to 12 times and then switch legs.

**C** **INTERMEDIATE BACK-OF-THIGH TONER**  
Simply bending your rear leg and lifting your foot toward the ceiling will help to zero in on that little bundle of fat that tends to bulge from the bottom of your swimsuit.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## LOWER BODY

### Quad Sets

#### TONES THE FRONT OF YOUR THIGHS

This exercise is deceptively more challenging than it appears.

**A** Sit on the ball with your knees bent and feet on the floor. Place your palms against the ball for balance. Zip up your abs.



**B** Shift your weight onto your right foot. Exhale as you lift your left knee as high as you can without losing your balance. Keep your lower back straight as you do so. Do not allow it to arch outward. Hold for 30 seconds, breathing normally, and then release and repeat with the other leg. If you lose your balance before 30 seconds, just put your foot down, re-establish your balance, and try again.



**C** **INTERMEDIATE QUAD SETS**  
Once you can easily keep your balance with your knee bent, try it with your leg extended and your hands behind your head. Don't allow your torso to wobble or your lower back to arch outward. Keep your abs tight.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## LOWER BODY

### Thigh Blaster

#### TONES FRONTS OF THIGHS

This is a great move for both the fronts of your thighs and your abs as the ball forces your core muscles to work in tandem with the move.

**A** Sit on the ball with both feet on the floor. Place your hands on either side of the ball, and lift your right leg until it is parallel with the floor, as shown. Hold for 15 seconds.

**B** Move right leg back to the floor, and lift the left leg, holding for 15 seconds. Repeat on each leg.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## LOWER BODY

### Hip Slimmer

**SHRINKS SADDLEBAGS**  
**SLIMS YOUR OUTER THIGHS AND HIPS**

You only need the band for this exercise to really target those outer thighs.

- A** Secure the band under your feet and stand with your feet under your hips. Grasp the ends of the band with both hands and position your hands by your navel.
- B** Exhale as you lift your extended left leg out to the side as high as you can. Inhale as you return to the starting position. Repeat on the other side. Continue to alternate sides for 12 total repetitions on each side.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## LOWER BODY

### Inner-Thigh Shaper

#### FIRMS YOUR INNER THIGHS

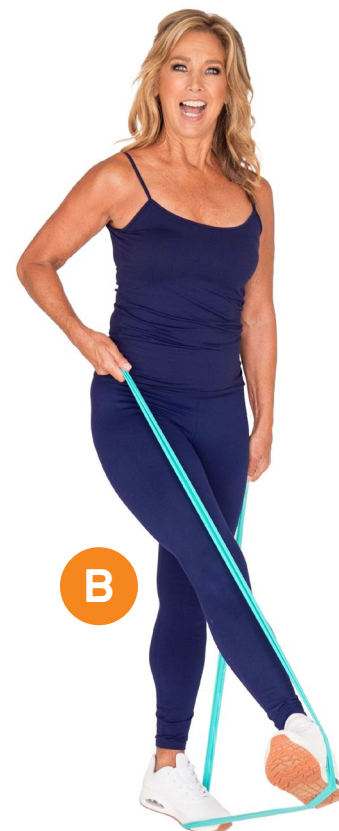
I love this exercise. It's one of the best ways to firm up your inner thighs. You'll simultaneously firm your standing leg as well as the one pressing into the band. Did you know that your inner thigh is one of the most underused muscles of the body? But this exercise targets right there.

A

Stand with the band secured under your left foot. Grasp an end of the band in each hand and gather up the excess until the band is taut. Lift your right leg slightly, bringing the inner edge of your right foot against the band.

B

Cross the band in front of you. Exhale as you press your right foot into the band and bring it to the left. Inhale as you return to the starting position. Repeat up to 12 times and then switch legs.





### Leg Circles with Band

**FIRMS YOUR INNER AND OUTER THIGHS**  
**STRENGTHENS YOUR ABDOMEN**

This exercise originates from the Pilates method. Adding the band really helps to target your legs and make smooth circles. It also encourages proper body alignment.

- A** Lie on your back with the left leg extended on the mat and your right leg lifted toward the ceiling, with the exercise band wrapped around the arch of your right foot. Hold both ends of the band in your right hand at chest level with your elbow bent. Extend your left arm out to the side for balance and engage your abs.
- B** Slowly circle your right foot counterclockwise, dipping down to the floor as you move your foot around the circle. Make large circles, exhaling as you lower your leg and inhaling as you raise your leg. Then switch direction, circling clockwise. Then switch legs and repeat.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## UPPER BODY

### Sculpting Your Upper Body

#### SHAPE SEXY ARM, SHOULDER AND BACK MUSCLES

Combine the smooth, yet constant, resistance of the band with the instability of the ball, and what do you get? Try long, lean, upper body muscles that you can show off in sleeveless blouses, backless dresses, and spaghetti straps!

**Upper body toning creates better body proportions.** You'll firm any flab under your arm so it doesn't jiggle when you wave. You'll tone and lift your breasts and create muscle for sexy cleavage.

Strengthening your upper back and shoulders helps you to **stand upright naturally**. The better your posture, the slimmer, taller, and more confident you will appear. Also, as you firm your upper back, you'll no longer have bra overhang, the fat that pushes out around our bra straps.

Upper body strength will also help you move through life with more ease. **Strong arm, chest, shoulder, and back muscles help you to lift and carry** heavy laundry baskets or your growing kids without putting stress on your upper back.

In this section, I'll share 17 of my favorite upper body moves with you. Learning a bit about the anatomy and physiology of your upper body will help you understand why I designed these exercises in the way I have. You will target the following important upper body areas:



# Ball and Band Exercises

## UPPER BODY

### Arms

You'll target your biceps, along the front of your upper arms, and your triceps, along the back of your upper arms.

### Chest

You'll work your pectoralis major, the muscle that lifts your breasts and gives them definition and shape. Developing your chest helps you create a line of cleavage, because the two sides of your pectoralis muscles meet just above your breast. Your pectoralis major sits underneath your breast tissue so it will lift your breasts, helping to counteract the pull of gravity.

### Shoulders

Working your deltoid muscles along the front, top, and back of your shoulders will help eliminate sloping shoulders, making you look more confident, youthful, and energetic. You'll give yourself natural shoulder pads, creating a strong, sexy look.

### Upper Back

You'll work your trapezius muscle - a large diamond shaped muscle that begins at the base of your skull, fans out to your shoulders, and extends halfway down your back - and smaller upper back muscles including the teres minor and infraspinatus. You also work your latissimus dorsi (often called lats), which are slightly lower on the back.

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I've incorporated the band into all but two exercises. Because of the flexibility of the band, you will find that it challenges your balance just as much as the ball does. Be patient with yourself and perform each exercise slowly. Soon you will not feel so wobbly.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## UPPER BODY

As you lift and lower the band, try to **make smooth, fluid movements** rather than quick, jerky ones. Whenever you feel that you need more resistance, you can increase the challenge by grasping the band closer to its middle, which will create more tension and take the exercise to the next level.

Also be sure to **maintain good posture** - a long spine, relaxed shoulders, an open chest, and a firm abdomen - in every move.

Perform up to 12 repetitions of each exercise. In a few movements, instead of doing repetitions, you'll simply hold the posture for up to one minute. When multiple variations of an exercise is shown, try the initial, beginner version first. Some of these exercises are very challenging; don't let that discourage you. In the 3-week plan I start you off with beginner exercises during week 1 and gradually build up to intermediate and advanced moves by week 3.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## UPPER BODY

### Chest Press

**TONES YOUR CHEST, BACK, ABDOMEN, AND THIGHS**  
**LIFTS YOUR BREASTS**

In addition to zeroing in on those chest muscles, doing this exercise against the ball gives you a great leg and abdominal workout. You'll really feel the backs of your thighs and buttocks working to keep your hips lifted.

- A** Lie with your upper back, neck, and head supported by the ball and with an exercise band secured between your back and the ball. Grasp an end of the band in each hand and wrap it around the hand, with your elbows bent at 90 degrees.
- B** Exhale as you press your hands toward the ceiling. Inhale as you lower to the starting position. Continue to press and lower 12 times.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## UPPER BODY

### Pushup

#### TONES YOUR CHEST AND ABDOMEN

The ball will really challenge you in the pushup. If you can do just a few of these pushups, give yourself a pat on the back! The closer you bring the ball to your thighs, the easier this one is. Try a few this way first, and don't give up - you can do it!

**A** Bring your body into the pushup position with your shins against the ball and your palms on the floor under your chest. (Note: Placing your thighs against the ball makes it easier.)



**B** Inhale while you lower your chest, bending your elbows. Stop once your chin is even with the bend in your elbows, then exhale as you press back to the starting position. Keep your back flat, hips up, and abs tight throughout the exercise. Don't allow your hips to sink down or your lower back to arch. Repeat up to 12 times.



**C** **ADVANCED PUSHUP**  
Lifting one leg will challenge your balance even more. Lift one leg for half of the repetitions, lower it, and then lift the other leg for the remaining repetitions.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## UPPER BODY

### Chest Firmer

**TONES THE SIDES OF YOUR CHEST**  
**FIRMS YOUR BACK, ABDOMEN, LEGS, AND BUTTOCKS**

As with the Chest Press, the Chest Firmer gives you a great leg and abdominal workout as the backs of your thighs and buttocks work to keep your hips lifted.

**A** Lie with your upper back, neck, and head supported by the ball and with an exercise band secured between your back and the ball. Grasp an end of the band in each hand with your arms and extend toward the ceiling. Keep your abs tight.



**B** Inhale as you lower your arms out to the sides. Exhale as you press your hands back together above your chest, as if you were squeezing a large beach ball around your chest. Continue to lower and raise your hands 12 times.





### Upper-Back Firmer

**TONES YOUR UPPER BACK**  
**STRENGTHENS YOUR LEGS**  
**STRETCHES YOUR HIPS AND THIGHS**

You'll tone your upper and lower body at once by doing a lunge over the ball as you simultaneously "unsheath your sword."

- A** Stand with your feet under your hips. Step forward about 2 to 3 feet with your right leg. Place the ball under your right thigh. Exhale as you bend your right leg and sink into a deep lunge. Inhale and lift your left heel and move it inward, so that your rear foot is at a 45 degree angle. Grasp one end of the band in your left hand, resting your hand along your outer left thigh. Grasp the other end of the band in your right hand and position that hand near your left hip bone.
- B** Exhale as you unsheathe your imaginary sword and raise it overhead. Inhale as you release. Repeat six times and then switch sides.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## UPPER BODY

### Arm Row

#### FIRMS AND SHAPES YOUR UPPER BACK

I call this my “no more bra overhang” exercise. It targets the piece of flab that tends to bunch outward from your bra strap.

**A** From a standing position, secure the band under your left foot, grasping both ends in your right hand. Place your left palm on top of the ball and your left leg next to the ball. Take a large step back with your right leg and bend forward about 45 degrees. Extend your right arm toward the floor. Tighten your abs.

**B** Exhale as you raise your right elbow toward the ceiling, as if you were starting a lawn mower. Inhale as you lower it. Repeat 12 times and then switch sides.

**C** **INTERMEDIATE ARM ROW**  
Doing the same exercise with your rear foot on the ball really challenges your balance. You'll feel muscles up and down your torso firming to help keep you upright. You'll also strengthen your standing leg.

To get into position, stand and secure the band under your right foot. Grasp an end of the band in each hand. Bend your left knee and place the top of your left foot against the ball. Roll the ball behind your torso as you extend your left leg behind. Bend forward about 45 degrees, as shown. Exhale as you raise your elbows toward the ceiling, as if you were rowing a boat. Inhale as you lower.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## UPPER BODY

### Lateral Raise

#### TONES AND STRENGTHENS YOUR SHOULDERS

Sitting on the ball will work your abdomen as you raise and lower the band, shaping beautiful, sexy shoulders.

**A** Sit on the ball with your back straight, abs tight, and an exercise band secured between your feet and the ground. Grasp an end of the band in each hand, with your arms fully extended by your hips and your palms facing the ball.

**B** Exhale as you raise your arms out to your sides, with your palms facing down, until they are level with your shoulders. Inhale as you lower to the starting position. Continue to raise and lower 12 times.

**C** **INTERMEDIATE LATERAL RAISE**  
Lifting and extending one leg will put you off balance, forcing your tummy, waist, and back to work to keep you upright. You will also strengthen the front of your thighs. Secure the band under one foot, raising and extending the opposite leg. Raise and lower the band six times. Then switch legs and complete six more repetitions.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## UPPER BODY

### Front Raise

#### TONES AND STRENGTHENS YOUR SHOULDERS

The front raise will help you sculpt the front of your shoulders as you simultaneously target your abdomen.

**A** Sit on the ball with your back straight and an exercise band secured under your feet. Grasp an end of the band in each hand with your arms fully extended by your hips and your palms facing the ball. Tighten your abs.

**B** Exhale as you raise your arms straight out in front of you, with your thumbs pointing up, until they are level with your shoulders. Inhale as you lower to the starting position. Continue to raise and lower 12 times.

**C** **INTERMEDIATE FRONT RAISE**  
Lifting and extending one leg will put you off balance, forcing your tummy, waist, and back to work to keep you upright. You'll also strengthen the front of your thighs. Secure the band under one foot, raising and extending the opposite leg. Raise and lower the band six times. Then switch legs and complete six more repetitions.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## UPPER BODY

### Upper-Back Toner

#### STRENGTHENS AND TONES YOUR UPPER BACK AND UPPER ARMS

As with previous seated exercises, the ball will work your core muscles as you raise and lower the band.

- A** Sit on the ball and bend forward about 45 degrees. Secure the resistance band under your feet. Cross the band so that you are grasping the band's left end in your right hand and the band's right end in your left hand. Extend your arms toward the floor with your palms facing in.
  
- B** Exhale as you raise your arms up and out to the sides until they are level with your shoulders. Inhale as you lower to the starting position. Continue to raise and lower 12 times.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## UPPER BODY

### Back and Shoulder Firmer

#### STRENGTHENS AND TONES YOUR UPPER BACK AND SHOULDERS

This is a great exercise that helps to really shape the shoulders. As you raise your arms overhead you'll feel your torso firm as it works to stabilize you on the ball.

- A** Cross the bands so that you are grasping the band's left end in your right hand and the band's right end in your left hand. Extend your arms towards the floor with your knuckles facing forward.
- B** Exhale as you raise your arms out to the sides and up overhead, keeping your thumbs up the entire time keep. Keep your shoulders relaxed away from your ears and your spine long. Inhale as you lower to the starting position. Repeat 12 times.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## UPPER BODY

### Upright Row

#### FIRMS YOUR UPPER BACK AND SHOULDERS

Sculpt a beautiful line along the tops of your shoulders with this exercise as you simultaneously firm up your abdomen.

