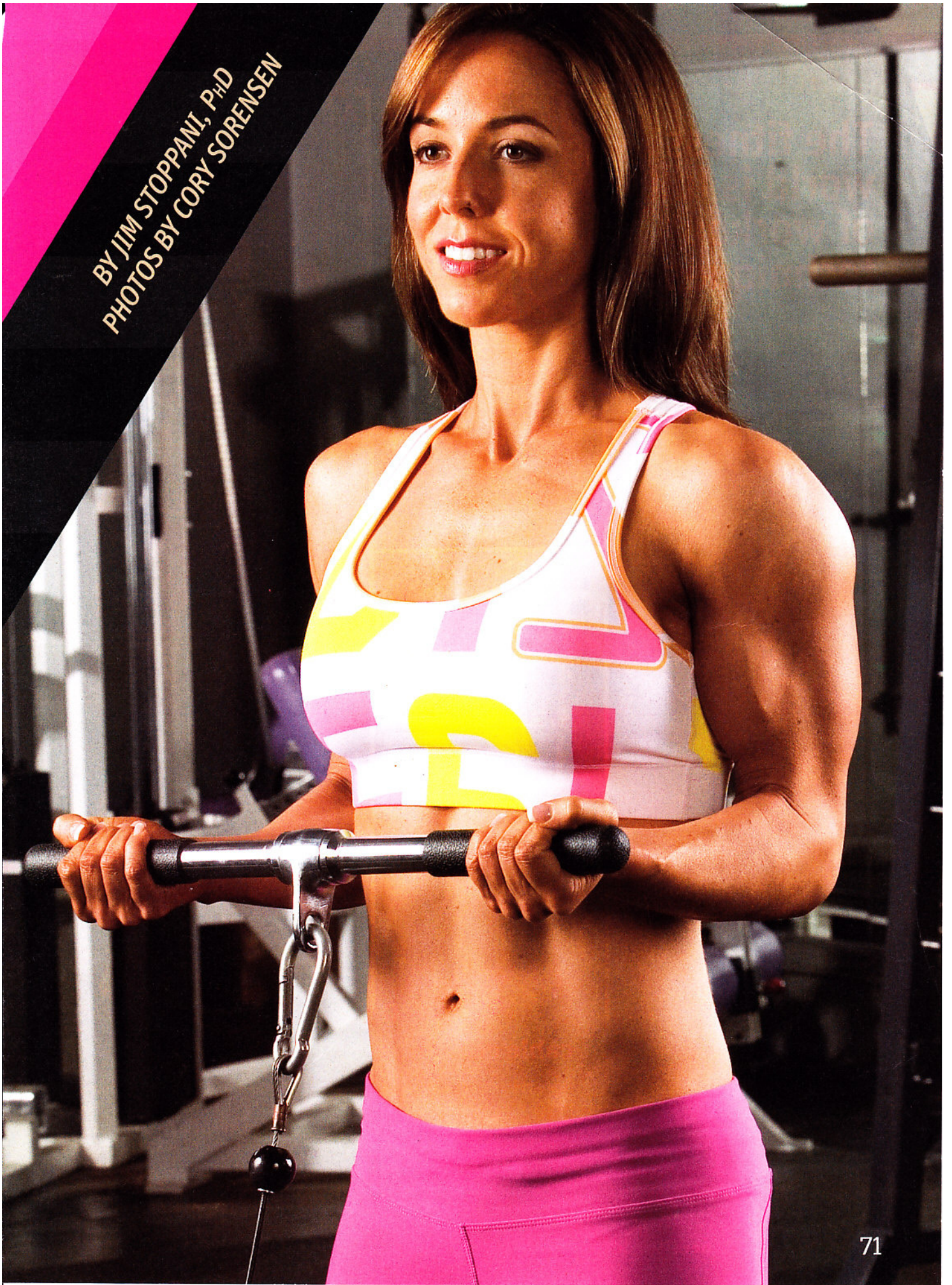




We re-engineer the **CLASSIC 21s** format
into a muscle-building, full-body workout

