

Best Body

Health and fitness inspo to feel amazing all over

GIVE ME 12



**That's all trainer
Krista Stryker
asks: 12 minutes
of your best
effort. In return:
the lean, sculpted
physique you've
always wanted**

By Wanita Nicol

If you sucked at school sports and cursing your way through a parkrun felt like confirmation that fitness just wasn't for you, Krista Stryker is here to change your mind. Why? Because she's been that girl. Growing up in a sporty family, Krista always felt like the odd one out. She played basketball and soccer at school, but didn't enjoy either and, to this day, still hates running. But, using high-intensity interval training (HIIT), Krista has built the kind of strong, fit body she could only dream of as a flabby, exercise-averse student with a habit of eating her feelings. Now she's sharing her secret through her signature 12-Minute Athlete HIIT workouts.

CHALLENGE ACCEPTED

"It wasn't until my older brother challenged me to do a push-up that I had any desire to become strong," Krista recalls. Up until then she'd been suffering through mind-numbing 45-minute struggles on the treadmill and elliptical in an effort to sweat off the weight she'd picked up bingeing on junk food. "I was sick of feeling weak and unconfident, so I decided at that moment to actually put in the work to try to change."

Krista started exercising more regularly and even qualified as a personal trainer, but she still didn't really enjoy exercise. "I became a personal trainer mostly just to prove to myself that I could," she admits. "At that time, I was still doing the typical gym workouts, including a separate cardio session and split-strength training days. It took so much time out of my day and also left me often injured, overtrained, yet feeling like it was never enough."

It was during a particularly brutal winter, confined to her tiny New York City apartment with only a chair, a single kettlebell and a doorway pull-up bar to call her gym, that Krista started experimenting with quick, intense workouts. "HIIT changed everything for me," she says. "All of a sudden I was

busting out push-ups, pull-ups and burpees and still had energy left over to enjoy my life. Being strong is everything to me now and it's my absolute favourite thing in the world to help others become strong in their own fitness journeys."

FAST TRACK YOUR GAINS

After experimenting with different workout styles, Krista's recipe for success now comprises full-body workouts, using little or no equipment, that can be done pretty much anywhere. "They'll get you strong, but also increase your conditioning and VO₂ max in significantly less time than the typical moderate intensity workout," she says. What's more, studies have shown that HIIT revs your metabolism for hours after you've finished exercising - which means you'll burn fat even when you're just sitting around, contemplating how badass you are for getting through twelve minutes of hellfire. "In contrast, medium intensity workouts boost your metabolism during your workout, but then it returns to its regular rate after your workout is finished," says Krista.

And, yes, 12 minutes really are all you need. "Twelve minutes of HIIT might not sound like a lot, but trust me, give it a try and you'll be sweating, out of breath and your muscles will be aching by the end," says Krista.

The catch? You have to work your butt off. "In order to get the maximum benefits of HIIT, you really do have to work really hard - up to 80 to 90 percent of your maximum capacity. You should basically feel like you're sprinting during each work period and aim to go as fast as you can while keeping good form." In fact, if you're pushing as hard as you should be, you probably wouldn't be able to go much longer before running out of steam. "HIIT workouts should be pretty intense and if you're working out for much more than 15 or 20 minutes at a time, you're most likely doing a moderate-intensity workout, not a high-intensity one," says Krista. How's that for a truth bomb?

Safety First

Working out at super-high intensity isn't a good idea for beginners. If you're just starting out, get used to moving first, says Krista. For six months, aim to walk every day or cycle a few days a week before you dial it up. Similarly, if you're susceptible to joint injuries - or are currently injured - you're better off swapping all the jumping for lower-impact moves.

Annnnd...**GO!**

Ready to give it all you've got? Do the following exercises in order. Perform as many reps as you can with good form in 30 seconds, then rest for 10 seconds before moving on to the next exercise.

Do three rounds total, never resting for longer than 10 seconds.

If you're relatively new to HIIT workouts, do this routine no more than two or three days a week, but do light activity like walking on the other days. More advanced? You can do the workout four or five days a week - but be sure to take one full rest day.

You'll need: timer



BURPEE TUCK JUMPS

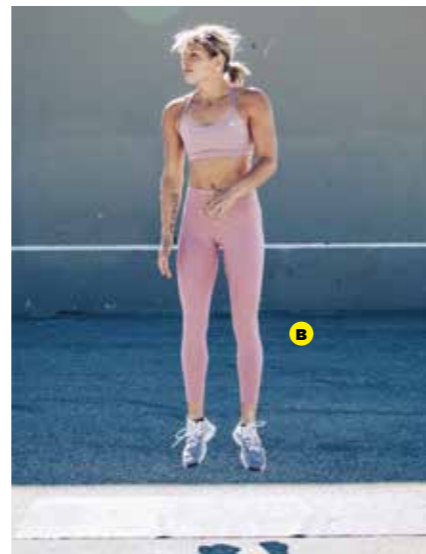
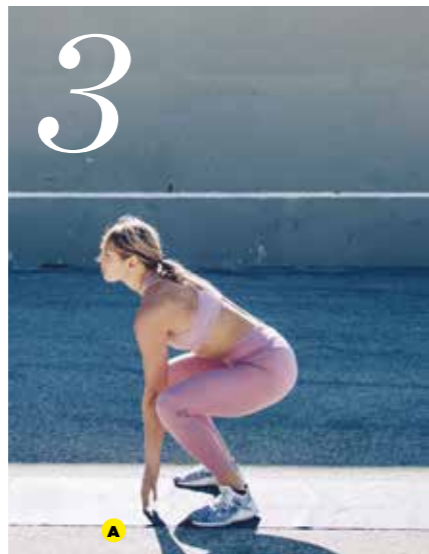
From standing, squat down and jump your feet back into the top of a push-up. Do one push-up (A). Immediately jump your feet back towards your hands (B), then jump straight up as you tuck your knees towards your chest (C). That's one rep.