**A** Sit on the ball with your back straight and the exercise band secured under your feet. Grasp the end of the band in each hand, with your arms fully extended and hands near your knees.

**B** Exhale as you raise your elbows toward the ceiling and your hands toward your chin. Keep your back straight and shoulders relaxed away from your ears. Inhale as you lower to the starting position. Repeat 12 times.

**C** **INTERMEDIATE UPRIGHT ROW**  
Doing upright rows in an inclined position forces your core muscles to work harder to keep you balanced. You'll also strengthen your legs. Sit on the ball with your knees bent and feet on the floor. Walk your feet forward as you slide down the ball, until your lower back rests against the ball. Your feet should be far enough away from the ball for your thighs to be parallel with the floor. Then secure the band under your feet to perform the upright rows, as shown.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## UPPER BODY

### Overhead Press

#### FIRMS AND SHAPES YOUR SHOULDERS

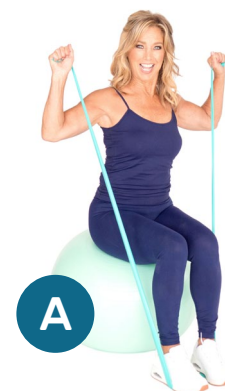
This will give you a beautiful figure, a strong and sexy upper body. As with previous seated exercises, the ball will work your core muscles as you raise and lower the band.

**A** Sit on the ball. Secure the middle of the resistance band under your feet. Grasp the ends of the band with your elbows bent and hands in front of your shoulders, palms facing forward.

**B** Exhale as you raise your hands above your head. Keep your shoulders relaxed away from your ears as you do so. Inhale as you lower to the starting position. Repeat 12 times.

**C** **INTERMEDIATE OVERHEAD PRESS**  
Lifting and extending one leg will put you off balance, forcing your tummy, waist, and back to work to keep you upright. You'll also strengthen the front of your thighs. Secure the band under one foot, raising and extending the opposite leg. Raise and lower the band six times. Then switch legs and complete six more repetitions.

**D** **ADVANCED OVERHEAD PRESS**  
Lowering one arm at a time forces your shoulders to work twice as hard. Sit on the ball. Secure the middle of the resistance band under both feet. Grasp the ends of the band with your elbows bent and hands just in front of your shoulders, palms facing forward. Exhale as you raise your hands above your head. Keep your right arm extended as you inhale and lower the left. Exhale as you raise your left hand and then inhale as you lower the right. Keep one arm extended overhead at all times. Do 12 total repetitions.





### Triceps Kickback

**FIRMS THE BACKS OF YOUR UPPER ARMS  
TONES YOUR TORSO**

Keep your abs toned and lifted while you firm up the backs of your arms.

- A** Sit on the ball and bend forward about 45 degrees. Secure the resistance band under your feet. Grasp the ends of the band in your hands with your arms extended toward the floor and palms facing in. Bring your elbows up toward the ceiling and your hands in toward your ribs, as shown.
- B** Exhale as you extend your arms behind your torso. Inhale as you return to the starting position. Try to keep your upper arms and shoulders motionless, bending only at the elbows. Repeat 12 times.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## UPPER BODY

### Arm Firmer

#### TONES THE BACKS OF YOUR UPPER ARMS AND SHOULDERS

No more underarm flab, no more underarm sag. This exercise will firm up your arms!

- A** Sit on the ball with your knees bent and feet on the floor. Grasp the middle of the band in your left hand, holding your hand by your left hip. Grasp one end of the band in your right hand. Extend your right arm from your chest with your palm facing down, as shown. If this feels too challenging, you can release some of the band with your left hand to provide less resistance.
- B** Inhale as you bend your right elbow and bring your right hand toward your left shoulder. Exhale as you extend your right arm back to the starting position. Repeat six times and then switch sides.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## UPPER BODY

### French Curl

**TONES THE BACKS OF YOUR UPPER ARMS**  
**FIRMS YOUR CORE MUSCLES**

This French curl and all of the variations are great ways to firm up your arms. Doing it overhead like this makes it target the length of your triceps.

**A** Sit on the ball with the middle of the resistance band secured under your feet. Grasp an end of the band in each hand. Extend your arms overhead, palms facing each other. Keep your abs engaged.

**B** Inhale as you bend your elbows and lower your hands behind your head. Exhale as you raise your hands back to the starting position. Repeat 12 times.

**C** **INTERMEDIATE FRENCH CURL**  
When you alternate arms, you make them work twice as hard. To get into position, sit on the ball with the middle of the resistance band secured under your feet. Grasp an end of the band in each hand. Extend your arms overhead. Inhale as you bend one elbow and lower that hand behind your head, as shown. Exhale as you stand that arm back up and then lower the other, alternating arms for 12 repetitions.

**D** **ADVANCED FRENCH CURL**  
You can also do French curls without the ball. Doing them while standing stretches the band a bit more, making it tighter and creating more resistance to the exercise. To get into position, stand in a lunge position with your left foot forward. Secure the middle of the band under your right foot. Grasp an end of the band in each hand. Extend your arms overhead. Inhale as you bend your elbows and lower your hands behind your head, as shown. Exhale as you extend them overhead.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## UPPER BODY

### Biceps Curl

#### FIRMS THE FRONT OF YOUR UPPER ARMS

Doing biceps curls with a resistance band gives you a better workout, because there's both a positive and a negative resistance. A dumbbell lets gravity pull it down, but the band uses more muscles to both raise and lower.

- A** Sit on the ball with the resistance band secured under your feet. Grasp an end of the band in each hand, with your arms fully extended toward the floor and your palms facing away from your torso.
- B** Exhale as you bend your arms and lift your hands to your shoulders. Inhale as you lower to the starting position. Repeat 12 times.
- C** **INTERMEDIATE BICEPS CURL**  
Lifting and extending one leg will take you off balance, making your core muscles work harder to keep you steady. Do 6 repetitions with one leg extended and then switch legs for 6 more reps.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## UPPER BODY

### Hammer Curl

**FIRMS THE FRONT OF YOUR UPPER ARMS  
GIVES YOU BEAUTIFUL, SEXY ARMS**

Hammer curls target a slightly different section of the biceps muscle. Doing both Traditional Curls and Hammer Curls will help you truly shape your biceps.

- A** Sit on the ball with resistance bands secured under your feet. Grasp an end of the band in each hand, with your arms fully extended toward the floor, your palms facing the ball, and your thumbs up. Keep your abs tight.
- B** Exhale as you bend your arms and lift your hands to your shoulders. Inhale as you lower to the starting position. Repeat 12 times.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## UPPER BODY

### Lat Pulldown

**TONES YOUR CHEST AND BACK**  
**STRENGTHENS YOUR ABS**

Holding the ball will help you to extend more fully into the lat pull-down as well as to keep your shoulders in position, making the exercise more effective.

- A** Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet on the floor. Grasp the ball and extend your arms and the ball above your chest.
- B** Inhale as you lower the ball behind your head. Exhale as you raise it. Keep your hips steady and lower back pressed against the floor the entire time. Repeat 12 times.





### Stretching on the Ball

#### ELONGATE AND SMOOTH YOUR MUSCLES

The biggest benefit of stretching is how it makes you feel: Oh so good! In addition, **stretching is good for your health**: It increases blood circulation throughout your body. Good circulation helps heal your body and reduces swelling. Stretching is also a perfect way to eliminate tension in your muscles. After sitting all day at the office, a short stretching routine can help put a spring back in your step. Anytime you need a natural energy boost, just take a stretch break.

An added bonus? A regular stretching routine can make you more beautiful, too. **It helps to improve your posture**, lengthening the muscles in your legs, hips, back, abdomen, and elsewhere, helping you to stand taller. As your muscles lengthen, you'll feel less pain and stiffness. You will move more fluidly and be able to enjoy other kinds of fitness activities.

**Your spine is your lifeline -  
let's keep it healthy.**

*Denise Austin*

The stretching routine I have put together in this e-book touches all of the major muscles in your body, specifically:



# Ball and Band Exercises

## STRETCHING

### Your Chest and Shoulders

Tight chest muscles can cause us to slouch and collapse our shoulders forward. This, in turn, restricts breathing, which causes fatigue. These chest and shoulder stretches will help you to stand upright with better posture and more energy.

### Your Upper Back

Have you ever felt sore or tight between your shoulder blades? I often do, especially after sitting at my computer for a long time. The stretches at the beginning of this routine - the Hug-a-Ball and the Upper-Back Stretch - are among my favorite stability ball stretches because they target this area of the back so well. They warm up your trapezius and rhomboid muscles in your upper back and help work the kinks out of your shoulder blades. You will love them, especially if you work at a computer for long periods of time.

### Your Lower Back and Spine

For optimal health of the discs in your spine, you must move your back in four directions: Forward, backward, to the side, and in rotation. I made sure these stretches will move your spine through its fullest range of motion, helping you to keep your spine and back healthy.

### Your Thighs

Tight muscles in the front, sides, or backs of the thighs tend to tug the pelvis out of alignment, creating back pain. This routine will help you stretch and lengthen your thighs, taking tension off your back and helping to sculpt longer, leaner legs.

### Your Hips

We tend to hold a lot of tension in our hips, and many fitness pursuits such as running tend to make them even tighter. I've incorporated two of my favorite hip stretches - the Hip Stretch and the Hip Release - into this routine to help release tension from those areas. They feel wonderful!





# Ball and Band Exercises

## STRETCHING

This routine is a collection of my favorites that I turn to day in and out to elongate my muscles and feel good all over. Do this routine in the morning to wake up your body, before or after a cardio workout, or before or after your toning workout.

You can either flow through this sequence a few times, holding each position for a few seconds, or hold each stretch for a longer period of time - 20 to 30 seconds. In the series of movements, the ball and band will serve as props that help you more easily stretch into certain positions, one that would be more challenging without these two tools. In some stretches, the ball helps you move your body into proper alignment, so you can make the most of each stretch. Finally, adding the bands in some of the stretches helps you warm up and stretch particular muscles through their entire range of motion, instead of only in one direction.

Move into each stretch slowly, paying close attention to your own internal cues. Try to challenge your muscles enough to lengthen them, but don't over challenge them.

As you stretch, breathe deeply and smoothly, never holding your breath. Don't bounce or jerk your body into a stretch. Just slowly bring your body into the stretch, surrender to it, and let your muscles respond gradually. Be gentle and enjoy the feeling of your body lengthening and rejuvenating!

Enjoy this stretching routine on its own and as part of your 3-week plan - your body will thank you!





### Hug-a-Ball

**STRETCHES UPPER BACK AND SHOULDERS  
ELONGATES SPINE AND OPENS BACK, GIVING SPACE TO VERTEBRAE**

This stretch is so simple, yet it feels so wonderful.

- A** Stand while holding the stability ball against your navel. Rest your arms over the top of the ball and use your palms to press the ball to your tummy. Inhale as you lengthen your spine upward. Pull in your navel and engage your abs.
- B** Exhale as you bend your knees slightly, curl your chin toward your chest, and pull your torso against the ball. Spread your shoulder blades apart and round your spine. Hold up to 30 seconds, breathing normally.





### Upper-Back Stretch

**STRETCHES YOUR UPPER BACK AND SHOULDERS**  
**RELEASES TENSION BETWEEN YOUR SHOULDER BLADES**

Holding the ball in front of your body will help keep your arms in the right position.

- A** Stand with your feet under your hips and your arms and ball extended at chest level.
- B** Exhale as you bring your navel toward your spine and curl forward, keeping your arms by your ears as you do so. Inhale as you rise. Repeat curling and rising for 1 minute.





### Waist Rotation/Lower-Back Stretch

**STRETCHES YOUR LOWER BACK**  
**CONDITIONS YOUR SPINE**

Holding the ball in front of your body as you twist will help you to keep your spine long and your chest open.

- A** Stand with your feet under your hips. Grasp the ball between your hands, extending both arms out from your chest. Inhale as you firm your tummy and lengthen your spine. Exhale as you rotate your torso to the left, starting at the base of your spine and moving upward, as shown. Inhale as you return to center.
- B** Exhale as you rotate to the right, as shown. Continue rotating from one side to the other for 1 minute.





### Side Stretch

**STRETCHES YOUR SIDES**  
**STRENGTHENS YOUR TUMMY**

Holding the ball overhead will help you to keep your shoulders in the proper position as you stretch. This stretch is great for lengthening your spine.

**A** Stand with your feet under your hips and your arms and ball extended overhead. Relax your shoulders away from your ears. Inhale as you firm your tummy and lengthen your spine.

**B** Exhale as you bend to the left, as shown, keeping your chest open and your right shoulder blade stacked above the left. Maintain equal weight in both feet. Turn your head to look up, holding for a count of five. Inhale as you rise to the starting position and then exhale as you lean to the right. Continue bending left and right for 1 minute.





### Thigh Stretch

#### LENGTHENS THE BACKS OF YOUR THIGHS

This half-forward bend allows you to safely and slowly stretch the backs of your thighs without stressing your lower back.

- A** Stand with your feet under your hips and with the ball one or two feet in front of you. Bend forward from the hips and place both palms on top of the ball. Exhale as you bend forward even more, moving the ball forward along the floor. Hold for 20 to 30 seconds, breathing normally. Inhale as you rise.





### Spine Stretch

**STRETCHES YOUR CHEST AND SHOULDERS**  
**LENGTHENS YOUR SPINE**

This variation of yoga's Child Pose encourages you to extend back through your tailbone, feeling the nice, long stretch through each vertebrae in your spine.

- A** Kneel on your shins and place both palms on the ball. Exhale as you extend your arms and bend forward, rolling the ball forward, until your torso is nearly parallel to the floor.

Once in position, extend back through your tailbone and forward through the top of your head and fingertips. Allow your shoulder blades to widen away from each other and your chest to open. Hold for 20 to 30 seconds, breathing normally. Inhale as you rise.





### Spinal Twist

**STRETCHES YOUR SIDES AND WAIST**  
**CONDITIONS YOUR SPINE**

You would normally do the Spinal Twist with your hands against the floor. Doing it on the ball allows you to focus specifically on rotating your spine, deepening the stretch.

- A** Stand with your legs under your hips. Place both palms on the ball and roll the ball forward as you bend forward from the hips.