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PHOTOS BY CORY SORENSEN



The fitness world is full of workout techniques

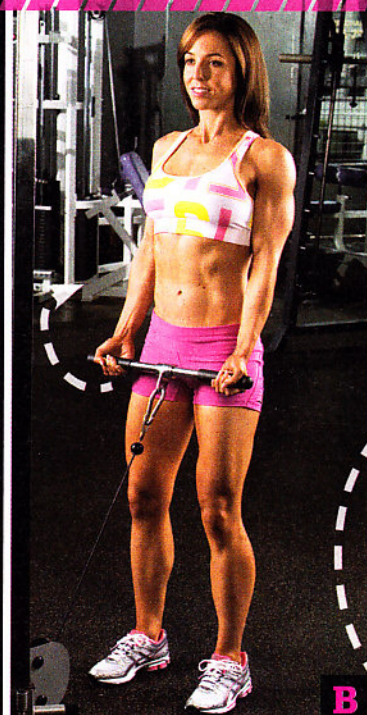
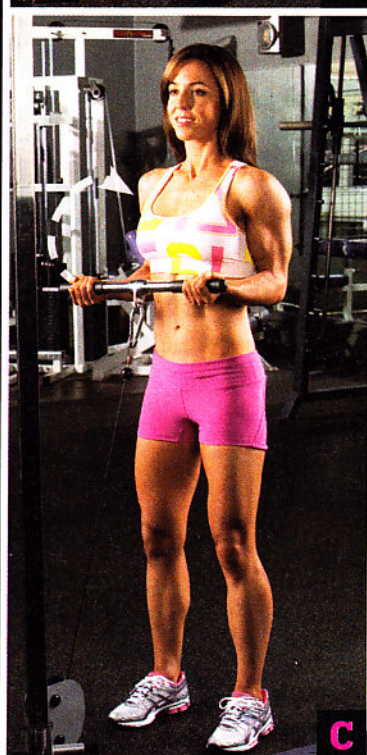
that float in and out of vogue depending on the trade winds of trend. One effective high-intensity method that's often forgotten is 21s. Generally done with biceps curls, 21s involves doing seven reps through the bottom half of the range of motion (ROM), seven reps through the top half and seven complete reps, with no rest in between.

The benefits are legion since different portions of the ROM target different muscle fibers, further emphasizing each bodypart. Moreover, you get an intensity boost that can help push your lean muscle development to the next level.

Although this technique has been practiced for decades, we offer a new and improved take. We've moved the full-ROM reps from the end of the set to the beginning, then have you immediately do seven reps through the bottom half of the ROM followed by seven reps through the top half to complete 21 reps. Choose a weight that's 50%–70% of your 10-rep max.

Our version is more beneficial for several reasons. Working through the full ROM first acts as a warm-up. That way when you do the bottom half of the move, where the muscle is weakest, you have more strength. And in the final reps when fatigue sets in, you'll utilize the ROM in which the muscle is strongest. The last seven reps will still be challenging, however, as the muscle is fatigued from the previous 14 reps.

Making this routine even more unique is how we applied 21s to each bodypart. For this approach to truly be effective, you must focus on single-joint or isolation movements such as biceps curls, pressdowns, lateral raises, flyes, leg curls and leg extensions. This allows you to target a single muscle group; multijoint exercises, on the other hand, involve numerous bodyparts for overall mass and strength gains.

