

JACQUELINE LUXE

Hack Your Way To Frugal Fitness Workouts With These Tips

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Achieving a toned, fit body does not have to break the bank. Yoga and pilates classes in addition to gym memberships are not financially realistic for all people. For parents, going to the gym means having to worry about childcare, therefore adding another expense. Just because you don't have a fat wallet does not mean you can't get buff. The following are budget friendly at home fitness tips from **Franci Cohen, a New York City fitness trainer and exercise physiologist.**

HERE ARE THE HACKS:

Use soup cans for weights: Franci Cohen says that, "You can do any triceps or biceps exercise at home using cans of soup that you'd do at the gym with dumbbells. To properly gauge the weight, don't go by the ounces listed on the can -- that's liquid weight. Instead, weigh the cans on your scale to figure out the poundage that's best for you."

Use jugs as weights: Fill a household bucket or jug with water (or sand, rock salt, or powdered detergent) and secure the top with duct tape. Lift it up and down in front of you as you do squats. **Substitute paper plates for body sculpting equipment:** "The key here," [Franci](#) says, "is to use the plates to help your body slide on a carpet. This allows you to do body sculpting moves that would ordinarily require workout equipment. You can do the sliding lunge (put the paper plate under one foot and lunge forward). Try simulating skating to work your butt and thighs -- just attach the plates to your feet with rubber bands and slide away. Or, get down on all fours, put the plates under your hands, and use them to work your chest by sliding your arms back and forth."

Substitute a countertop for a push-up bench: In most homes, at least one countertop, either in the kitchen or the bath, is the right height for a push-up. Put both hands on the countertop, extend your legs behind you at an angle, lean down into the counter, and then push back up.

Substitute pantyhose for resistance bands: "Almost any exercise you can do with a resistance band, you can do with old pantyhose or tights," says [Franci](#). For example, sitting on the floor with your legs straight, loop a pair of pantyhose around the balls of your feet and pull back with both hands as if you are using a rowing machine.

A fitness ball: Sometimes called a stability ball, looks like a large beach ball. You can do many core exercises, including abdominal crunches, with a fitness ball. You can also use a fitness ball to improve your flexibility and balance.

Kettlebell: A kettlebell is a round weight with the handle attached at the top. A kettlebell can be used to do strength-training exercises and to help improve grip strength. Kettlebells are available in many sizes.

Jump-ropes: Skipping rope can be a great cardiovascular workout.

Resistance tubing: These stretchy tubes offer weight-like resistance when you pull on them. Use the tubes to build strength in your arms and other muscles. Choose from varying degrees of resistance, depending on your fitness level.

Chair or step stool: Use a chair for support when doing exercises such as leg curls. A low, sturdy step stool can become exercise equipment if you use it for step training — an aerobic exercise resembling stair climbing.

Smart Phone: Take a break between gym memberships, weight loss clubs and those hefty trainer fees and swipe your way fit with a variety of low-cost smart phone applications. "I recommend MyFitnessPal.com a free application on the iPhone (the key here is to know your basal metabolic rate for maintaining your weight and for losing weight and this app does it all), says Franci. With this app you get free access to the world's largest nutrition and calorie database — over 5 million foods!