

FIND A SPARE TYRE FOR THIS WHEELY TOUGH TONING SESSION



Expert help: Daisy's personal trainer, Chris, helps her to adjust her posture to ease pressure on the lower back during sit-ups

sure sign that the squats are doing their job as this exercise works the hips, thighs and lower back.

BURNING RUBBER

TIME for lunges. The "tyre lunge" is like proposing with a car tyre instead of a diamond ring: bent almost on to one knee, one leg outstretched behind and arms holding said tyre straight in front at shoulder height. Not quite as romantic as a proposal of marriage, but my favourite exercise of the session.

Against all odds, I was starting to enjoy the gym now — I was having a laugh with Chris, targeting various muscles and even getting used to the smell of rubber up close. Grrr.

By this stage I had come to realise that lifting 10kg is no mean feat. I couldn't hold the lifts for more than 20 seconds before my arm muscles shook under the strain, but Chris assured me this would improve with time. Manhandling the bulky tyre is essential when grappling with the next move, the "tyre lift", which involves lifting the tyre from the ground to above the head.

Lots of bent knees, bottom protrusions and sweaty She-Ra impressions later, I mastered it. The biceps, shoulders and back are given a good seeing-to and the tyre seemed to grow heavier, but Chris was on hand to catch it — or me — in case of a fall.

How to tyre yourself out

- The hurdle: set your tyre on the ground and jump sideways over it.
- The squat: hold tyre in front of you and bend knees into a squat. Hold, straighten up, repeat.
- The lift: bend knees and lift tyre from floor as you stand, raise over head height, hold. Keep knees flexed for strength and stability.
- The press-up: as normal but with tyre laid flat, hands placed on either edge.
- The Olympic bar: grab a broom handle, hang a tyre on each end. Do your best circus strongman impression to boost your biceps.
- The sit-up: as normal, but use a tyre (or two) as a counter-weight over your feet. Keep fingertips behind ears.
- The tyre lunge: keeping your back straight, step forward into a lunge, holding tyre in front of you. Hold and repeat. To boost core muscles, gently rotate to one side.

FULL THROTTLE

I HAD reached top gear now and it was time to attempt my nemesis: the push-up. I've always avoided this shoulder, ab and tricep exercise — I just don't seem to be genetically suited to it. But Chris had other ideas.

Placing my hands on either side of the tyre and with my toes taking my lower body weight, I managed a few repetitions. The trick is that the tyre widened my usual arm width, making the push-up slightly easier.

On to sit-ups and my stomach

muscles clearly have a long way to go. Chris helped by changing my posture slightly so that I straightened my spine, easing pressure from the lower back. Even so, they are far from my strong point and, defeated, we moved on to some final, less demanding warm-down moves.

The "tyre Olympic bar" — think circus strongman — looks impressive but is not so easy to emulate at home. However, the tug-of-war — substituting, you guessed it, a tyre instead of rope — could settle remote-control scraps in the living room.

VERDICT

OKAY, so I hadn't attained the streamlined curves of a Porsche after my first session, but I will definitely complete the schedule at home over the next four weeks. It's probably the cleanest fun you can have with a handsome young trainer and a load of car tyres — and not a Pirelli calendar in sight. Just remember to put that spare tyre back into your car after each workout.

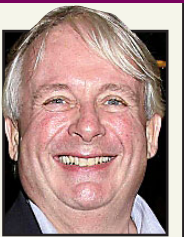
It's a refreshing change to a trudge through the park or even a session using conventional weights and gym equipment. Plus, there's the added bonus of being able to exercise in front of the telly without any embarrassing mirrors in sight.

It's hard work at first, but with a bit of perseverance, the only spare tyre hanging around in my life will be firmly in the boot of my car.

● Programme runs until the end of October at all LA Fitness gyms. Free weekend membership for two, and a free check-up with a personal trainer, with the purchase of two or more Continental tyres until the end of October. Detailed descriptions of all Spare Tyre Workout exercises are available to download at sparetyreworkout.co.uk

What's in my fridge?

ENTERTAINER Christopher Biggins, 59, lives in Hackney with his civil partner Neil. His autobiography *Just Biggins* is out now.



"AT BREAKFAST I eat grapefruit, wheat-free toast with peanut butter and coffee. I'll have two or three more coffees but all before 2pm or I can't sleep. Then I switch to Earl Grey and water. I snack on wheat-free toast, but I hear Jaffa Cakes are good, too.

At home I have guacamole or hummus for lunch or if I'm out I'll eat something light, say a hamburger. For dinner I'll have fish with boiled potatoes. I like desserts but I save them as a treat. We don't drink at home, but we go to lots of functions with champagne and wine so we have to be strong-willed. We have a great fish and chip shop in the area where I often pop in. The fridge is stocked with cheese eggs, bacon, Olivio spread, fruit, peanut butter, jams and marmalade and sliced meats."



Nutritionist Fiona Hunter says:

"WHEAT-FREE breads have less fibre than granary or whole-bread and, as most of us don't get enough fibre, Christopher could swap his toast for fibre-rich porridge. At just 46 calories and 1g of fat per biscuit Jaffa Cakes are a sensible choice compared with other biscuits. If he can stop at one or maybe two biscuits for a snack that's fine, but if he's lacking in the willpower department then having things like biscuits in the cupboard is bad news. Fish and chips are fine occasionally, but it sounds like Christopher is a regular. Chip shop portions are usually massive so he should share a portion of chips with Neil, and take the batter off the fish and just eat the flesh."



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