Keep your right palm against the ball as you exhale and raise your left arm toward the ceiling, as shown, opening your chest and twisting your spine. Keep equal weight on both feet. Hold for 30 seconds, breathing normally. Inhale as you return to the starting position. Then exhale as you lift your right arm toward the ceiling.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## STRETCHING

### Torso Stretch

#### STRETCHES YOUR CHEST, SHOULDERS, SIDES, BACK, AND LEGS

The ball in this stretch allows you to easily roll it from one side to another, bringing your body into some positions that you could never do without the support of the ball. This stretch is a great example. You'll stretch muscles in your back that have become tight from sitting all day long. It feels wonderful!

- A** Stand with your legs under your hips. Place the ball in front of you. Bend forward from your hips and place your palms against the ball. Roll the ball in a semicircle toward your right foot, as shown. As the ball rolls, your left hand will rise and right hand lower. Hold for 20 to 30 seconds, breathing normally.
  
- B** Roll the ball in a semicircle to your left foot and hold for 20 to 30 seconds.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## STRETCHING

### Front-of-Thigh Stretch

**STRETCHES THE FRONT OF YOUR THIGHS**  
**STRENGTHENS YOUR HIPS AND THIGHS**

The ball helps to steady your balance in this traditional thigh stretch.

- A** Stand with your feet under your hips and the ball to your right side. Place your right palm or fingertips against the ball. Inhale as you bend your left knee and lift your left foot toward your buttocks. Exhale as you grasp your left foot with your left hand, as shown, and gently pull it closer to your hips. Hold for 20 to 30 seconds and then release and repeat on the other side.

- B** **EXTENDED THIGH STRETCH**  
Take it to next level by bending forward so your body is parallel to the floor and hold your foot behind you in the same manner.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## STRETCHING

### Hip Release

#### WARMS UP YOUR LOWER BACK AND HIPS

Only the ball allows you to roll your hips in these soothing, gentle circles. I love doing this Hip Release first thing in the morning or whenever my hips begin to feel tight.

- A** Sit on the ball with your knees bent and feet on the floor. Extend your arms out to the sides at shoulder height as shown. Exhale as you tuck your tailbone and begin to circle your hips in a clockwise motion.
- B** Continue to circle your hips all the way around, exhaling as you tuck your tailbone and inhaling as you release the tuck. Do this for 20 to 30 seconds. Then reverse direction for 20 to 30 seconds.





### Hip Stretch

#### STRETCHES YOUR HIPS AND BUTTOCKS

This is one of my favorite stretches. It targets a deep muscle in your buttocks that is often responsible for causing back and sciatica discomfort.

- A** Sit on the ball with your knees bent and feet on the floor. Bend and lift your right leg, placing your right ankle just above your left knee, as shown. Turn out your right knee.
- B** Slide down the ball until the ball comes in contact with your lower back, as shown. Make sure your knee is bent at a 90-degree angle. Place one or both hands on the floor for support. Hold for 20 to 30 seconds, rise, and repeat on the opposite leg.





### Hamstring Stretch

#### STRETCHES THE BACK OF YOUR THIGHS

This stretch is similar to one that you can do while seated on the floor. I find, however, that it feels much better while seated on the ball. Try it both ways, and I'm sure you'll agree.

- A** Sit on the ball with your legs spread apart in a wide angle, forming a V shape, and your toes pointing up. Exhale as you bend forward from the hips and slide your hand down your legs until your fingers reach the floor. Try to keep your back long and flat. Hold for 20 to 30 seconds, breathing normally.
- B** Keeping your back long and flat, exhale as you walk your hands over to your left foot. Shift your torso and bend your belly over your left thigh. Hold for 20 to 30 seconds, breathing normally.
- C** Exhale as you walk your hands over to your right foot. Hold for 20 to 30 seconds. Return to the center position and then inhale as you rise.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## STRETCHING

### Shoulder Stretch

#### STRETCHES YOUR CHEST AND SHOULDERS

The band allows you to stretch your shoulders through a wider range of motion than you probably ever thought possible. Because the band stretches with you, it allows you to slowly and gently move your hands farther apart if you bring your arms in a semicircle.

- A** Sit on the ball with your knees bent and feet on the floor. Hold the ends of the band in each hand and gather up the material until the band feels taut.
- B** Inhale as you raise your arms overhead.
- C** Exhale as you lower the band behind your torso, as shown. Inhale as you raise your arms back up overhead, and exhale as you return to the starting position. Continue to alternate between the two positions for 20 to 30 seconds.





### Chest Stretch

**STRETCHES YOUR CHEST**  
**STRENGTHENS YOUR UPPER ARMS**

You can also do the stretch while standing, but I find it feels much more comfortable when seated on the ball.

- A** Sit on the ball with your knees bent and feet on the floor. Clasp your hands behind your back. Inhale as you roll your shoulders up, back, and then down. Reach down through your knuckles, squeeze your shoulder blades together, and lift your sternum.
- B** Exhale as you bend forward, bringing your tummy into your thighs. Lift your arms as you reach through your knuckles to increase the stretch. Hold for 20 to 30 seconds, breathing normally. Inhale as you rise.





### Arm Stretch

**STRETCHES THE TOPS OF YOUR ARMS AND SHOULDERS  
GIVES YOU GREAT FLEXIBILITY IN YOUR TRICEPS**

The band serves as a great tool in this stretch. Without the band, you need the flexibility to be able to grasp your hands behind your back!

- A** Sit on the ball with your knees bent and feet on the floor. Grasp the band in your right hand.

Raise your right arm overhead, bringing the top of your right arm near your right ear. Bend your right elbow and bring your right palm toward your shoulder blade, as if you were giving yourself a pat on the back. Bring your left arm and hand behind your back from below and grasp the band. Hold for 20 to 30 seconds, breathing normally. Slowly take up more and more of the band as you bring your hands toward one another and deepen the stretch. Keep your shoulders relaxed away from your ears and your spine long. Switch arm positions and repeat.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## STRETCHING

### Child's Pose

#### STRETCHES YOUR HIPS, BACK, SPINE, CHEST, AND SHOULDERS

The ball will encourage you to reach forward, allowing you to feel a deeper stretch in your upper back and shoulders. It also allows you to open your chest to one side, creating a wonderful stretch along the side of your torso. Once you do this with the ball, you may never go back to the floor!

- A** Kneel with your hips on top of your heels and shins against the floor. Place both palms on the top of the ball. Reach forward, extending your arms and rolling the ball as far forward as you can without lifting your hips off your heels.
- B** Exhale as you lower your right hand and raise your left, rotating your torso to the right. Hold for 30 seconds. Inhale as you return to the starting position and then exhale as you rotate to the left. Hold for 30 seconds.





## Pilates on the Ball

### SCULPT, STRETCH AND ELONGATE YOUR MUSCLES

Named after Joseph Pilates, who invented the method almost 100 years ago, Pilates involves a series of exercises that place intense concentration on your abdominal muscles, particularly the deepest layer of muscle in your abdomen. I love Pilates because it **strengthens and stretches my body from head to toe** and helps me to emphasize the core muscles in my abdomen, waistline, and back. It also helps me to maintain my rock hard tummy.

When you add the ball and bands to traditional Pilates movements, you gain all of those benefits and more. Specifically, the ball and bands will help you to stretch and sculpt the following body areas:

### Your Abdomen and Back

As you perform traditional Pilates movements with your abdomen, backsides, hips, or legs against the ball, your core muscles must work even harder to keep your body stable. As you balance your body weight, you'll zero in on your transverse abdominis, a deep abdominal muscle that is hard to target through other toning exercises. Your transverse abdominis acts like a corset to hold your abdominal organs in place. The stronger this muscle is, the smaller your waistline and the flatter your tummy!

### Your Arms and Shoulders

Adding the band helps to tone your upper body. Two moves in particular - the Bug and the Rowing Series - will strengthen your arms, shoulders, and upper back. Another movement, the Plank, will target your arms and chest.



# Ball and Band Exercises

## PILATES

### Your Legs

I've included the Pilates leg series in this routine. It will help to slim your thighs and tone away saddlebags. It particularly zeros in on the abductor muscles along your outer thighs and the adductor muscles along your inner thighs. You'll sculpt lean, toned, beautiful legs in just a few movements.

In addition to making some Pilates movements more effective (and a bit more challenging), **the ball and band will also help to make some Pilates movements more accessible.** In these exercises, such as the T-Stand, the ball serves as an aid that helps you train your body to be able to hold the traditional posture.

The best part of all is that **the band will help you to align your body correctly,** giving you the feedback you need to extend more fully into the posture. I love using the band when I do Pilates because it's a safe and gentle source of resistance. The band serves as a perfect complement, allowing you to create smooth, circular, flowing movement. You'll feel as if you were dancing.

In the following pages, you'll find 13 of my favorite Pilates moves. All of them include the ball, and some incorporate the band. You can do all 13 movements in sequence to stretch and tone your legs, back, abdomen, waistline, shoulders, upper back, arms, and shoulders. These moves will also show up in the 3-week plan, or you can pick and choose the moves you like the most to incorporate into a workout you design yourself.



### Pilates Tummy Tuck

#### WARMS UP AND STRETCHES YOUR SPINE

You will love the sensation of this stretch. The support of the ball allows you to create a full arch in your spine, stretching out that area between the shoulder blades that can become so tight after a day of working at a computer.

- A** Stand with your feet together. Bend forward from the hips and place your palms on top of the stability ball. Inhale as you roll the ball forward and lengthen your spine, stretching your head and tail bone away from each other.
- B** Exhale as you curl your chin and tailbone towards each other, firming your abs, keeping your navel in, and arching your spine upward. At the same time, bring the ball back in toward your legs. Continue to alternate between the two positions for 1 minute.





### Pilates Twist

**TONES YOUR WAISTLINE**

**STRETCHES YOUR SPINE, BACK, AND CHEST**

The ball will keep you a little off balance during the Pilates twist, forcing more muscle fibers in your abdomen to work to keep you stable. The band will keep your arms and shoulders properly aligned.

- A** Sit on your ball with your knees bent and feet on the floor. Grasp an end of the band in each hand and extend your arms out to your sides at shoulder level with the band behind your upper back. Firm your abs, inhale, and lengthen your spine, reaching your head upward as you grow taller.

- B** Exhale as you twist to the left, feeling the twist start at the base of your spine and move upward, as if your spine is a spiral staircase. Inhale as you return to the starting position and then exhale as you twist to the other side. Continue to alternate sides for 1 minute.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## PILATES

### Saw

**SLIMS YOUR WAISTLINE AND STRENGTHENS YOUR ABDOMEN  
STRETCHES YOUR BACK AND CHEST**

Using the ball during the Saw takes the movement to a new level. You'll really feel your waistline working to keep your torso stable as you twist. The band will help hold your arms in the proper position, preventing your top shoulder from rolling inward.

- A** Sit on the ball with your legs extended in a wide angle. Grasp an end of the band in each hand and extend your arms out to your sides, with the band behind your upper back. Inhale and lengthen your spine, reaching your head upward as you grow taller. Pull in your navel and engage your abs.
- B** Exhale as you twist your torso, "sawing" your right pinky finger past your left pinky toe. Inhale as you rise to the starting position. Exhale as you repeat on the other side. Keep your abdominal muscles active and your spine extended throughout the movement. Alternate sides for 1 minute.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## PILATES

### Bug

#### TONES YOUR SHOULDERS, ARMS, AND UPPER BACK

The resistance of the band helps tone your shoulders as you smoothly swing your arms forward and back. The ball will challenge your balance, targeting your abs. The ball allows you to flatten your tummy and firm and strengthen your upper body.

A

Sit on the ball with your knees bent and feet on the floor. Place the middle of the band under your feet. Grasp one end of the band in each hand. Bend forward from the hips about 45 degrees. Keep abs active.

Exhale as you raise your right arm forward and your left arm back, as shown, until both arms are parallel to the floor. Inhale as you switch positions, bringing your right arm back and left arm forward. Continue to alternate positions for 1 minute.





### T-Stand

**TRIMS YOUR WAISTLINE**

**IMPROVES YOUR BALANCE AND COORDINATION**

Many people struggle to hold a full T-Stand for even just a few seconds. Doing it with the ball, however, allows you to extend into the T-Stand and hold it much longer.

- A** Lie with your left side on the ball and your legs extended, one on top of the other. Exhale as you press your left palm into the floor and extend your right arm toward the ceiling. Turn your head to look up toward the ceiling. Try to lift the side of your torso so that the ball merely provides feedback and some help with balance. Don't allow your torso to collapse against the ball. Hold for 30 seconds, breathing normally, and then switch sides.

- B** **ADVANCED T-STAND**

Take it up a notch by holding your top leg up to torso height as you perform this move.





### Front/Back

#### TONES YOUR OUTER THIGHS, WAISTLINE, AND ABDOMEN

Doing the Front/Back against the ball challenges your torso to keep your body steady as you move your leg forward and back.

- A** Lie with your left side on the ball and your left knee on the floor. Press your left hand into the floor. Lift and extend your right leg until it is even with your torso. Rest your right palm against the ball. Exhale as you bring your right leg forward, as shown, keeping your abdomen firm and your torso steady.
  
- B** Inhale as you bring your right leg back behind the ball. Try to keep your torso and hips motionless as you move your leg. Continue to bring it front and back for 30 seconds and then switch sides.





### Hip Circles

#### TONES YOUR OUTER THIGHS, WAISTLINE, AND ABDOMEN

As with the Front/Back, doing hip circles against the ball challenges your torso to keep your body steady as you move your leg.

A

Lie with your left side on the ball and your left knee on the floor. Press your left hand into the floor. Lift and extend your right leg until it is even with your torso, as shown. Circle your right leg slowly, with control, exhaling as your leg comes forward and inhaling as it circles back up. Keep your abdomen firm and your torso steady as you do so. Continue to circle your leg for 30 seconds and then switch sides.



A



### Pilates Plank

**TONES YOUR UPPER BODY, ABDOMEN, AND LEGS**  
**TARGETS THE HARD-TO-FIRM TRANSVERSE ABDOMINIS**

Placing your feet on the ball is quite a challenge to the traditional Plank. If you've never felt your abdomen work to hold you up during a traditional Plank you'll definitely feel those muscles fire with your feet on the ball!

**A** Come into a pushup position with your thighs, shins, or feet against the ball and your palms on the floor under your chest. (The further down on your legs you position the ball, the more challenging the exercise.) Hold for one minute, breathing normally. Keep your navel in, abdomen firm, and back flat and extended. Try not to let your hips sink down or rise above the plane between your feet and head.

#### **B** INTERMEDIATE PILATES PLANK

Lifting one leg increases the challenge to your balance and tones your thighs and buttocks. Come into the plank position with your thighs, shins, or feet against the ball and your palms on the floor under your chest. Exhale as you lift one leg. Hold for 30 seconds or as long as you can and then switch legs.



