



Publication / Self

12 Ab flatteners - Not a crunch in the bunch, Killer martial arts moves

When you kick from a one-legged stance, your ab muscles drive the motion," says Violet Zaki, a Powerstrike master trainer at New York City's Equinox.



<p>MORE BASIC TRAINING ABS</p> <p>SIT AND TWIST Sit with knees bent, calves raised and nearly parallel to ground. Extend arms to sides for balance. Twist torso to the left and lower body to the right. Return to start; switch sides to complete one rep. Do 10 reps.</p> <p>Quick form guide: Squeeze thighs to activate lower abs.</p> <p>Quick form guide: Keep torso elongated as you twist.</p> <p>REVERSE REACH Sit with legs apart, arms at sides at shoulder height. Twist left; place hands on floor behind you (right hip lifts off floor). Return to start; do 10 reps. Then do 10 reps on opposite side.</p>	<p>MORE MARTIAL ARTS ABS</p> <p>SIDE LIFT Stand on left leg; extend right leg to side at hip level (or slightly lower for balance). Lean slightly to the side. Place hands in fighting stance. Contract obliques (side abs) to raise right leg a few inches higher than hip bone. Lower back to start. Repeat eight times. Switch legs and repeat.</p> <p>Quick form guide: Use obliques, not momentum, to lift your leg.</p> <p>TWIST AND PUNCH Stand with feet apart, arms in fighting stance, hands in fists. Stepping forward onto left foot, pivot torso to left and punch forward with right hand. Return to start; do 10 reps. Then do 10 reps on opposite side.</p> <p>Quick form guide: Tighten your upper abs to help keep your spine straight.</p>
<p>MORE PILATES ABS</p> <p>BICYCLE Lie on floor, hands behind head. Raise legs in air directly over hips (use abs to stabilize). Keeping legs as straight as possible, bring right elbow to left leg. Switch sides, scissoring legs so right leg comes toward left elbow to complete one rep. Do 10 reps.</p> <p>UPWARD SLIDE Lie on back, left leg extended, thighs even. Extend arms parallel to thighs. Scooping navel to spine, roll up until torso is upright and reach for toes. Roll back to start; do 10 reps. Switch legs and repeat.</p> <p>Quick form guide: Exhale as you twist to engage upper abs.</p> <p>Quick form guide: Keep shoulders relaxed.</p>	<p>MORE YOGA ABS</p> <p>SIDE PLANK Position body on left knee with right leg extended and left arm straight, hand aligned under shoulder. Open body to right so right hip stacks on left hip. Straighten right leg, foot flexed. Extend right arm to ceiling, look up at hand. Lift hips and straighten left leg in front of right foot. Hold for five slow breaths. Switch sides; repeat.</p> <p>BOAT POSE Sit tall, knees bent and feet flat on floor. Tilt back and extend legs so that body forms a right angle, contracting abs to balance. Extend arms at shoulder height past knees. Hold for five slow breaths. Lower legs and repeat three to five times.</p> <p>Quick form guide: Don't pant—breathe deeply and steadily.</p> <p>Quick form guide: Scoop your navel toward your spine to tighten lower abs.</p>

SELF Amazing abs from kickboxing!

Tear-out bonus

Killer martial arts moves

When you kick from a one-legged stance, your ab muscles drive the motion, says Violet Zaki, a Powerstrike master trainer at New York City's Equinox.

Quick form guide: Stand on right leg. Position hands as though you are about to fight. Bend left knee and lift leg as high as you can, keeping foot flexed and leaning back slightly. Tighten abs and quickly kick left foot straight in front. Return to start; repeat eight times. Switch legs and repeat.

SELF Amazing abs from basic training!

Tear-out bonus

Boot camp for bellies

This traditional move gives abs guaranteed definition. Just ask Cindy Crawford and Jennifer Lopez, who sweat through this pooch-defating drill at Radius Physical Culture in New York City.

Quick form guide: Lie on stomach with hands shoulder-width apart on ground. Raise chest slightly, keeping body weight mostly on hands and hips. Twist smoothly onto left hip, bringing bent knees toward right arm. Return to start and then twist to the right to complete one rep. Do 10 reps.

SELF Amazing abs from yoga!

Tear-out bonus

Middle-whittling yoga poses

...do yoga for serenity, but it's also great for abs, says Jonathan Fields, owner of Sonic Yoga in New York City. "The breathing engages your deepest muscles."

Quick form guide: Sit, legs crossed, with a yoga block (or thick book) on either side of hips. Place hands on blocks, fingers forward. Press down with shoulders to lift buttocks off the ground. Contract lower abs to raise knees as high as you can. Hold for five slow breaths. Lower. Repeat three to five times.

SELF Amazing abs from Pilates!

Tear-out bonus

Torso-toning core work

"Pilates trains you to pull your navel toward your spine, resulting in a firm, flat belly," says Howard Sichel, owner of Power Pilates in New York City.

Quick form guide: Sit balanced as shown: Thread arms through legs and grasp ankles from the outside. Keep back rounded and use abs to scoop navel toward spine. Clasp soles of feet together three times (like a seal), then roll onto upper back, using abs to control the movement. When hips are off the ground, clasp heels again three times, then roll back to start. Repeat 8 to 10 times.