PUSH-UP PLANK JUMPS

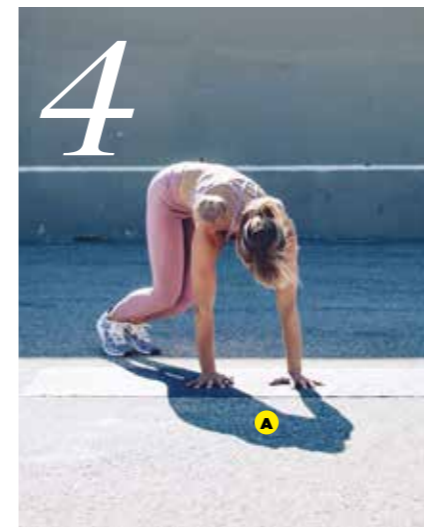
Start in the top of a push-up position with your shoulders directly over your hands. Push through your shoulders as you tighten your abs, glutes and quads. Lower your chest towards the floor. You should aim to touch or almost touch your chest to the floor while keeping your gaze slightly in front of your hands (A). Push yourself back up to start, then immediately jump your feet forwards towards your hands while keeping your core tight (B). Jump your feet back to start. That's one rep.

Make it easier:
Place your hands on an elevated surface such as a countertop or bench. The higher the surface, the easier the exercise will be.



SNOWBOARDER JUMPS

Start in a squat position with one hand reaching towards the floor (A). Jump up as high as you can, rotating 180 degrees mid-air (B). Land back in a squat position, reaching towards the floor with your opposite hand. That's one rep. Alternate directions on each rep.



PIKE JUMPS

Start in a piked position with your hands on the floor in front of you about shoulder-width apart, feet together to one side (A). Jump your feet up as far as possible (B) and land on the other side. Trying not to pause, continue alternating.



Tip
Need motivation to push harder? Count your reps during each interval and write them down. Next time you do the workout, try to beat your previous reps.

SIDE LUNGES

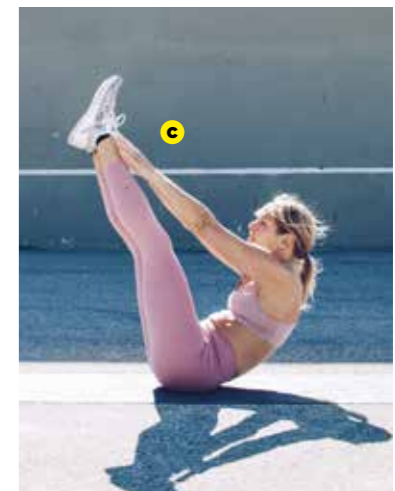
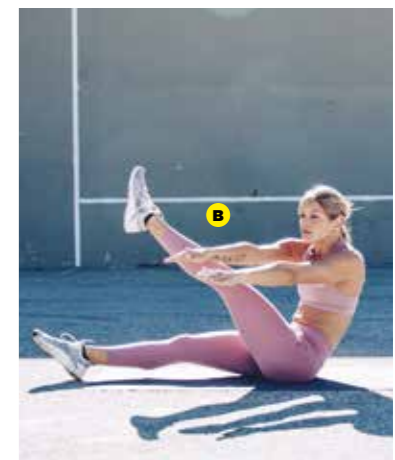
Stand straight with your legs wider than hip-width apart (A). Bend one knee and lower down as far as you can to one side while keeping the other leg straight to the side (B). Return to start and repeat on the other side. Continue alternating.

WANT MORE 12-MINUTE ATHLETE WORKOUTS?

The 12-Minute Athlete app is free for download, then you can choose which workouts you'd like to purchase, from R15 each. You can also download the 12-Minute Athlete Timer app, totally free.

BOOST YOUR BURN

For best results, Krista recommends you supplement your workouts with moving more in everyday life - take the stairs, go for a walk at lunchtime or catch up with friends over a hike rather than lunch.



SPLIT-LEG V-UP COMBO

Lie on your back with your arms straight above your head and your legs straight (A). Pull your belly button towards the floor, then raise your left leg as you reach both arms towards the left at the same time (B). Lower back down, then repeat on the opposite side. Next, raise both legs up at once as you reach your hands towards your toes (C). That's one rep. Do all reps.

PHOTOGRAPHS: TAMARA MUTH-KING