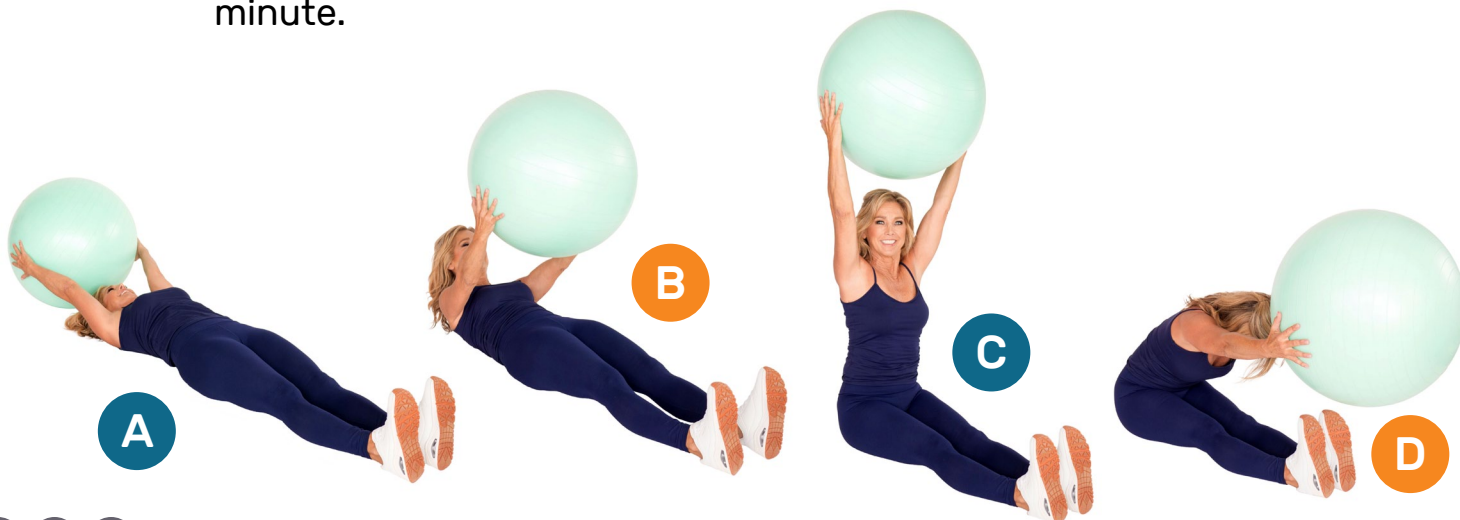


### Roll-Down

**TONES YOUR ABDOMEN**  
**CONDITIONS YOUR SPINE**  
**STRETCHES YOUR LEGS AND BACK**

Doing the Roll-Down with the ball overhead prevents you from cheating. You really feel your tummy working when you do this exercise!

- A** Lie on your back with your legs extended. Grasp the ball with your palms and hold it behind your head. Inhale as you firm your abdomen and lengthen your spine.
- B** Inhale as you tuck in your tailbone, bring your navel in toward your spine, and slowly roll up, keeping the ball overhead.
- C** Come to a seated position with the ball still overhead and both legs extended. Pull your navel in and keep your abs engaged.
- D** Exhale as you stretch forward, bringing the ball towards your feet. Then roll back down. Continue to roll up and then back down for 1 minute.





### Teaser

#### TONES YOUR BACK, ABDOMEN, AND LEGS

Holding the ball overhead during the Teaser helps you to tease your strength and balance a little more. It also helps you extend your torso and arms in the up position, increasing the benefits of the posture.

- A** Lie on your back with your legs extended. Extend your arms behind your head with the ball between your palms.
- B** Exhale as you lift your legs and arms, bringing your body into a V shape. Hold for 5 to 15 seconds. Try to keep your torso long, your abs firm, and your back flat. Release and repeat three or four times.





### Leg Circles with Ball

**TONES AND STRETCHES YOUR LEGS**  
**STRENGTHENS YOUR ABDOMEN**

Adding the ball and bands to the Leg Circles provides many benefits. Placing one leg on the ball helps you keep your hips steady as you circle your other leg. The ball will also move around under your leg, challenging your balance and stability. The band will provide additional resistance as well as some feedback, helping you to feel whether you are making smooth or jerky circles.

- A** Lie on your back. Place your left heel on the ball. Wrap the middle of the resistance band around the arch of your right foot. Hold the ends of the band in your right hand. Place both hands out to your sides at a 45-degree angle to your lower torso. Extend your right leg toward the ceiling.
  
- B** Slowly bring your right leg through large clockwise circles, exhaling as you lower your leg (move it from the 12 o'clock to the 6 o'clock position) and inhaling as you raise it (move from 6 o'clock to 12 o'clock). Draw six circles in this direction. Then draw six counter-clockwise circles. Switch legs and repeat on the other side.





### Double-Leg Stretch

#### TONES YOUR UPPER AND LOWER TUMMY

The ball will encourage you to extend through your arms and legs as you move in and out of this stretch. It also makes the exercise feel smooth and almost meditative as you hand off the ball from your hands to your feet.

- A** Lie on your back with your legs extended and raised, as shown. Extend your arms overhead with the ball between your palms.
- B** Inhale as you lift the ball towards your torso, simultaneously lifting your legs to meet it. Keep your abs engaged and naval in.
- C** Exchange the ball from your hands to between your shins. Then exhale as you slowly lower the ball and your legs to the floor, and extend your arms behind your head. Tap the ball against the floor and then raise your arms and legs back up to pass the ball back to your hands. Continue to exchange the ball from your hands to your feet and from your feet to your hands for 1 minute.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## PILATES

### Rowing Series

#### STRETCHES YOUR CHEST AND SHOULDERS

I love the fluid feeling this exercise creates as I circle my arms through the motion. It feels very peaceful as I flow through the sequence. Plus, it tones everything up!

- A** Sit on the ball. Bend over at the waist as far as you can while maintaining a straight back. Secure the exercise band under your feet. Grasp one end of the band in each hand while bent over. Exhale as you raise your body into a sitting position and pull your hands straight up under your chin, as shown, bringing your elbows out to the sides.
- B** Inhale as you bend forward again and simultaneously extend your hands behind you. Pull your navel in and tighten your abs.
- C** Keeping your arms straight and level with your shoulders, exhale as you move them forward in a half-circle around your body.
- D** Keep moving them forward until they are directly in front of your shoulders, as shown. Inhale as you return to the starting position. Continue to flow through the sequence for 1 minute.





### Yoga on the Ball

#### STRENGTHEN AND STRETCH YOUR ENTIRE BODY

Do you feel fantastic after doing yoga? You should! This wonderful form of exercise is one of my favorites - it stretches and strengthens your muscles simultaneously. Adding in the ball and band allows beginners and advanced alike to explore yoga postures in a new way. In this e-book, I've incorporated the ball and bands into my favorite yoga postures such as the Warrior, the Balancing Stick, the Mermaid, and more.

The exercises run in a flow sequence, and you can do the entire sequence as a 12-minute routine, holding each move for up to one minute. You can also deepen and hold each pose longer, for added benefits - a great alternative when you have more than 12 minutes for your routine.

As with many other exercises that you've learned so far, the ball will keep you slightly off-balance and help you work a myriad of muscles throughout your body, muscles that you wouldn't be able to target if you were doing the same yoga posture without the ball. This is yet another reason that the ball and bands are so great. As promised, they really allow you to do quick and effective workouts!

In particular, this yoga routine will help you zero in on the following areas:



# Ball and Band Exercises

## YOGA

### Your Shoulders and Arms

In numerous exercises, such as the Warrior and the Triangle, you'll hold your arms out to the side as you resist the effects of gravity. This will help to sculpt beautiful and sexy arm muscles. You will strengthen your arms further when you lean one or both hands into the ball, such as with the Pose of the Dancer and the Balancing Stick.

### Your Thighs and Buns

Yoga postures such as the Triangle, the Warrior, and the Balancing Stick are well known for their ability to sculpt what has come to be known as "yoga buns." The ball will help you extend into these challenging standing postures, offering support where you need it most and helping to steady your body. You'll be able to focus your mind on extending, lengthening, and releasing into the posture, and on holding for longer periods of time.

### Your Back and Spine

I've incorporated into this routine stretching and strengthening postures that will move your spine through its entire range of motion. The support of the ball allows you to perform gentle backbends with no discomfort in your lower back. Postures such as the Knee Sway, the Wheel, the Cobra, and the Mermaid will help you to keep your spine and lower back healthy. Remember: Your spine is your lifeline. Keep it strong.

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In addition, the ball - and particularly the bands - will provide important feedback from your body, helping you to feel whether or not you are properly aligned. For example, in the Triangle pose, just by holding the band around your upper back, you can feel whether or not your top shoulder is in the correct position, which will help you keep your shoulder from collapsing forward.





# Ball and Band Exercises

## YOGA

In some of the postures, you'll learn how to move on the ball first. Once you get used to doing the posture with the ball, you'll then learn how to incorporate the band. I include the resistance band in the postures where it offers the strongest benefits.

One of the most important parts of yoga is the breathing. Try to stay aware of your breath throughout the yoga poses. Paying attention to your breath not only helps you time the exercise, it will calm and soothe you as well. Breathe in through your nose and out through your nose. It takes a little getting used to but it's very beneficial.

Enjoy the benefits these yoga poses will bring to your health, your outlook and your spirit!





### Pose of the Dancer

- IMPROVES YOUR BALANCE
- STRENGTHENS AND TONES YOUR LEGS
- STRETCHES YOUR CHEST
- IMPROVES CORE STRENGTH

The ball will help you to gain your balance in this challenging posture.

- A** Stand with the ball about two feet in front of you. Place your right palm against the top of the ball. Shift your body weight over your right foot. Exhale as you lift your left foot in toward your buttocks and grasp your left ankle with your left hand. Inhale as you reach back through your left leg, deepening the posture. Hold for 30 seconds, breathing normally, and then release and repeat on the other side.





### Warrior 1

**TONES THIGHS**

**STRENGTHENS CORE**

**STRETCHES HIPS, CHEST, GROIN, ABDOMEN, AND SHOULDERS**

Many people allow their torsos to collapse forward in the Warrior 1 pose. Holding the ball overhead will help you keep your torso upright and your chest open, allowing you to feel a deeper stretch in the front of your hips, your abdomen, and your chest.

**A** Stand with your feet under your hips. Hold the ball overhead. Exhale as you step forward with your left leg and heel and lift your right heel and move it in toward you so that your rear foot is at a 45 degree angle. Exhale as you bend your left leg and sink into a deep lunge, as shown. Keep your upper arms in line with your head and reach up and into the ball as if you were Atlas holding up the world. Hold for 30 seconds, breathing normally. Inhale as you rise to the starting position and then repeat on the other side.



**B** **INTERMEDIATE WARRIOR 1**  
Adding the band will help to keep your arms in alignment. Placing the ball under your front leg allows you to sink deeper into the posture. Stand with your feet under your hips. Exhale as you take a large step forward with your left leg. Place the ball under your left side. Inhale and lift your right heel and move it inward, so that your rear foot is at a 45 degree angle. Grasp the band in both hands and then extend your arms overhead. Exhale as you bend your left knee and sink into the posture, as shown. Hold for 30 seconds, breathing normally. Inhale as you rise, and then repeat on the other side.





### Warrior 2

**TONES YOUR THIGHS**  
**STRENGTHENS YOUR CORE**  
**STRETCHES YOUR CHEST, HIPS, AND GROIN**

The support of the ball under your forward leg allows you to go deeper into this quintessential yoga posture than you ever have before.

**A** Stand with your legs in a wide angle and your feet about 3 feet apart. Place the ball just behind your left leg. Turn out your left foot 90 degrees and slide your right heel back slightly. Extend your arms from your shoulders, keeping your shoulders relaxed away from your ears.

Exhale as you bend your left knee, bringing the rear of your thigh on to the top of the ball. Reach back and extend through your right heel, feeling a stretch along the front of your right thigh and hip. Turn your head to look to the left. Breathe normally as you continue to sink into the lounge, holding for 30 seconds. Inhale as you rise to the starting position and then repeat on the other side.

**B** Holding an end of your resistance band in each hand will help you keep your arms in proper alignment, helping you to open your chest and extend through your fingertips. Start in the same position with your legs in a wide angle, the ball behind your left leg, and your left foot turned out 90 degrees. Then bring the band around your upper back and grasp an end in each hand. Extend your arms and sink into the posture. The band will pull your arms back slightly, helping you to open your chest.





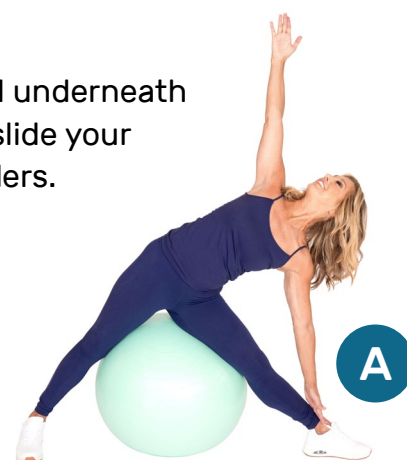
### Triangle

**STRETCHES YOUR SIDE, CHEST, AND INNER THIGHS**  
**TONES YOUR LEGS, ARMS, AND TORSO**

Beginner yoga students often allow their top shoulders to collapse downward in the Triangle, reducing the stretch along the sides of their torsos. Using the ball, beginners can easily move into the pose. Because the ball and band encourage proper body alignment, advanced students may feel more of a stretch when they add it to this posture.

**A**

Stand with your feet about three feet apart. Place the ball underneath your right thigh. Turn your right foot out 90 degrees and slide your left heel back slightly. Extend your arms from your shoulders. Exhale as you move to the right, sliding your right hand down your leg as you bend. Extend your left hand toward the ceiling and slightly behind your torso. Turn your head to look up toward the ceiling. Hold for 30 seconds, breathing normally. Inhale as you rise and then repeat on the other side.



**B**

#### INTERMEDIATE TRIANGLE

Adding the band to the Triangle pose will help hold your hands and arms in the proper position, allowing you to feel more of a stretch for your chest. Stand with your feet about three feet apart. Place the ball just behind and slightly under your right thigh. Grasp an end of the resistance band in each hand, with the middle of the band around your upper back. With your arms extended, take up the give in the band until it feels taut. Turn your right foot out 90 degrees and slide your left heel back slightly. Extend your arms from your shoulders. Exhale as you bend to the right. Slide your right hand down your leg as you bend and extend your left hand toward the ceiling. Allow the ball to support your right thigh. Turn your head to look up toward the ceiling. Feel the band gently pulling your hands back and opening your chest. Hold for 30 seconds, breathing normally. Inhale as you rise and then repeat on the other side.





