

RAISE YOUR FITNESS GAME

HIT 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

Words by **AMELIA JEAK JONES**



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 name sounds. It is based around a free motion bar, across the more fitness you apply to it, the more resistance you have created back against you from the machine. "This form of training reduces micro-tearing of the muscles as you don't get muscle spasms and will still want to then the next day," says physiotherapist Stuart Apple, Senior Director.

CALORIE BURN: 400-1,200 per 45-minute session

GREAT FOR: Arms and overall fitness levels

TRY IT: £45 per class at various locations in London, speedflex.com

2 ESSENTRICS The new Pilates

WHAT IT IS: It might sound like the latest air-headed side trend, but Essentrics is, in fact, a Pilates-inspired workout based on stretching muscles before strengthening them. It's the slowest motion to create a longer, leaner, more toned shape. It makes your waist thinner, stomach flatter, legs longer and bum more toned. Most people see results within a month. "My clients' fitness expert Lisa Williams, says this is a kick to our butt."

CALORIE BURN: 275 per 30-minute session

GREAT FOR: Posture and sculpting the midsection

TRY IT: Available at ChampsHQ Sports, champsHQ.com

3 SOULCYCLE The new spinning

WHAT IT IS: The wait is over. SoulCycle, a cycling and body-sculpting class, has a call following in the US and now it's coming here. As part of our stationary bikes, the lights are dimmed, candles are lit and the instructor cuts a playlist that's timed to give you maximum sweat energy just when you need it. "It's an encouragement to already with motivation means you'll keep going back," says David Slater, CEO of UK Active. Count us in.

CALORIE BURN: 500 per 45-minute session

GREAT FOR: Toning, burn and cardio fitness

TRY IT: At a London location in 2014. See www.soulcycling.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. It's as long as you know the alphabet. The South African-born cardio-dance class focuses on writing letters and numbers with your feet. There's also shoulder shakes, lunges and... well, whatever you want really. "You're not laughing with sweat by the end, but it doesn't even feel like exercise because you're having fun," says trainer Georgia Papp, 5th Street in Soho.

CALORIE BURN: 330 per one-hour session

GREAT FOR: Improving cardio and flexibility

TRY IT: Free to Nuffield Health members. Visit nuffieldhealth.com to download a passcode



By the way, the latest new classes for you, just by the way, are on the list. Find out more.

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. "I've got a different workout every time and surprising your body builds 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

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 trick is aqua bike 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 Staker. Royal Ocean Hotel.

CALORIE BURN: 300 per 30-minute session

GREAT FOR: Saddlebags

TRY IT: £20, available at Dolphin Fitness Club, London. dolphinsfitnessclub.co.uk

7 BARRECORE The new Balletcore

WHAT IT IS: Barrecore is a hybrid of Pilates and ballet. With cardio, light weights, isometric movement and, of course, a whole lot of barre. "The isometric movement drives insulin into the cells," says Williams. "It helps your body utilize sugar in your bloodstream instead of storing it as fat." But it's not all about weight loss. "Barre improves posture so your neck looks smaller." Legwarmers optional.

CALORIE BURN: 500-800 per one-hour session

GREAT FOR: Bum, core and overall toning

TRY IT: £25 per class at Barrecore London, barrecore.co.uk

8 OMNIA TECHNOGYM The new circuit training

WHAT IT IS: If you want a 50/50 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 Hall, head of fitness at Virgin Active. That means no hiding at the back of the class. "We know your bro."

CALORIE BURN: 300 per 30-minute session

GREAT FOR: All-over toning

TRY IT: Rocky Hall Village in Preston and at Virgin Active gyms after January 2014

9 ANTI-GRAVITY YOGA The new inverted yoga

WHAT IT IS: It looks like a bouncy bouncer, but don't worry, no-one's going to bounce you. In anti-gravity yoga, you use a hammock to do yoga. Pilates and dance moves. Concepts, including Dharma, say the technique allows them to get individuals who can't reach. "Anti-gravity yoga releases compressed joints and aligns the body, so you can stretch further," says fitness expert Brett Hootel. No sitting on your bum.

CALORIE BURN: 600 calories per one-hour session

GREAT FOR: Your back

TRY IT: Prices vary, visit anti-gravityyoga.com 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 hit the fitness scene and arrived in the UK. SUP yoga is for all levels, even if you haven't mastered every position 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 Jane Dwyer. Watch chugging the shaping forecast first.

CALORIE BURN: 200 per 30-minute session

GREAT FOR: Core and thighs

TRY IT: Around £25 per class. Visit paddleboardyoga.com to find your nearest class.

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.