

get a gorgeous bod

NO GYM
NEEDED!

Is that “just had a baby” line wearing a little thin now that your “baby” is in second grade? Enter Liz Neporent, president of Wellness 360, a health and fitness consulting company in New York City (and mom of a 4-year-old). Find time to fit in her quick moves and your jeans will fit better soon, too.

By Leslie Goldman Photographs by Saye

Before starting: See the box on the next page for tips on how to get the most out of these moves (so you can do the least!).

THE PLANK

works all abdominal muscles, lower back, shoulders, glutes

Kneel on the floor. Bend elbows and place forearms on ground, clasping hands and forming a small triangle with hands and elbows. Straighten legs and balance on forearms and toes, feet six inches apart. Once balanced, make sure tush is level with the rest of body, forming a straight line from the top of your head to heels (as shown). Keep abs engaged to prevent back from sagging. Hold for six counts, building up to 30 counts (counts sound like “1-1000, 2-1000, 3-1000”). If this is too challenging, keep your knees on the ground and shift forward so you’re balancing your weight just above your knees. >

HAIR AND MAKEUP: NIKKI WANG YOGA PANTS BY SPLENDID

gorgeous



2 CRISSCROSS works abs, obliques, quads

On back, clasp hands behind head and slightly lift the tops of your shoulder blades off floor. Straighten and lift left leg a foot off the floor as you twist at waist, bringing right knee slowly in toward left shoulder (as shown). Be careful not to round your back or pull on your head or neck. Hold for two counts, then twist to the other side for one rep. Aim for 8 to 12 reps.

max out your results AND DO FEWER REPS!

To get the most out of this plan, you'll need to do the moves three times a week for four to six weeks. You'll see a difference soon. "Strong abs pull in, take up less room, are tighter and more dense," Neporent says. While you can't fuse stomach muscles separated in pregnancy back together with exercise, "no matter what, we can make the muscles look better." The key, she says, is not to allow momentum to do the work for you—that's just a waste of time. Instead, execute each move smoothly and precisely. Bonus: Doing them right means you'll have to do fewer reps. As you perform the exercises, keep your abs engaged—picture a belt tight around your waist, pulling everything in so your navel is "kissing" your spine. Done properly, these exercises will leave you with a slightly tender feeling in your tummy the next day.



3 STANDING CHOP works waist, obliques, lower back, glutes, legs

Stand with feet hip-width apart. Extend left arm overhead, right hand resting on hip (as shown, left). Keeping core engaged for balance and left knee soft, bring right knee up and pull left arm down in a controlled chopping motion, aiming for the outside of the knee with your elbow, for one count (right). Return to start for two counts; aim for 8 to 12 reps on each side. For an extra challenge, hold a two-pound weight in the "chopping" hand. Note: If you can't reach your elbow all the way to your knee, simply go as far as feels comfortable.

AB FAB!
Go to Parenting.com/abs for more easy ab flatteners from Your Ultimate Pilates Body Challenge, by celebrity Pilates maven Brooke Siler.



4 THE AXE works obliques, lower and mid back, shoulders

Standing with feet slightly wider than hip-distance apart and holding a one- to two-pound weight in each hand, bring both hands over left shoulder (as shown, left). Exhale as you chop down with a slow, controlled twisting motion toward right leg, keeping both feet planted on floor (right). Slowly, using your abs, not momentum, to control speed, return to start. Do 8 to 12 reps on each side. Women with back problems should be especially careful not to over-rotate.

5 THE SWIM works core, lower back, shoulders, glutes, quads

Lie facedown, arms extended overhead, palms facing down. Lift head slightly off the floor, tilting chin down to form a straight line with neck. Tighten abs to create a space between your belly button and the floor. Raise right arm and left leg one inch off the floor (as shown). Do not try to go higher. Hold for one count, then lower. Repeat on other side, completing 8 to 12 reps on each side. Beginners can rest between sides, lowering head, arms, and legs to the floor; as you progress, you may remain slightly elevated the entire time, as if swimming. ✨

Chicago-based writer Leslie Goldman is the author of *Locker Room Diaries*.