### Extended Side Angle Pose

**LENGTHENS THE SPINE**

**STRETCHES YOUR STOMACH AND HIPS**

I love this stretch - it feels so good, and you can feel from your toes to your fingertips!

- A** Stand with your feet about three feet apart. Place the ball underneath your left thigh. Extend your arms sideways to shoulder-height, palms facing down. Turn your left foot out 90 degrees and slide your left heel back slightly.
  
- B** Exhale as you move to the left, bending your left knee and placing your left elbow on your knee. Extend your right arm overhead, feeling the stretch from your right foot all the way through the fingertips of your right hand. Hold for 12 counts, then switch sides.





### Balancing Stick

**IMPROVES BALANCE AND COORDINATION  
TONES YOUR ABDOMEN, BACK, WAISTLINE, AND LEGS**

Balancing Stick ranks as one of the more challenging postures in yoga. Adding the ball as a prop will help you to hold the posture longer and bring your body into proper alignment.

**A** Stand with the ball about two feet in front of you. Exhale as you bend forward from your hips, placing your hands against the ball. Raise and extend your left leg.



**B** Lift and extend your right arm. Reach out through your right fingertips and left toes to lengthen your spine. Keep your tummy firm as you balance, breathing normally. Keep your head in a neutral position, with your gaze at the floor. Hold for 30 seconds, breathing normally, and then release and repeat on the other side.





### Mermaid

**STRETCHES YOUR SIDE, CHEST, NECK, AND SHOULDERS**  
**STRENGTHENS YOUR ABDOMEN**  
**IMPROVES YOUR BALANCE**

When you sit on the ball to stretch into the Mermaid, you activate your abdominal muscles as they work to keep you stable. The band will help to keep your top shoulder from dropping forward, allowing you to feel a deeper stretch.

- A** Sit on the ball with the band between your hips and the ball and with your knees bent and on the floor. Grasp one end of the band in your right hand, securing it by your side. Grasp the other end of the band in your left hand, extending your left arm overhead.
- B** Exhale as you reach up and over to the right, as shown, feeling the stretch along the left side of your torso. Keep both hips equally planted on the ball. Turn your head to look up. Hold for 30 seconds, breathing normally. Inhale as you rise and then repeat on the other side.





### Cobra

**STRENGTHENS YOUR BACK**  
**IMPROVES YOUR POSTURE**  
**STRETCHES YOUR CHEST**

The ball helps keep your lower back and hips in proper alignment, preventing tightness or pinching in your spine as you extend into the pose. Placing your palms against the front of the ball helps you to extend your spine, allowing you to stretch more deeply.

- A** Lie with your tummy on the ball, your legs extended, and the balls of your feet on the floor. Rest your palms on the ball for support.
- B** Inhale as you reach through the crown of your head to lengthen your spine as you lift your upper back, neck, and head toward the ceiling. Press your hands into the ball to help lengthen your spine. Hold for one minute, breathing normally, and then release.





### Bridge

#### TONES YOUR HIPS, BUTTOCKS, THIGHS, BACK, AND ABDOMEN

Doing the Bridge against the ball is a completely different experience than doing it on the floor. With the ball, you'll really feel your hips and buttocks working to keep your torso stable.

- A** Sit on the ball with your knees bent at 90 degrees and your feet flat on the floor. Place your palms on the ball for support and slowly walk your feet forward, allowing your back to slide forward along the ball. Release your hands toward the floor and continue to walk your feet out until the ball rests on your shoulders, as shown, supporting your shoulders, neck, and head. Reach your hips toward the ceiling. Hold for one minute, breathing normally. Inhale as you walk your feet back in and rise to the starting position.

- B** **INTERMEDIATE BRIDGE**  
To increase the challenge of the bridge, extend your arms over head, making sure to keep your hips up toward the ceiling.





### Forward Bend

#### STRETCHES THE BACKS OF YOUR THIGHS AND YOUR BACK

The Forward Bend is a perfect complement to the Wheel (next), as it brings your spine into the opposite position. Doing it while seated on the ball helps you to tip your pelvis forward as you bend.

- A** Sit on the ball. Extend your legs, with your feet about your hips' distance apart.
- B** Exhale as you bend forward from your hips and slide your hands down your legs to your feet, if possible. Try to keep your back long and flat. Hold for one minute, breathing normally. Inhale as you rise.





### Wheel

**STRETCHES THIGHS, HIPS, ABDOMEN, CHEST, AND SHOULDERS  
TONES LEGS AND BACK**

You'll love doing this back bend over the ball. The ball fits snugly into your back, giving you the support you need to extend into the Wheel and feel the wonderful, deep stretch along the front of your body. The curve of the ball helps bring your spine into the correct position, preventing pinching between your vertebrae.

- A** To bend into the Wheel, start by sitting on your ball. Walk your feet forward and bend your knees until your lower back comes in contact with the ball.
- B** Extend your legs. Place your palms against the ball for support as you lower your entire torso and head on to the ball. Once your torso is in position, reach back with your hands, as shown, placing your palms on the floor. Hold for one minute, breathing normally. Inhale as you release.





### Threading the Needle

**STRETCHES YOUR UPPER BACK**  
**KEEPS YOUR SPINE HEALTHY AND STRONG**

This stretch helps to work the kinks out from between your shoulder blades. I love it!

- A** Kneel with your hips on top of your heels and shins against the floor. Place both palms on the top of the ball. Reach forward, extending your arms and rolling the ball as far forward as you can without lifting your hips off your heels.

Exhale as you lift your right palm off the ball and slide it under your torso to the left, as shown, as if the space between your body and the floor were the eye of a needle and your arm was the thread. Slide your arm through as far as possible. Then rest the back of your arm against the floor, holding for 30 seconds as you breathe normally. Release and repeat on the other side.





### Knee Sway

**STRETCHES YOUR SPINE, LOWER BACK, HIPS, AND CHEST**

The ball will help provide a counter stretch, allowing you to create more of a twist in your spine.

- A** Lie on your back with your knees in toward your chest. Grasp the ball and extend your arms from your chest.



- B** Exhale as you lower your knees to the floor to your left and the ball to the floor to the right. Hold for 30 seconds, breathing normally. Inhale as you rise and exhale when you repeat on the opposite side.



# Your 3-Week Plan





# Your 3-Week Plan

## INTRODUCTION

### Introduction to Your 3-Week Plan

#### THE KEYS TO YOUR SUCCESS

Welcome to your 3-week plan, and congratulations on making the commitment to becoming fit, slim, and healthy!

This 3-week progressive plan starts at the beginner level and allows you to build fitness gradually. Have faith in your abilities and charge full speed ahead into the program with confidence. I know you can do it! I want you to know that as well. Right now, say to yourself out loud, "I can do it!"

I've designed the 3-week plan with efficiency in mind. If you are a person who leads a busy life and feels as if you don't have a moment to spare, this is the program for you. It requires a minimum amount of time for toning, just 12 minutes a day, five days a week. Your 12-minute workouts may be short on time, but they're big on results.

You'll also fit in walking or another form of cardio around those toning routines, committing yourself to an amount of time ranging from as little as 12 minutes of your favorite high-energy exercise to a nice, rejuvenating long stroll, depending on your lifestyle and goals.

To clinch your success on the 3-week plan, you'll focus on five simple keys: shape, strength and sculpt; fat-burning cardio; staying hydrated; getting quality rest; and eating to boost your metabolism.





# Your 3-Week Plan

## INTRODUCTION

### Key 1: Shape, Strengthen and Sculpt

Toning your body has never been simpler. You'll complete your 12-minute toning routine during the week, Monday through Friday. These routines will tone your upper, middle, and lower body in a balanced way, shrinking and shaping your arms, shoulders, back, tummy, waistline, hips, thighs, and buttocks. On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, your 12-minute routine emphasizes the upper and lower body. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, you will zero in on your abs, back, and waistline. I've incorporated stretches into each routine, so you can simultaneously lengthen your muscles as you strengthen them - another way you'll be making the most of these efficient exercises.

Each Saturday, you will complete a gentle stretching routine that will help rejuvenate your body, and encourage muscle recovery from the previous five days, and give your body some tender loving care.

As you move through the 3-week program, the toning routines will become slightly more difficult, challenging your fitness and encouraging consistent, efficient results. If you ever find an exercise too challenging, return to the beginner or intermediate level. Listen to your body at all times. Be careful not to challenge yourself beyond your limits or, worse yet, go through the motions and fail to reach your limits! Try to find the fine line between pushing your body just a little past its comfort zone and pushing your body into your discomfort zone.



### Key 2: Fat Burning Cardio

To burn that butter, you need to get your heart pumping too! My 3-week plan with the balls and bands will truly help you to stretch, increase your flexibility, improve your strength, balance, and coordination through the toning exercises. But to become truly fit and healthy, you must also do some type of cardiovascular exercise that gets your heart pumping.

Your cardio routine will do much more than help you burn off excess fat. Research shows that regular doses of cardio exercise help to regulate your appetite, help to condition your heart and lungs, boost your immune system, and help prevent disease. Cardio improves blood flow through your arteries and even encourages your body to build new capillaries. Because your blood carries energizing oxygen and nutrients to every cell in your body, cardio also gives you more stamina for everyday life. Finally, many people get a wonderful mood boost from cardiovascular exercise. I consider it a natural medicine for the mind!

So how much cardio should you do? I suggest you aim for three to four days of cardio each week. Depending on your goals, you can perform anywhere from 12 to 60 minutes of cardio during each session. 12 minutes is the bare minimum amount of time that will produce results, and the more you add, the more calories you'll burn. I personally aim for more than 30 minutes of cardio 4 days a week. This is in addition to what I do on the ball and with the bands.



# Your 3-Week Plan

## INTRODUCTION

### Pick Your Cardio Workout

The following offers suggestions for the right amount of cardio you should do during this plan, based on your level and goals.

#### Level One | 12 minutes

**BEST FOR** people new to exercise who want to shape up with only a minimum amount of time spent exercising

#### Level Two | 24 minutes

**BEST FOR** people with a regular exercise routine who want to lose more than 5 pounds

#### Level Three | 36 minutes

**BEST FOR** people with a regular exercise routine who want to lose more than 10 pounds

#### Level Four | 48 minutes

**BEST FOR** people with a regular exercise routine who want to get in top shape for a special occasion, such as a wedding or a high school reunions

#### Level Five | 60 minutes

**BEST FOR** athletes who love fitness, have plenty of time to spend on fitness, and enjoy the challenge of getting their bodies in optimal shape. (I usually try to fit in my 60-minute sessions on the weekends with my husband)





# Your 3-Week Plan

## INTRODUCTION

When deciding what type of cardio to tackle my suggestion is to always do the form of cardio that you will actually do! The type of exercise you enjoy the most is the type that you will do consistently. Consistency is one important key to your success. Let's look at the different benefits you'll get from several types of cardiovascular exercise.

**WALKING.** If you are a beginner, this is a great cardio choice, because you need minimal equipment and expertise. Also, most people are able to walk without discomfort, a big plus as it will help you keep your long-term commitment to exercise. I love to walk for fitness!

**JOGGING OR RUNNING.** Jogging burns more calories per minute than walking, making it a wonderfully efficient fat burning workout. To slowly progress from walking to jogging, add a one-minute jogging burst for each 10 minutes of walking. Once you can do that, add two minutes, and then three, until eventually you are jogging for nine minutes with just one minute of walking.

**SWIMMING.** If you have arthritis, bad knees, a bad back, or any type of pain in general, the pool can be your best friend. Water takes weight off your body, allowing you to move pain-free.

**BIKE RIDING.** Whether you're on a stationary, Spinning, or road bike, cycling provides a great calorie burning workout. It's also easy on the knees. If you have a bad back or are overweight, consider buying a recumbent bike, which allows you to lean back as you pedal.

**JUMPING ROPE.** This very challenging, efficient, calorie incinerating workout is perfect for people who can't exercise outdoors because of the weather or safety concerns, but who also have limited space indoors for movement. If you have trouble coordinating your arms with your feet, start by jumping without





# Your 3-Week Plan

## INTRODUCTION

the rope, and then add the rope later. For variety try jumping jacks, small jumps, large jumps, and jogging with the rope.

### **STAIR CLIMBING, ELLIPTICAL AND OTHER CARDIO MACHINES.**

Whether you use them at home or at the gym, exercise machines can make working out much more convenient. Maybe you like to watch television to distract yourself as you work out on the stair climber, the treadmill, or the rowing machine. These machines also allow you to exercise indoors during bad weather.

**DANCING.** I love dancing workouts, as they are both fun and effective! They can be a great source of cardiovascular exercise, and you may not even realize you're exercising at all, that's how fun they can be!

No matter what type of cardio you decide to do, always include a warm-up and a cool-down, each two to five minutes long. Your warm-up will slowly increase your heart rate, getting more blood to your muscles to ready them for your workout. Your cool-down will allow your heart to slow down gradually. To either warm up or cool down, just go a little more slowly than usual. My [DeniseAustin.com](http://DeniseAustin.com) site offers hundreds of fun, effective cardio workouts you can do anywhere, including walking workouts, dancing workouts and more!

The best type of cardiovascular exercise  
is the type you will do most often!

*Denise Austin*





# Your 3-Week Plan

## INTRODUCTION

### Key 3: Staying Hydrated

No doubt about it, water whisks away pounds. Water is one of your best friends. You need water for countless processes, from food digestion to body temperature regulation. Even though water contains no calories, it helps contribute to a feeling of fullness, especially when you drink it right before your meals. Because your brain and blood are largely made of water, a shortfall can make you feel tired, sluggish, and dull.

I try to drink eight, 8- to 12-oz glasses of water a day. As soon as I wake up in the morning, I go straight to the kitchen and down two glasses of water at the sink. After 8 hours of sleep, our bodies are dehydrated, and they need water to help get all systems in gear and burning at peak efficiency. I also find that if I drink a glass before each meal and one with meals, it automatically helps me eat less. Making water my main liquid staple helps me avoid other drinks, such as soft drinks or juice drinks that contain hidden calories.