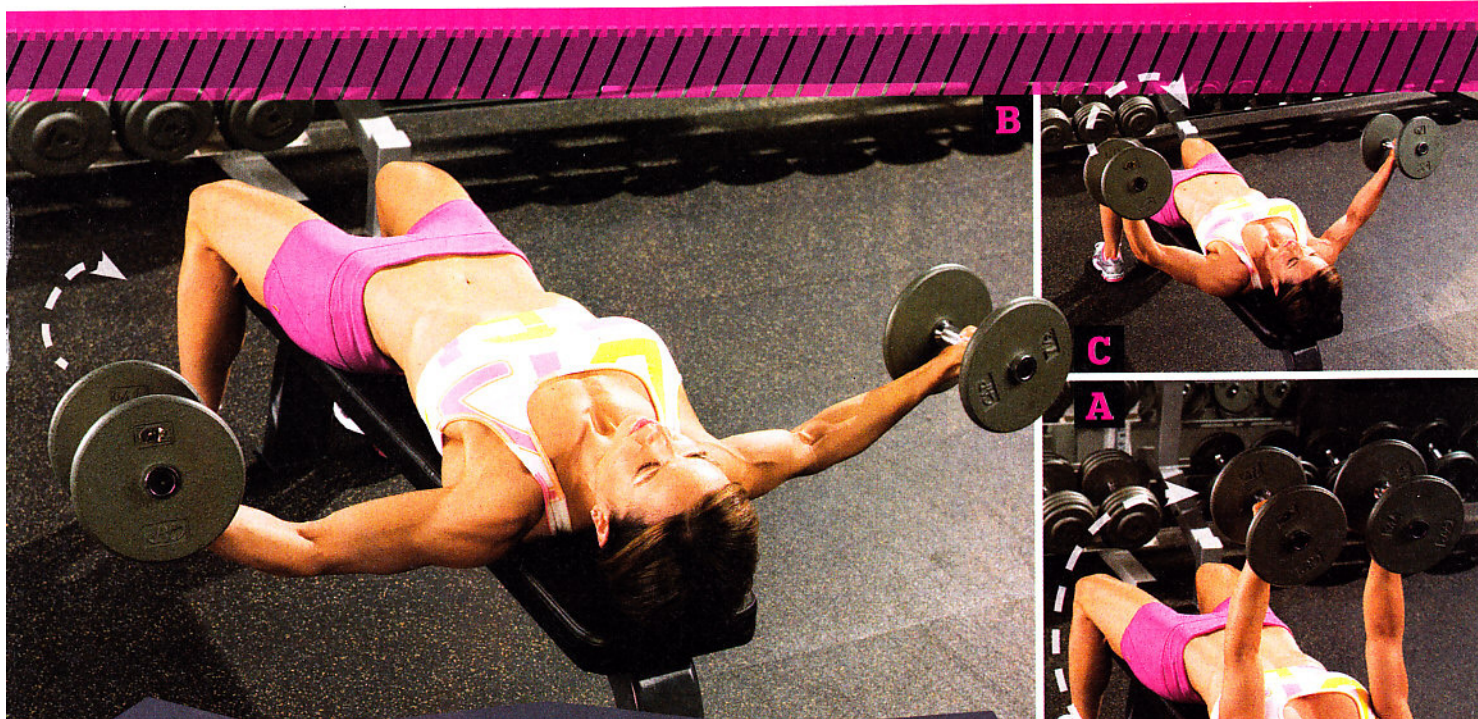
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cable curl

Stand erect facing a low-pulley cable station with a straight bar attached. Perform the first seven reps as normal, going from almost full extension to full flexion and squeezing your biceps before returning to the start. For the next round of seven, start at full exten-

sion and stop when your elbows are just shy of 90-degree angles. Finish by starting with your forearms just below parallel to the floor and curling all the way up. Flex your biceps as hard as possible at the top. Keep your elbows fixed at your sides throughout.

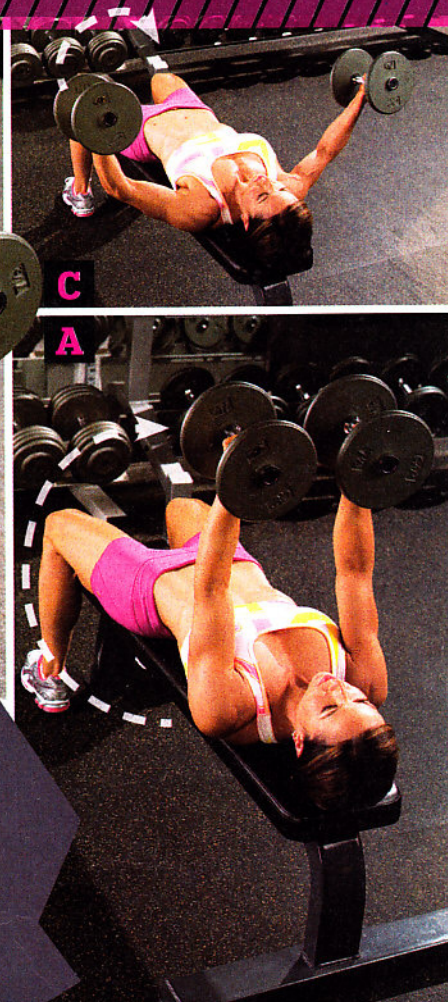
GYM: CLASSIC KICKBOXING, PASADENA, CA; FASHION DIRECTOR: CINDY WHITEHEAD; HAIR & MAKEUP: DONNA CAST



