

# RAISE YOUR FITNESS GAME

HIIT training? That's so last year. Bikram? Been there, wore the small pants. We asked the experts for the hottest fitness trends of 2014 and how they'll transform your body forever

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Back off, fashion police

## 1 SPEEDFLEX The new cross training

**WHAT IT IS:** Fear not. This high-intensity interval training isn't half as scary as its predecessor. It is based around a free motion bar, where the more force you apply to it, the more resistance you have pushed back against you from the machine. "This form of training reduces micro-tearing of the muscles so you don't get muscle soreness and will still want to train the next day," says physiotherapist Stuart Ayles. Steady on now.  
**CALORIE BURN:** 800-1,200 per 45-minute session.  
**GREAT FOR:** Arms and overall fitness levels.  
**TRY IT:** £45 per class at centres in Newcastle upon Tyne and London. [speedflex.com](http://speedflex.com).

## 2 ESSENTRICS The new Pilates

**WHAT IT IS:** It might sound like the latest wig-headed indie band, but Essentrics is, in fact, a Pilates-inspired workout based on stretching muscles before strengthening them in the elongated position to create a longer, leaner, more toned shape. "It makes your waist thinner, stomach flatter, legs leaner and bum more toned. Most people see results within a month," says celebrity fitness expert Laura Williams. Now that's music to our ears.  
**CALORIE BURN:** 276 per 30-minute session.  
**GREAT FOR:** Posture and sculpting lean muscle.  
**TRY IT:** Available at Champneys resorts. [champneys.com](http://champneys.com).

## 3 SOULCYCLE The new spinning

**WHAT IT IS:** The wait is over. SoulCycle, a cycling and body-sculpting class, has a cult following in the US and now it's coming here. As riders mount stationary bikes, the lights are dimmed, candles are lit and the instructor cues a playlist that's timed to give you motivation and energy just when you need it. "Giving encouragement directly with motivation means you'll keep going back," says David Stalker, CEO of UK Active. Count us in.  
**CALORIE BURN:** 500 per 45-minute session.  
**GREAT FOR:** Thighs, bum and cardio fitness.  
**TRY IT:** At a London location in 2014. See [womenshealthmag.co.uk](http://womenshealthmag.co.uk) for more details.

## 4 BOKWA The new Zumba

**WHAT IT IS:** If you have two left feet then Bokwa might be the dance workout for you - as long as you know the alphabet. The South African-born cardio-dance craze focuses on drawing letters and numbers with your feet. Then you add shoulder shakes, jumps and... well, whatever you want really. "You'll end up dripping with sweat by the end, but it doesn't even feel like exercise because you're having fun," says trainer Giancarla Pozzo. Shimmy on down.  
**CALORIE BURN:** 530 per one-hour session.  
**GREAT FOR:** Intense cardio and flexibility.  
**TRY IT:** Free to Nuffield Health members. Visit [nuffieldhealth.com](http://nuffieldhealth.com) to download passes.



Try the hottest new classes for free. Visit [bit.ly/FutureOfFitness](http://bit.ly/FutureOfFitness) to find out more

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## 5 SANDBELLS The new dumbbells

**WHAT IT IS:** These neoprene sand-filled weights are a cross between a sandbag, dumbbell, grip bag, medicine ball and kettlebell. In weights from 3kg to 12kg, you can slam, smash, drop and throw them - ideal for circuit training. "You get a different workout every time and surprising your body boosts weight loss," says Lee Matthews, head of fitness at Fitness First. Just don't try 'smashing' a kettlebell now.  
**CALORIE BURN:** 300 per one-hour session.  
**GREAT FOR:** Arms and core.  
**TRY IT:** Available at Fitness First gyms nationwide. Visit [fitnessfirst.co.uk](http://fitnessfirst.co.uk).

## 6 AQUA CYCLING The new aqua aerobics

**WHAT IT IS:** If you love spin but your joints don't, there's a workout that's just as effective - and kinder to your body. The bikes at aquAllure rest on the pool floor and use waist-high water for resistance. "The low-impact cardio improves aerobic endurance, increases breathing capacity and improves blood flow and flexibility," says Stalker. Pedal power indeed.  
**CALORIE BURN:** 200 per 30-minute session.  
**GREAT FOR:** Saddlebags.  
**TRY IT:** £20. aquAllure at Dolphin Fitness Club, London. [dolphinfitnessclub.co.uk](http://dolphinfitnessclub.co.uk).

## 7 BARRECORE The new Balletcise

**WHAT IT IS:** Barrecore is a hybrid of Pilates and ballet, with cardio, light weights, isometric movement and, of course, moves at the barre. "The isometric movement drives insulin into the cells," says Williams. "It helps your body utilise sugar in your bloodstream instead of storing it as fat." But it's not all about weight loss. "Ballet improves posture so your waist looks smaller." Legwarmers optional.  
**CALORIE BURN:** 500-600 per one-hour session.  
**GREAT FOR:** Bum, core and overall toning.  
**TRY IT:** £28 per class at Barrecore London. [barrecore.co.uk](http://barrecore.co.uk).

## 8 OMNIA TECHNOGYM The new circuit training

**WHAT IT IS:** If you want a 360° workout, you need this piece of kit in your life. The all-in-one apparatus is flexible and has options for strength, resistance, stability, coordination, flexibility and speed. "This is best for private or small group training, with the instructor standing in the middle of the group," says Alan Holl, head of fitness at Virgin Active. That means no hiding at the back of the class - we know your tricks.  
**CALORIE BURN:** 300 per 30-minute session.  
**GREAT FOR:** All-over toning.  
**TRY IT:** Ribby Hall Village in Preston and all Virgin Active gyms after January 2014.

## 9 ANTI-GRAVITY YOGA The new inverted yoga

**WHAT IT IS:** It looks like a baby bouncer, but don't worry, no-one's going to burp you. In anti-gravity yoga, you use a hammock to do yoga, Pilates and dance moves. Converts, including Gwynnie, say the technique allows them to get into advanced inverted poses other exercises can't reach. "AntiGravity yoga relieves compressed joints and aligns the body, so you can stretch further," says fitness expert Brett Hoebel. No spitting out your dummy.  
**CALORIE BURN:** 600 calories per one-hour session.  
**GREAT FOR:** Your back.  
**TRY IT:** Prices vary. Visit [antigravityyoga.co.uk](http://antigravityyoga.co.uk) to find your nearest class.

## 10 PADDLEBOARD YOGA The new Bikram

**WHAT IT IS:** If standing on your head on a mat is hard, try doing it on water. Paddleboard yoga has set sail from the States and arrived in the UK. SUP yoga is for all levels, even if you haven't mastered every pose on dry land. "There's a calmness to being gently rocked by the water so even though you're working harder than on a yoga mat you adapt to the board quickly," says paddleboard yoga instructor Jana Olenio. Worth checking the shipping forecast first.  
**CALORIE BURN:** 276 per 30-minute session.  
**GREAT FOR:** Core and thighs.  
**TRY IT:** Around £25 per class. Visit [supboardermag.com](http://supboardermag.com) to find your nearest school. **WH**