# Your 3-Week Plan

## INTRODUCTION

### Key 4: Get Quality Rest

Rest rebuilds your muscles. Sleep is heavenly, and as a culture, we need more of it. You see, rest is just as important to your body as movement. As you sleep, your body secretes the hormones responsible for repairing and strengthening your muscles. Research has found over and over again that people who routinely skimp on their sleep tend to age faster than those who get in a full 8 hours - yet it's often the first thing we women are tempted to cut short when time is tight! When you chronically deprive yourself of the rest you need, your metabolism slows, your muscles start to ache, your fitness plan results drop off, and your energy levels plummet.

#### Try This

Just like you do with your kids, decide on a set bedtime and make a firm commitment to get yourself to bed on time. And don't forget - if you set your alarm 15 minutes earlier to get in the morning workout, make sure to go to bed 15 minutes earlier at night.





### Key 5: Eat to Boost Your Metabolism

Metabolism is the rate at which your body burns calories. Your metabolism naturally starts to slow down as you become less active and your body loses muscle. Regular aerobic exercise and strength training can help give your metabolism a boost. But how and when you eat also plays an important role. Here are five easy ways to keep your metabolism charged, courtesy of my [Stop The Clock Nutrition Plan](#):

**DON'T SKIP MEALS - ESPECIALLY BREAKFAST.** Whether you're trying to drop weight quickly or are simply in too much of a hurry, skipping meals is a big mistake. When your body is deprived of food, it starts conserving fuel - in other words, burning fewer calories to protect itself from starving. This is especially bad news for those who don't eat breakfast. Since your body slows down while it's sleeping, you need food to give your metabolism a kick-start. Breakfast is a prime opportunity to add in healthy foods like vegetables and fruits to start the day off right.

**SPREAD YOUR FOOD INTAKE THROUGHOUT THE DAY.** While skipping meals is a definite weight-loss don't, eating too much food at once can also sabotage your efforts to beat middle-age spread. Your body processes fuel more efficiently when it's fed in small amounts. "Grazing" may be the secret to keeping your blood sugar stable and your body primed for movement. All you need to do is make a few timing changes, spreading your eating out rather than downing a three-course meal in one sitting. The aim is to keep your body fueled for activity.

**WATCH YOUR PORTION SIZES.** America is the land of extra-large everything - from jumbo sodas to super-sized fries to overstuffed sandwiches. The first step in defending yourself against overeat-



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## INTRODUCTION

ing? Learn what appropriate portion sizes look like and stick to them. Your body and waistline will thank you!

**PUT A CURFEW ON YOUR KITCHEN.** Does late-night eating make you gain weight? Technically, no. However, late-night nibbling often does set you up for overeating. Mindless munching in front of the TV can add up to a lot of excess calories. I suggest “closing” your kitchen at the same time each night to cut down on temptation.



**ADD SPICES TO YOUR DIET.** Ginger, capsaicin - what gives chili peppers their “bite” - and black pepper can elevate the generation of heat in your body, which can lead to more calories burned. Toss peeled, fresh ginger into your smoothies and stir-frys, and add pepper to your meals.

If weight loss is a goal for you during this 3-week plan, you should focus on eating lean proteins, whole fresh vegetables, healthy fats such as olive oil, and whole grains. All will help you feel full and provide you with necessary nutrients and fiber to give you energy! You can also join [DeniseAustin.com](https://DeniseAustin.com) and access my customizable eating plan for recipe suggestions.





# Your 3-Week Plan

## INTRODUCTION

### Getting Started: Sculpting Your Best Body

You'll kick off your 3-week plan on a Sunday. During your first day on the plan, you will complete no official exercise. Instead you'll use the day to prepare for the weeks ahead by:

#### **1) STEPPING ON THE SCALE AND TAKING YOUR MEASUREMENTS**

#### **2) SETTING A GOAL**

#### **3) SHOPPING FOR HEALTHY FOODS**

#### **4) MAKING SURE YOU HAVE YOUR EQUIPMENT AND WORKOUT SPACE READY FOR ACTION**

To inflate your ball, make a pencil mark on the wall at the 26" mark - that's the height of your ball. Then, insert the pump into the ball and begin to inflate it... this can take from 20 to 40 minutes or more... It's a great arm workout! Once you are near to filling the ball to capacity, measure it against the mark on the wall - you will want to inflate it to that height, but no more (overinflation can cause the ball to burst). Then insert the plug, pushing it all the way in so the top is flush with the ball. Now you are ready to go!

I'm so excited for you! You will soon learn how to combine good nutrition, fat burning cardio, toning and stretching, plenty of water, and plenty of rest to transform your body, your mind, and your life. You'll become the healthiest and happiest that you can be, and you'll create a balanced body, mind, and soul. In just 21 days, you'll be well on your way to sculpting a new you - a you who is open to new possibilities, a you who is balanced, strong, flexible, coordinated, and, most important, successful and satisfied!



## Denise's Daily Wisdom

Many women ask me whether I think it is a good idea to work a cheat day into their week. On the cheat day, they would eat all the foods they love, in large portions, and toss self-discipline aside. Then for the other six days of the week, they would return to an extremely healthful way of eating.

Although this approach certainly works for some people, I find it backfires for most. Many people tell me that one cheat day turns into two and then three. Suddenly, anytime they feel a craving, they declared a cheat day. To stick to a new, helpful way of eating, most people - myself included - must regularly indulge in the foods they love. When I feel like having ice cream, I just eat one scoop. I enjoy the ice cream without going overboard. Just remember to dish up reasonable portions. I recommend you follow the 80/20 rule - make 80% of your foods healthy, and the other 20% can be fun foods that you love. Once you allow yourself to eat the foods you love, you no longer have to cheat, and sticking with a healthy diet will be more manageable. Your cravings diminish, and you return to a sensible way of eating that results in permanent weight loss.

**Start moving your body, and your mind  
and motivation will follow.**

*Denise Austin*

### Day Off!

You will do no official exercise today. Instead, you'll spend some time getting ready for the exciting week ahead. I found that when starting a new program, preparation - both in your body and your mind - can be way more than half the battle. If you can get yourself off to a good start by anticipating any challenges to your program, you're almost guaranteed to succeed!

### Weigh-In

To be able to enjoy how much your body will change in three weeks, you'll want to have an accurate picture of where you began. Take a moment to jot down the following information in a notebook or a notes app:

- Your current weight
- Your current waist, bust, hips, thighs, and arm measurements
- Your current clothing size

And, if available:

- Your current body-fat percentage
- Your current health statistics such as cholesterol level, glucose level and so forth.

### Reflection

At the end of each week, you'll take a moment to reflect on your accomplishments and challenges. Today's reflection will help you to anticipate future challenges. Answer these questions in your notebook or app:

- What personal strengths can you call upon to help you stick with the program?
- What personal challenges do you anticipate? How will you overcome these challenges?
- What one goal do you plan to accomplish in the coming week? For example do you plan to get up 5 minutes earlier, give up eating past 7 p.m., or some other small measurable step that will help you achieve your goals?

### Preparation

A few moments of preparation today will make the rest of the week's plan come together quickly and easily. First and foremost, make sure that you have familiarized yourself with your resistance ball and bands - make sure it is inflated, and practice sitting on it and moving around a little bit. It can take time for your body to get used to the ball, so the more you practice on it the better! Also be sure you have a time and place selected for your workouts. And if you want to follow a healthy eating plan, make sure you have bought and prepped plenty of **healthy snacks** for the week. Fresh veggies, whole grain crackers, nuts and nut butters, hard boiled eggs, hummus, and fresh, whole fruits are all good choices!

### Denise's Daily Wisdom

For many people, morning is not only the best time to exercise, it's the only time. When everyone else is still in bed, you can get up and do your routine without feeling rushed and without interruption. Over the years, people have told me about many of their secrets for getting up for their morning moves. Here are just a few:

- The night before, lay your workout clothes and shoes next to your bed and get your workout area and ball ready so you have no excuses when the alarm sounds.
- Write a note to yourself and place it in front of your alarm clock, something like "You can do it!" or "I deserve to feel fit."
- Say to yourself, if I'm still this tired after three minutes, I can go back to bed. Chances are you won't!
- If you drink coffee, set your coffee maker to start brewing 5 minutes before the alarm goes off. Let the smell of fresh coffee lure you from the covers.
- Go to bed earlier. You need a good night's sleep in order to wake up refreshed.

Feeling good about yourself involves more than a fit body. Commit yourself to constant self-improvement by challenging your mind as well as your body, and savor the feeling of **self accomplishment!**

*Denise Austin*

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Upper-Back Stretch **PAGE 93**

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Chest Press **PAGE 72**

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Traditional Crunch **PAGE 33**

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Front Raise **PAGE 78**

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Upper-Back Toner **PAGE 79**

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Biceps Curl **PAGE 86**

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Triceps Kickback **PAGE 83**

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Thigh Blaster **PAGE 65**

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Hamstring Stretch **PAGE 103**

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Ball Squeeze **PAGE 56**

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Bottoms Up **PAGE 55**

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Hamstring Curl **PAGE 54**

## Denise's Daily Wisdom

You may wonder why I've included a shape, strengthen and sculpt routine for six out of seven days a week. You may ask, "Don't I get more time off than that?" I found that it takes time and repetition to form a habit. It's so easy to fall off the fitness wagon when you exercise only three days a week. If you feel tired on a particular day, you might say to yourself, "I'll exercise tomorrow." Eventually, you keep putting it off until another day... And that day may never come! By making exercise a part of your life, just like brushing your teeth, you can really commit to sticking with this plan.

During this 3-week plan, you are forming many habits, but the most important one is the ability to find 12 minutes for you every day. If you've spent your life catering to the needs of others and rarely ever giving yourself a second thought, finding 12 minutes every day to spend on just yourself will feel challenging at first. Move regularly and consistently, and you'll build a habit that will last a lifetime. And since it's only 12 minutes each day, there really isn't an excuse not to at least give a try!!

If you **rest**, you'll **rust**!

*Denise Austin*

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**Hug-A-Ball** PAGE 92

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**Saw** PAGE 112

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**Traditional Crunch** PAGE 33

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**Oblique Twist** PAGE 35

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**Torso Toner** PAGE 36

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**Mermaid** PAGE 132

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**Back Stretch** PAGE 32

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**Back Toner** PAGE 45

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**Reciprocal Reach** PAGE 48

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**Bicycle** PAGE 43

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**Lower-Tummy Firmer** PAGE 37

### Denise's Daily Wisdom

Can you speed up your results by tackling more than the 12 moves you have each day? The answer to that question depends on you! If it's a struggle for you to find 12 minutes a day to exercise, stick with only 12 minutes. Each daily routine will certainly challenge your body and provide the results you seek. On the other hand, if you find that you move through your daily routine easily and have time or energy for more, then go for it. Here are some ways to optimize your results:

- Once you finish a daily routine, do each exercise again for a total of two back-to-back routines.
- Do the day's suggested routine in the morning and then again later in the day.
- Add in extra cardio that is easy to accomplish: Try a 12-minute combo of walking in place, doing jumping jacks, or jumping rope.

The joy lies in the journey, not in the destination.  
**Enjoy each and every day!**

*Denise Austin*

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Triangle Pose **PAGE 129**

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Warrior 2 **PAGE 128**

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Pushup **PAGE 73**

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Lateral Raise **PAGE 77**

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Arm Row **PAGE 76**

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French Curl **PAGE 85**

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Chest Stretch **PAGE 105**

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Hammer Curl **PAGE 87**

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Front/Back **PAGE 115**

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Butt and Thigh Firmer **PAGE 59**

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Quad Sets **PAGE 64**

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Front-of-Thigh Stretch **PAGE 100**

## Denise's Daily Wisdom

People sometimes ask if it's cheating when they skip their cardio workouts after a long day working in the garden, moving furniture, or doing some other form of physical labor. I always reply, no way! Physical labor IS a form of exercise. Weeding, digging holes, planting, lifting boxes, doing laundry and moving furniture all require you to use your muscles. Think of five hours of gardening as a five-hour long workout. You're certainly not cheating if you skip an official exercise routine after that!

Just remember to cultivate the subtle art of listening to your body. Know the difference between when your body has really had enough and needs a rest and when your mind is merely trying to create excuses not to move.

Respect and cherish your body.  
You've been given only one. Taking care of it is  
key to a long, happy life.

*Denise Austin*

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Side Stretch **PAGE 95**

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Pilates Plank **PAGE 117**

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Natural Tummy Tuck **PAGE 41**

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Rise and Shine **PAGE 47**

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Lower-Back Strengthener **PAGE 46**

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Bridge **PAGE 134**

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Hip Circles **PAGE 116**

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Pelvic Tilt **PAGE 31**

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Tummy Flattener **PAGE 38**

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T-Stand **PAGE 114**

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Knee Sway **PAGE 138**

## Denise's Daily Wisdom

Don't forget to celebrate your successes! Too often we only notice when we slip up. We spend the day thinking, "What's wrong with me that I've slept in?" Or "I didn't work hard enough on my daily routine." You'll find more motivation, however, if you focus on each and every success.

Congratulate yourself for getting up earlier to fit in your routines. Be proud of your ability to perform a new daily workout that you never before attempted. Be constantly on the lookout for these little successes. They will serve as the kindling that fuel your desire to stay on track!

Laugh hard as often as possible.  
It is the best natural medicine for the mind,  
**and it firms your tummy!**

*Denise Austin*



**Mermaid** PAGE 132



**Chest Press** PAGE 72



**Back and Shoulder Firmer** PAGE 80



**Shoulder Stretch** PAGE 104



**Rowing Series** PAGE 122



**Arm Firmer** PAGE 84



**Arm Stretch** PAGE 106



**Biceps Curl** PAGE 86



**Ball Tap** PAGE 52



**Lower-Body Toner** PAGE 57



**Leg Circles with Ball** PAGE 120



**Lat Pulldown** PAGE 88

## Denise's Daily Wisdom

We all need motivation, so determine what motivates YOU! Sticking with an exercise routine can be exciting at first, but like most things, can lose its allure. So think back to why you originally chose to embark on this plan. Was it to tone up? To gain strength? Become more flexible? Maybe it was to simply be able to fit in 12 minutes of exercise every day... or maybe it was to lose weight, flatten that belly, or slim down your arms. Whatever your original goal, keep it in mind as you go through each movement and each day. Keep your eyes on the prize, as they say. You will achieve your goals!

We all need to feel appreciated. Tell someone you love how much you treasure him or her. A smile, a compliment, one kind sentence - those little things can make a person's day!

*Denise Austin*

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Waist Rotation **PAGE 94**

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Thigh Stretch **PAGE 96**

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Spinal Twist **PAGE 98**

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Torso Stretch **PAGE 99**

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Front-of-Thigh Stretch **PAGE 100**

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Hip Release **PAGE 101**

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Child's Pose **PAGE 107**



# Your 3-Week Plan

## WEEK TWO INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on completing Week 1 of the 3-week plan! You are already one third of the way toward your goal. Give yourself a pat on the back for a job well done. If you stuck with the program each day last week, that in itself is a significant accomplishment, one that you should be proud of. You are in the process of forming an incredibly important habit, in many ways the healthiest habit: Exercising consistently.

