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Kylie's vibrating bum firmer

Kylie, Elle Macpherson and Madonna are all fans of the new approach that sees you doing squats, lunges or tricep dips on a vibrating platform. "Stars love vibration training as it's fast," says Sonia Darbey from A-list Power Plate studio, Pilates Physique, in Sydney's Edgecliff.

"When you hold a move on the platform the vibrations travel up into the muscles triggering them to contract rapidly. The result: holding a squat for 30 seconds on a Power Plate is said to be equivalent to doing 900 on the floor."

There are now 45 Power Plate studios across Australia (with more appearing each day) and trainers like Darbey are getting creative adding weights or pilates to the standard moves creating even more powerful toning. Visit www.powerplate.com.au to find out more.

GRAZIA HEALTH KICK

Backwards running anyone?



APPARENTLY NO TREND IS TOO BIZARRE WHEN IT COMES TO GETTING (AND STAYING) IN SHAPE

WHILE some stars (stand up Nicole Richie and both Hilons) manage to stay slim with limited time spent in the gym, your average A-lister is usually on intimate terms with at least one personal trainer, a gym on each coast and the suppliers of many high-tech exercise gizmos and gadgets. But even with all those resources at their disposal, they still can't resist the latest wacky workouts. Warning: these may make you look pretty silly!

Tyra Banks' parachute runs
Spice Tyra during a workout and you might find her running around a track with a parachute strapped to her back. It sounds bonkers but Eduardo Whirlam from the Living Well Health & Fitness Club at Sydney's Hilton tells us it's great for improving speed and boosting leg toning because "when air gets trapped in the parachute it adds resistance working your muscles harder". Also, you'll get a super ab workout too because "You don't hold your tummy in while you run, the parachute drags on the floor."
Fancy trying this yourself? No problem, you can buy the Power Chute at www.logicalfitness.com for \$32.68 + GST, but forget trying to whack out a 5km run with one on. "You should only use parachute training in 20-30 second bursts as you have to sprint with it on," says Whirlam. Try 5 to 10 sets as part of your normal workout plan.

Jessica Biel's kangaroo moves
Want to know how to sculpt the bottom that tamed the Timberlake? Channel your inner 'no says Jessica's



Whether they hop run with a parachute or walk backwards, Jessica Biel Tyra Banks and Reece Whitherspoon are getting creative with their workouts

trainer Jason Walsh. He's a big fan of jumping moves called plyometrics that see Jessica leaping quickly up a set of 20 stairs which leaves her butt burning. Jason explains the key to great results is really springing up so you feel the move from your feet, through your legs and into your bum. "Think about the way a kangaroo jumps with its whole legs," he told us.
Not intense enough for you? Follow your 20 steps by jumping on and off the lowest step for one minute straight afterwards. "This is so tough the first time she did it Jessica would have punched me afterwards – but she didn't have the energy," says Jason.

Kelly Preston's bandage workouts
You've probably heard about body wraps where you're covered in a detox gel, wrapped in bandages then left to lie quietly for 30 minutes or so while you sweat off extra fluid inches.
That's not enough for fans – while Kelly Preston – of the Suddenly Slimmer wrap. In this, instead of lying still while the creams do their thing, you'll get on a cross-trainer for an hour which, says the wrap creators, releases extra fat and toxins.
As yet, the \$162 wrap isn't available here but should it hit our shores, Nicola Gleeson, national training manager for BLC Cosmetics (which includes wrapmasters Thalgo) suggests caution. "A wrap can get quite warm so the risk of dehydration while exercising is very high – and there might be health problems for anyone with heart or circulation issues. My advice? Exercise first, then have a wrap – at least that way you'll get to enjoy it."

Madonna's mega sessions
Madonna is renowned for her three-hour workouts, but she's not alone in carrying out mega sessions.

Actress Jaime Pressly says she lost her post-baby weight hitting the gym for two hours a day, five days a week while Kate Hudson did 12 to 3-hour cardio/pilates combos to lose hers.
"Celebrities often only have a short time to change their shape because of media pressure or for a new role," says Cameron Mercer, owner/personal trainer of Holistic Fitness Australia, the gym at Sydney's Fox Studios (where stars like Hugh Jackman are spotted). They also workout differently to mere mortals.
While we happily work out while busy in an hour's session, they may spend an hour working one part only, followed by a massage or yoga, then an afternoon gym or cardio session. "This helps them recover better and reduces risk of injury," says Mercer.
So what if you want to ramp up to Madonna-type hourage? Mercer says to build up gradually – never increase time or intensity by more than 10 per cent a week – and remember, mixing cardio/weights and stretching is key.

Jennifer Lopez's triple threat
"Why swim, bike or run when you can do three?" seems to be the motto in Hollywood with triathlon training joining the hip list.
Veteran tri-fans like Estella Warren and desperate housewife Felicity Huffman have been joined by Jennifer Lopez. "She's working out between 40 minutes and two hours a day, 4 to 6 times a week at the moment," her trainer Gunnar Peterson told us. "It's a brilliant way to keep your body tight and avoid stop-boredom."
There are triathlons all over Australia (Google "tri a tri" for good starter events near you) but heed Gunnar's advice: "Remember you might be able to run 10km but that doesn't mean you can swim and bike on top of that. Choose an event that fits your current fitness

level or has enough training time for improvement and practise swapping from each exercise – that transition is the hardest part of any triathlon."
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Fergie's backwards step
Singer Fergie, Spice Girl Mel B and actress Reese Witherspoon are all known to use backwards running or walking as part of their workouts.
"It works the muscles in a different way which challenges them. But it also gets your heart rate higher than forwards running because you take smaller steps which quickens your pace without you really noticing," says Fergie's trainer Natasha Kufa.
Her tip for beginners: take your workout outside to a flat surface where there are no obstacles. Start with 10-second bursts, then work up to 30 seconds, joggng back to the start each time. Repeat up to 10 times. "Once that gets harder, find a slight incline and head up that backwards which changes the move again," says Kufa.