Despite your success, do you still find your thoughts focused on the negative? Do you find yourself brooding and feeling guilty about every single slip-up? I encourage you to put aside your inner critic and let your inner confidence bloom. Each day start with a fresh slate, focusing on the new, fit, firm, healthy you that is blossoming. Think of yourself as a rose early in its season, closed tightly. Slowly, and over time, the petals begin to unfold, revealing the beauty inside.

In the coming week, your toning routines will become slightly more difficult. If you encounter an exercise that feels too challenging, move back to the less challenging version of the exercise. For example, on day 9, I suggest that you complete Intermediate Bicep Curls. It's a tough one! If you can't balance on the ball with one leg extended and simultaneously do the bicep curls, feel free to go back to the beginner version. Don't beat yourself up more feel discouraged. Your balance and strength will improve over time.

If you want to lose more than 5 pounds, step up your cardio this week from 12 minutes to 24 minutes, three to four times a week. You can do your cardio on any day you like, as long as you actually do it!





# Your 3-Week Plan

## WEEK TWO INTRODUCTION

Continue to monitor your water intake and your hours of sleep, always aiming for more. Until you form this habit, which takes three weeks, it can be easy to backslide.

You will start your week with your day off from exercise, your weigh-in, and your preparation for the week to come. I believe your day off can actually be the most productive and crucial day of the week; it's the day that you take care of all the details that will help you accomplish your goals for the week to come.

This week, don't forget to focus on quality in everything you choose for yourself - not only in your food and fitness but also in the way you think about your downtime. Are you giving yourself enough true rest? Are you taking as good care of you as you are those you love? Savor the feeling of a good, deep stretch and try to transfer that pleasure to other parts of your life - you are worth it!



## Denise's Daily Wisdom

I like to make fitness as fun as possible. The more fun you have, the more likely you will stick with it. Each weekend, I like to organize a fun family day, on which my husband and I do something active together. Although I often don't think of it as "official" exercise, it is. Each Sunday, I recommend that you do the same! You will find that as you grow stronger and more coordinated, you'll want to do more and more. Spend the day at the park, swimming in the pool, or playing active games with your children; or go for a long walk or hike on a nature trail, go on a bike ride, garden in your yard, or just dance in your living room! The more you move, the more calories you will burn, even if it doesn't feel like exercise. It's all about being active. Just move, move, move!

If you don't squeeze it, no one else will!

*Denise Austin*

### Day Off!

Today is your day off from exercise. Spend the day appreciating your accomplishments from the past week. Remember to stay on track, find a fun type of exercise today, but don't add up how many calories you burn. Just have fun in your body as it gets more fit each day!

### Weigh-In

Assess your progress. Don't worry if you don't see dramatic changes in your weight or measurements - your body is keeping track, even if the scale isn't yet. Record:

- Your current weight
- Your current measurements
- Your "yay me" moments (any other accomplishments such as more energy to run up the stairs, or better sleep)

### Reflection

As in week one, a few thoughts will get you mentally prepared for the days ahead this week.

- What did you do well last week?
- How could you improve your motivation and dedication?
- Set one goal that you plan to accomplish in the coming week. For example, plan to get up five minutes earlier, give up eating past 7 p.m., and so forth.

### Preparation

This week I want you to focus on healthy breakfasts and lunches. By filling up on whole foods that really fuel your nutritional bottom line, you will be giving your body the energy it needs to really excel in this 3-week plan.

#### HEALTHY BREAKFAST SUGGESTIONS

**Almond butter and banana sandwich** on whole-grain bread. This will give you healthy fats, protein, fiber and a serving of fruit.

**Two apple halves topped with natural peanut butter.** This is an easy breakfast that offers up a good amount of fiber and protein.

**A quick power smoothie.** I like to use a combination of ice, almond or oat milk, yogurt, a banana, and mixed berries (frozen are fine). You can sub in kale or other greens for the berries - either way, this smoothie will provide you with nutrients, protein, fiber and a couple servings of produce - a great way to start the day!

#### HEALTHY LUNCH SUGGESTIONS

**Healthy bowls:** Start with brown rice, quinoa or farro; add in some beans or lentils; top with fresh spinach and a little cheese, and you have a meal that is rich in protein, fiber and antioxidants!

**Crudite plate:** Chop up any fresh veggies you have on hand and serve with hummus, a hard boiled egg and some nuts. Protein and fiber to fuel your body!

**Baked potato and cottage cheese.** Simple and satisfying - swap out the potato for a sweet potato and add sauteed spinach or broccoli for even more nutritional benefits.

## Denise's Daily Wisdom

You can help yourself stick to reasonable food portions by starting the day on the right foot nutritionally. Research shows that eating and drinking sugary foods such as donuts, baked goods, and soft drinks often result in hunger and cravings later in the day. I recommend that you make breakfast your opportunity to eat some great foods with fiber, fruits, vegetables, and protein.

Some healthy breakfast options (in addition to the ones on the previous page) include:

- A bowl of oatmeal with a spoonful of ground flax seeds and some berries.
- An egg white omelet chock-full of chopped up vegetables.
- A bowl of high-fiber cereal with whole milk and berries.

These meals have staying power, helping to prevent cravings and hunger all morning. They will stabilize your blood sugar and help you to eat right for the rest of the day.

Prevention is the best medicine.  
Never take your health for granted.

*Denise Austin*

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Upper-Back Stretch **PAGE 93**

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Pushup **PAGE 73**

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Intermediate Front Raise **PAGE 78**

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Bug **PAGE 113**

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Back and Shoulder Firmer **PAGE 80**

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Intermediate Biceps Curl **PAGE 86**

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Triceps Kickback **PAGE 83**

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Thigh Blaster **PAGE 65**

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Hip Stretch **PAGE 102**

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Advanced Ball Squeeze **PAGE 56**

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Bottoms Up **PAGE 55**

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Intermediate Hamstring Curl **PAGE 54**

## Denise's Daily Wisdom

Many people ask me how to get over those motivational slumps. They tell me that they find it easy to motivate themselves for a while, and then they enter a phase when they hate to exercise and don't know what to do about it.

Is this true for you, too? Here are some ways to get over the hump that have worked for me and other people I've spoken with:

- Exercise with your friend or partner. You will feel accountable to that person. By setting up a time and a place, you will have to keep your promise.
- Mix it up. Doing the same thing day in and day out becomes boring. That's why I have provided so much variety in the ball and band routines in this book.
- Pump up the volume. Your favorite music can help create the urge to move!
- Stick with it. Usually, motivational slumps pass by, and eventually your motivation resurfaces. Persevere, and eventually you won't even recognize the person who wanted to skip those workouts.

Oxygen creates energy. Breathe deeply and nourish your body with this important life force. One of the best ways to get more oxygen flowing is by exercising. **Exercise equals energy!**

*Denise Austin*

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Waist Rotation **PAGE 94**

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Pilates Twist **PAGE 111**

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Hip Release **PAGE 101**

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Intermediate Crunch **PAGE 34**

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Advanced Oblique Twist **PAGE 35**

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Intermediate Torso Toner **PAGE 36**

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Back Stretch **PAGE 32**

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T-Stand **PAGE 114**

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Intermediate Rise and Shine **PAGE 47**

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Reciprocal Reach **PAGE 48**

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Waistline Trimmer **PAGE 39**

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Roll-Down **PAGE 118**

## Denise's Daily Wisdom

Some people try to speed up their results by exercising their trouble spots every day. For example, they do a leg workout every day or an abs workout every day. Rather than speed up results, however, this might be a recipe for injury. Your muscles need a day to recover from resistance exercise. If you work the same muscle group every single day, it never gets a chance to recover and grow stronger. Worse, you feel sore and tired all of the time, which depletes your motivational reserves.

You will notice that my 3-week plan never includes strengthening exercises of the same body area two days in a row. This allows each body area to completely recover. Successful weight loss requires patience. Stick with the 3-week plan as it is laid out, and hold yourself back from adding to it. Your results will come, I promise!

Motivation comes from within. If you tell yourself you can do it, you **will** achieve your goals!

*Denise Austin*

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Intermediate Triangle **PAGE 129**

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Warrior 2 **PAGE 128**

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Chest Press **PAGE 72**

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Intermediate Lateral Raise **PAGE 77**

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Upright Row **PAGE 81**

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Intermediate French Curl **PAGE 85**

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Intermediate Biceps Curl **PAGE 86**

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Intermediate Hamstring Curl **PAGE 54**

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Floor Tap **PAGE 53**

10



Ultimate Tummy Trimmer **PAGE 42**

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Hip Circles **PAGE 116**

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Outer-Thigh Toner **PAGE 58**

## Denise's Daily Wisdom

You can more effectively keep track of your eating habits and reign in what I like to call “unconscious calories” by keeping a food diary. Each day jot down everything that you eat - your phone notes is a good place to do this. Include little nibbles here and there, the bites you finished from your child's plate, the free samples at the grocery store, the taste of cake you indulged in at an office party. At the end of the day, look over your food diary. Notice not only how much and how often you ate, but also the composition of your meals. Are you eating enough fruits and vegetables? Your food diary will help you to find out. Are you eating too many sweets or drinking too many soft drinks? The answers will be right there in front of you at the end of the day.

One caution, however: Don't allow your food diary to make you feel guilty. Just use it as a way to keep tabs on your eating habits. In fact, I recommend that you delete each diary entry after you have looked it over. This allows you to start over the next day with a fresh slate and without guilt.

Why are you working so hard?  
For your health, for your body, for your mind,  
**for you... that's why!**

*Denise Austin*

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Upper-Back Stretch **PAGE 93**

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Waist Rotation **PAGE 94**

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Plank **PAGE 40**

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Cobra **PAGE 133**

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Lower-Back Strengthener **PAGE 46**

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Intermediate Torso Toner **PAGE 36**

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Back Stretch **PAGE 32**

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Oblique Twist **PAGE 35**

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Double-Leg Stretch **PAGE 121**

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Waistline Trimmer **PAGE 39**

11



Intermediate Bicycle **PAGE 43**

12



Knee Sway **PAGE 138**

## Denise's Daily Wisdom

I try not to eat any food that contains partially hydrogenated fat. Also called trans fat, this type of fat has been implicated in heart disease, cancer, and weight gain. The worst food offenders include margarine, cake and other mixes, instant soups, fast food, frozen dinners and desserts, commercially baked goods, snack chips and crackers, and commercially made dips and salad dressings.

During the late 1970s, before the dangers of these facts were known, food manufacturers began using partially hydrogenated oils to extend the shelf life of packaged foods. For many years, trans fats were considered a hidden fat because manufacturers were not required to list it on food labels. Now since evidence is stacked against these fats, the FDA requires manufacturers to list them on labels. I recommend you examine the labels of the packaged foods you eat and look for their levels of trans fats. If possible, buy only packaged foods that contain zero trans fat.

Eating right isn't about willpower. It's about changing bad habits.

*Denise Austin*

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**Mermaid** PAGE 132

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**Advanced Pushup** PAGE 73

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**Chest Firmer** PAGE 74

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**Intermediate Arm Row** PAGE 76

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**Floor Tap** PAGE 138

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**Back and Shoulder Firmer** PAGE 80

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**Shoulder Stretch** PAGE 104

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**Rowing Series** PAGE 122

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**Arm Stretch** PAGE 106

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**Biceps Curl** PAGE 86

11



**Thigh Blaster** PAGE 65

12



**Child's Pose** PAGE 107

## Denise's Daily Wisdom

As you move through the program, you may notice that your weight on the scale doesn't necessarily reflect the wonderful changes that you've made to your body. Because muscle weighs more than fat, some people find that the scale weight changes very little, even though their bodies definitely are shrinking in size. Muscle takes up much less room than fat, so that's why you can sculpt your body and lose a dress size without losing weight on the scale.

A great way to measure your progress as you exchange fat for new muscle is to use a scale that measures more than your weight. Some scales will also measure your body fat percentage. As you firm up, your body fat level will continue to drop, even if your actual weight remains steady. That way you will be able to assess your success accurately.

In addition to using a scale that measures your body fat percentage, you can keep track of your measurements. Hopefully, you used a flexible tape measure to jot down the circumference of your thighs, belly, and hips before you started your journey. If so, continue to do it again at regular intervals - if not, start now, and watch the inches fly off!

Exercise and healthful eating are important,  
**because you are worth it!**

*Denise Austin*

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**Pilates Tummy Tuck** PAGE 110

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**Pilates Twist** PAGE 111

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**Mermaid** PAGE 132

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**Hip Release** PAGE 101

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**Hip Stretch** PAGE 102

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**Hamstring Stretch** PAGE 103

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**Forward Bend** PAGE 135

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**Chest Stretch** PAGE 105

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**Shoulder Stretch** PAGE 104

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**Wheel** PAGE 136

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**Child's Pose** PAGE 107

12



**Knee Sway** PAGE 138



# Your 3-Week Plan

## WEEK THREE INTRODUCTION

After completing week 2, you are now two-thirds of the way through this weight loss jumpstart. Way to go! Completing your routines, getting plenty of sleep, eating healthfully, and drinking eight glasses of water a day are significant accomplishments. Be proud of yourself. You've overcome procrastination!

The journey is well worth the effort. Keep going. The feeling of accomplishment is one of the most wonderful sensations in the world. You are building the discipline needed to continue your new helpful changes for the rest of your life. Although your toning and stretching routines may not feel completely natural yet - you still have one more week to go until they become a habit - the healthier, fitter you is already inside! Your body, mind, and soul are slowly becoming accustomed to this new way of life. You are balancing your life from the inside out, and you are creating the dedication and type of lifestyle needed to be successful at everything you do, from your career aspirations to your family life.

In the coming week, your toning routines will become slightly more difficult. If you encounter an exercise that feels too challenging, move back to the less challenging version of that exercise. For example, on day 16 if you struggle to do just one pushup on one leg, you can return to the version with both legs on the ball. Again, don't beat yourself up or feel discouraged. Attempt the more difficult version and see how well you do, and then do the less challenging version if needed. Always remember this: The more you challenge yourself, the more your balance and coordination will improve. You'll see and feel the results.

If you need to lose more than 10 pounds, step up your cardio this week from 24 to 36 minutes, three to four times a week. Remember, you can do your cardio on any day you like, as long as you do it!





# Your 3-Week Plan

## WEEK THREE INTRODUCTION

Continue to monitor your water intake and your hours of sleep - keep them up, up, up! Until you form your new healthful habit, it can be too easy to slide back to those old ways. Writing down what you eat and drink and taking note of how many hours of sleep you are getting will keep you on track and accountable to yourself.

This week when you focus on quality, think of how each deliberate movement in your plan brings you one step closer to your goals. By choosing to give each exercise your best effort, you are packing more value into every moment. Your time is your most precious resource - make it count!

You'll start your week with your day off, weigh-in, and preparation for the week to come. Keep an open mind and a positive outlook. You're almost there!



## Denise's Daily Wisdom

Everyone who knows me knows that I don't leave home without my reusable water bottle. I keep a bottle of water with me at all times and drink from it as often as possible. Drinking plenty of fluid helps fuel your energy levels, lower your appetite, and adds a lustrous glow to your skin. When you become dehydrated, your blood becomes thicker, making your heart work twice as hard to pump it through your body. As your heart rate speeds up, you begin to feel fatigued while performing common, everyday tasks.

Dehydration is not at all an ideal state in which to perform your exercise routines. You'll breathe harder than usual. Also, your body will have a tougher time regulating your temperature. Finally, dehydration often causes a dull headache and fatigue.

It doesn't matter whether you drink club soda with a wedge of lemon or lime, or plain tap water, as long as you drink eight glasses a day. I recommend you use a reusable water bottle, because you can take it with you in the car and on errands and other trips away from home, ensuring that you'll never get dehydrated.

Supercharge your fat-burning power by keeping up with your muscle-conditioning exercises. Muscles work miracles on your metabolism!

*Denise Austin*

## Day Off!

Today is your day off from exercise. Enjoy your day and be grateful for your accomplishments during the past week. Feel good about yourself and how far you've come. Reward yourself with a bubble bath, massage, manicure, or some other treat. Allow your body the luxury and necessity of rest and renewal.

## Weigh-In

You're doing great! Take a moment to chart your progress.

- Your current weight
- Your current measurements
- Your other accomplishments such as a compliment from a friend or resisted temptation

## Reflection

Before you head into your final week, take a moment to ponder the following.

- What did you do well last week?
- How could you improve your motivation and dedication?
- Set one goal that you plan to accomplish in the coming week. For example, increase your cardio by 12 minutes, or try to increase the number of repetitions in your workouts by one or two.

### Preparation

This week I want you to focus on eating a healthy dinner. I prefer to eat a lighter meal at night, because I sleep better than when I eat a heavier meal... I make up for that by eating a hearty breakfast to fuel me throughout the day! The below are some foods I use in many of the dinners I make.

**EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL.** Heart healthy, I use this on and in most everything that calls for oil!

**AVOCADOS.** A healthy fat, sometimes I just add a scoop to whatever dinner I am making.

**KALE OR SPINACH.** Dark leafy greens for dinner salads or sides - I almost always add to pasta dishes.

**GARLIC.** I love this natural anti-inflammatory and use it all the time!

**SWEET POTATOES.** A perfect sweet treat or substitute for white potatoes. Top with greens, cheese or enjoy on it's own.

**QUINOA.** I love this protein-rich food, and use it in salads, casseroles and more.

**ORGANIC, OMEGA-3 ENRICHED EGGS.** A quick, inexpensive way to get protein and omega-3s. I love whipping up breakfast for dinner - a good omelette with lots of veggies and a sprinkle of cheese, or fried egg sandwiches.

**PRE-ROASTED CHICKEN FROM THE GROCERY STORE.** Good to have on hand for healthy meals, fast.

## Denise's Daily Wisdom

If you've been having a hard time losing weight and you've thoroughly examined your diet, you may want to take a closer look at your liquid sources of calories. I find that many people drink many more calories and they realize, and most people don't think of soft drinks and fruit juices in the same way they think of hamburgers and french fries. Yet, soft drink often may have more calories than a hamburger!

Always check the nutrition facts label on drinks and other caloric beverages, and look for both calories and servings per container. You may be surprised to learn that your "healthy" bottle of juice contains 200 or more calories - calories that could be hindering your weight loss efforts! If plain water is just not to your liking, add a squeeze of citrus (lemon, lime, or orange), try warming up plain water and adding lemon, or drink sparkling water. If you are a juice lover, then make sure you water down your juice, and keep watering it down until it's mostly water. This may take some time, but you will get to the point where your taste buds will enjoy the watered down (and lower calorie and sugar) version!

When you finish a workout, you don't simply feel better, **you feel better about yourself!**

*Denise Austin*

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Upper-Back Stretch **PAGE 93**

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Intermediate French Curl **PAGE 85**

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Upper-Back Firmer **PAGE 75**

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Deadlift **PAGE 60**

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Ball Tap **PAGE 52**

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Advanced Pushup **PAGE 73**

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Intermediate Lateral Raise **PAGE 77**

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Intermediate Biceps Curl **PAGE 86**

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Chest Stretch **PAGE 105**

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Advanced Ball Squeeze **PAGE 56**

11



Lower-Body Toner **PAGE 57**

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Advanced Bottoms-Up **PAGE 55**

## Denise's Daily Wisdom

Have you ever had one of those days when you meant to eat right and fit in exercise, but everything seems to conspire against you? Perhaps you meant to get up early, but when the alarm went off, you slept in just a little longer. And then when you got up, your day started with a bang and didn't end until 10 hours later. You found yourself rushing around and getting by on snack chips and junk food. By the time you came home, you raided the fridge, and then when you were done, you were mad at yourself. Don't worry, these types of days happen to me, too.

The important thing to remember is that it's over. Tomorrow is a brand new day! Think positive and start with a clean slate. Calmly try to learn from such days. What could you have done differently? At any point during the day could you have put your needs ahead of others? How can you prevent such occurrences in the future? Learn from it, move on, and promise to treat yourself with greater respect in the future. One of the ways that I prevent myself from slipping up is by planning ahead best I can. While I can't predict what may come my way, I can help to keep my snacks healthy if I am unable to sit and have a healthy meal... try it yourself: Get a baggie and fill it with roasted or raw almonds, cashews, and walnuts, and add a little handful of dried fruit. Keep a baggie in your purse, and a reusable container in your car, and you can reach for an energy-boosting snack that is also healthy vs. a vending machine snack or drive-through meal that isn't going to do your body and health any favors!

Attitude is everything, so pick a good one!

*Denise Austin*

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Waist Rotation **PAGE 94**

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Hip Release **PAGE 101**

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Advanced Crunch **PAGE 34**

4



Advanced Oblique Twist **PAGE 35**

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Back Stretch **PAGE 32**

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Plank **PAGE 40**

7



Advanced Rise and Shine **PAGE 47**

8



Reciprocal Reach **PAGE 48**

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T-Stand **PAGE 114**

10



Lower-Tummy Firmer **PAGE 37**

11



Teaser **PAGE 119**

12



Knee Sway **PAGE 138**

## Denise's Daily Wisdom

Many people asked me to recommend a set of exercises that will help create more energy. There is no shortage of things you can do to create more energy, but I start by asking people about their sleep and relaxation habits before going further. Often, I find that they need more energy because they routinely get by on less than seven hours of sleep. Although exercise, a healthy diet, and plenty of water will certainly help energize you, they are not solutions for lack of sleep.

I recommend that you go to bed at the same time every night and get up at the same time every morning. Try to wind down for an hour before bed by doing some light reading or stretching. Then plan to hit the sack around 10 p.m. on weekday nights and sleep for eight hours. Only then can you expect to create more energy by exercising and eating healthful foods.

Relish this feeling of satisfaction that  
you can only get from knowing that you are  
**taking care of yourself.**

*Denise Austin*

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**Hug-A-Ball** PAGE 92

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**Intermediate Warrior 1** PAGE 127

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**Advanced Pushup** PAGE 73

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**Back and Shoulder Firmer** PAGE 80

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**Intermediate Upright Row** PAGE 81

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**French Curl** PAGE 85

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**Chest Stretch** PAGE 105

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**Intermediate Biceps Curl** PAGE 86

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**Deadlift** PAGE 60

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**Back-of-Thigh Toner** PAGE 63

11



**Hip Circles** PAGE 116

12



**Outer Thigh Toner** PAGE 58

## Denise's Daily Wisdom

From time to time, I hear from women and men who complain, "I hardly eat anything, but I still can't lose weight." I asked them what they are eating, and they tell me something like, "I have an orange for breakfast, a cup of yogurt for lunch, and a salad for dinner." Often when I pursue it a bit further, I find out that they raid the fridge at some point after 8 p.m. and end up consuming the bulk of their calories at night often more calories than they ate all day long.

Skipping meals and starving yourself can be as detrimental as consistently eating too much. First, your body senses that your calorie intake is low and automatically slows down your metabolism as a result. Second, when you feel hungry all day long, you will eventually give in to the urge and end up eating much more food than you would have if you had eaten three meals and two healthy snacks during the day. If you find yourself constantly snacking you may not be getting the correct amount of nutrients that your body needs. Work with your doctor to determine what your calorie intake should be and whether or not you were deficient in any vitamins, minerals or nutrients. Once you know what your body needs, you can nourish it in the right way.

Posture speaks volumes.  
Make sure yours says **confidence**.

*Denise Austin*

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Upper-Back Stretch **PAGE 93**

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Plank **PAGE 40**

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Cobra **PAGE 133**

4



Lower-Back Strengthener **PAGE 46**

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Intermediate Torso Toner **PAGE 36**

6



Back Stretch **PAGE 32**

7



Intermediate Crunch **PAGE 34**

8



Advanced Oblique Twist **PAGE 35**

9



Natural Tummy Tuck **PAGE 41**

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Double-Leg Stretch **PAGE 121**

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Intermediate Bicycle **PAGE 43**

12



Knee Sway **PAGE 138**

## Denise's Daily Wisdom

Do you ever feel frustrated when your tummy begins to rumble only an hour or so after you've eaten breakfast? It seems as if your body burned through your morning meal at an exceptionally fast rate, and depending on what you eat, it probably did.

Many of us turn to carbohydrates first thing in the morning, in the form of cold cereal, a bagel, or a muffin. Pure carbohydrate, however, usually isn't enough to fend off hunger until your mid-morning snack time. Of all the macronutrients - carbohydrates, protein, and fat - your body digests and uses carbohydrates the quickest. You can keep the morning munchies at bay by adding a bit of protein or some healthy fats to your morning meal. Try mixing a little peanut butter in your oatmeal or on top of your bagel for both flavor and staying power. Or, have a hard cooked egg along with your morning fruit, or add some chia or flaxseeds to your fruit smoothie. A bit of carbs, protein and fat will help you feel fuller, longer, and will help promote energy, too.

When you approach an activity with  
belief in yourself, you will perform  
**beyond your expectations!**

*Denise Austin*

1



**Mermaid** PAGE 132

2



**Advanced Pushup** PAGE 73

3



**Intermediate Arm Row** PAGE 76

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**Floor Tap** PAGE 53

5



**Ball Tap** PAGE 52

6



**Advanced Overhead Press** PAGE 82

7



**Shoulder Stretch** PAGE 104

8



**Rowing Series** PAGE 122

9



**Arm Stretch** PAGE 106

10



**Biceps Curl** PAGE 86

11



**Thigh Blaster** PAGE 65

12



**Child's Pose** PAGE 107

## Denise's Daily Wisdom

Have you noticed that some stretches or toning exercises feel easier on one side of your body than the other? As most of us are right- or left-handed, we tend to use that hand more often than the other. That sets up a strength imbalance in our upper bodies. For example, if you are right-handed, the muscles in your right arm are probably stronger than the muscles in your left arm. Similarly, most of us preferentially use one leg more than the other. Finally, little habits that we do over and over all day long without noticing, such as crossing our legs, can tighten muscles on one side of the body more than the other. And certain sports that emphasize one side of the body will do the same.

So, what should you do about it? If you notice a strength imbalance, you can try to do more reps on your weaker side. If you notice a flexibility imbalance, you can hold a stretch on your weaker side for a longer period of time or repeat twice on that side and only once on the more flexible side.

**Food isn't the enemy. Sitting still it is!  
Get going. You'll feel great!**

*Denise Austin*

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**Pilates Tummy Tuck** PAGE 110

2



**Front-of-Thigh Stretch** PAGE 100

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**Pose of the Dancer** PAGE 126

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**Saw** PAGE 112

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**Mermaid** PAGE 132

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**Hip Release** PAGE 101

7



**Hip Stretch** PAGE 102

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**Hamstring Stretch** PAGE 103

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**Chest Stretch** PAGE 105

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**Shoulder Stretch** PAGE 104

11



**Child's Pose** PAGE 107

12



**Knee Sway** PAGE 138

## Denise's Daily Wisdom

Congratulations! You did it! You've completed your 3-week Shape, Strengthen and Sculpt program, 21 days to getting your body and mind in better shape. Give yourself a standing ovation! You are a winner. You made a decision to improve your lifestyle, and you've accomplished that goal. I'm so proud of you!

I know this is the beginning of a new chapter in you, one in which you take care of yourself, give yourself the time to renew and recharge, and carve out some time everyday - even if it's just 12 minutes - to give your body the exercise it craves.

Think positive and be optimistic. Going through the motions can trigger the emotions!

*Denise Austin*

## Day Off

Appreciate your success - you've earned it! It's very important to acknowledge your accomplishments when you've done well. This positive reinforcement will help you to turn your 3-week triumph into a lifetime of good, healthy choices about enjoying movement and feeding your body the quality food it deserves.

## Weigh-In

Take a fun moment to assess your progress after your initial program.

- Your current weight
- Your current measurements
- Your other accomplishments, such as swearing off afternoon cookies or being able to do a flight of stairs without feeling out of breath

## Reflection

Today you have the perfect opportunity to ponder how the 3-week Shape, Strengthen and Sculpt plan has helped you get a head start on your long-term goals.

- What did you do well over the past few weeks?
- What challenges did you face?
- How can you learn from those challenges in the future?
- What new roles can you make to help keep you motivated?

You're on the right path of healthful eating and regular exercise! Continue with this plan by repeating it again from the beginning as is, or if you are up to it, try adding more reps to each set. You can also join [DeniseAustin.com](https://DeniseAustin.com) for access to hundreds of workouts, 7-, 10- and 14-day Challenges and more - including a customizable eating plan to keep your newfound healthy eating goals on track. My workouts include yoga, Pilates, toning and cardio, so it's everything you need to keep you body fit and healthy! I offer a 7-day free trial, so check it out today, and stay on the healthy path you have created for yourself!