dumbbell flye

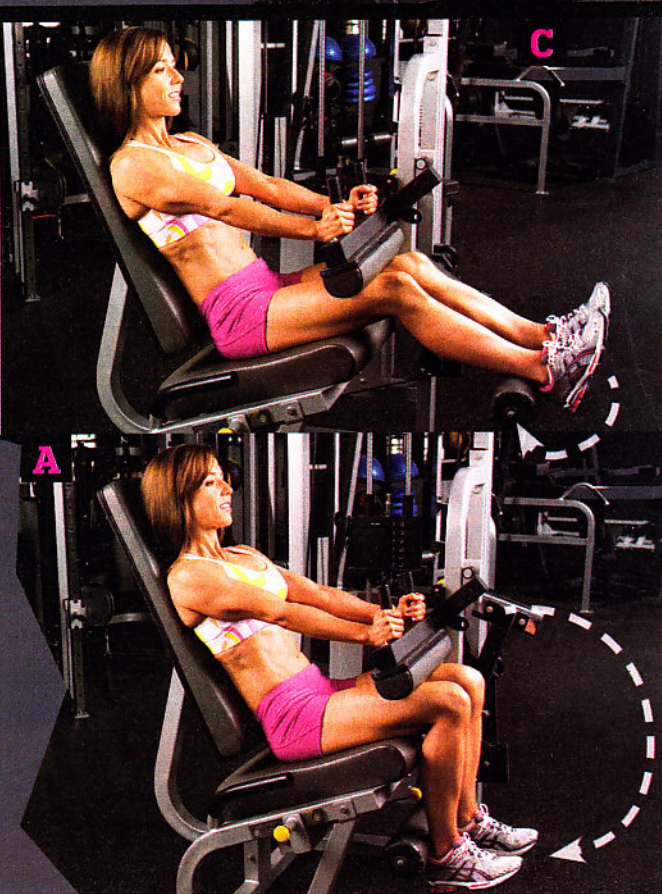
Perform seven reps of a standard flye: With your arms extended out to your sides in line with your shoulders and a slight bend in your elbows, contract your pecs to bring the weights together above your chest. For the next seven, start with your hands in line with your shoulders

and lift the weights until your arms form 45-degree angles to the floor, then return to the start. Finish by starting with your arms at the 45-degree position and stopping when your hands meet above your chest. Squeeze your pecs at the top before returning to the start.



leg curl

Sit in the machine so your knees line up with the axis of rotation. Start with your knees near full extension. Do seven reps through the full ROM, forcefully contracting your hamstrings. Perform the second group of seven by starting at full extension and stopping just shy of your knees forming 45-degree angles. Do the last seven reps with your knees starting just short of the 45-degree position and going to full contraction.



The "21 Hold 'Em" program is a full-body training split done three times a week. Try performing the 21s workout on Monday and Friday and the standard multijoint workout in between. This way you train the majority of fibers in each major muscle group with both isolation and multijoint moves each week.

With 21s training, different portions of the range of motion focus on different muscle fibers, further emphasizing each bodypart

For best results, follow this program for 4–6 weeks. If a full 21s program doesn't fit into your schedule, you can do this workout as a one-time substitute when you want to switch things up or you're short on time. Either way, this workout provides your muscles with variety, which will help advance your progress in the gym.



APPAREL: TOP BY NIKE, SHORTS BY LUCY, SHOES BY ASICS

21 Hold 'Em

WORKOUTS 1+3 (21s)

EXERCISE	SETS/REPS	REST
Chest		
Dumbbell Flye	4/21	1–2 min.
Shoulders		
Lateral Raise	4/21	1–2 min.
Back		
Straight-Arm Pulldown	4/21	1–2 min.
Triceps		
Pressdown	4/21	1–2 min.
Biceps		
Cable Curl	4/21	1–2 min.
Quads		
Leg Extension	4/21	1–2 min.
Hamstrings		
Leg Curl	4/21	1–2 min.
Abs		
Sit-Up	4/21	1 min.

pressdown

Do seven reps with a straight bar: Stand erect with your upper arms pinned at your sides, forearms just above parallel to the floor. Push down to full arm extension, being sure to squeeze your triceps at the bottom. Perform seven more reps by starting at the same point and stopping when your forearms form 45-degree angles to your body. For the final seven reps, start with your forearms at the 45-degree position and stop when your arms are fully extended.

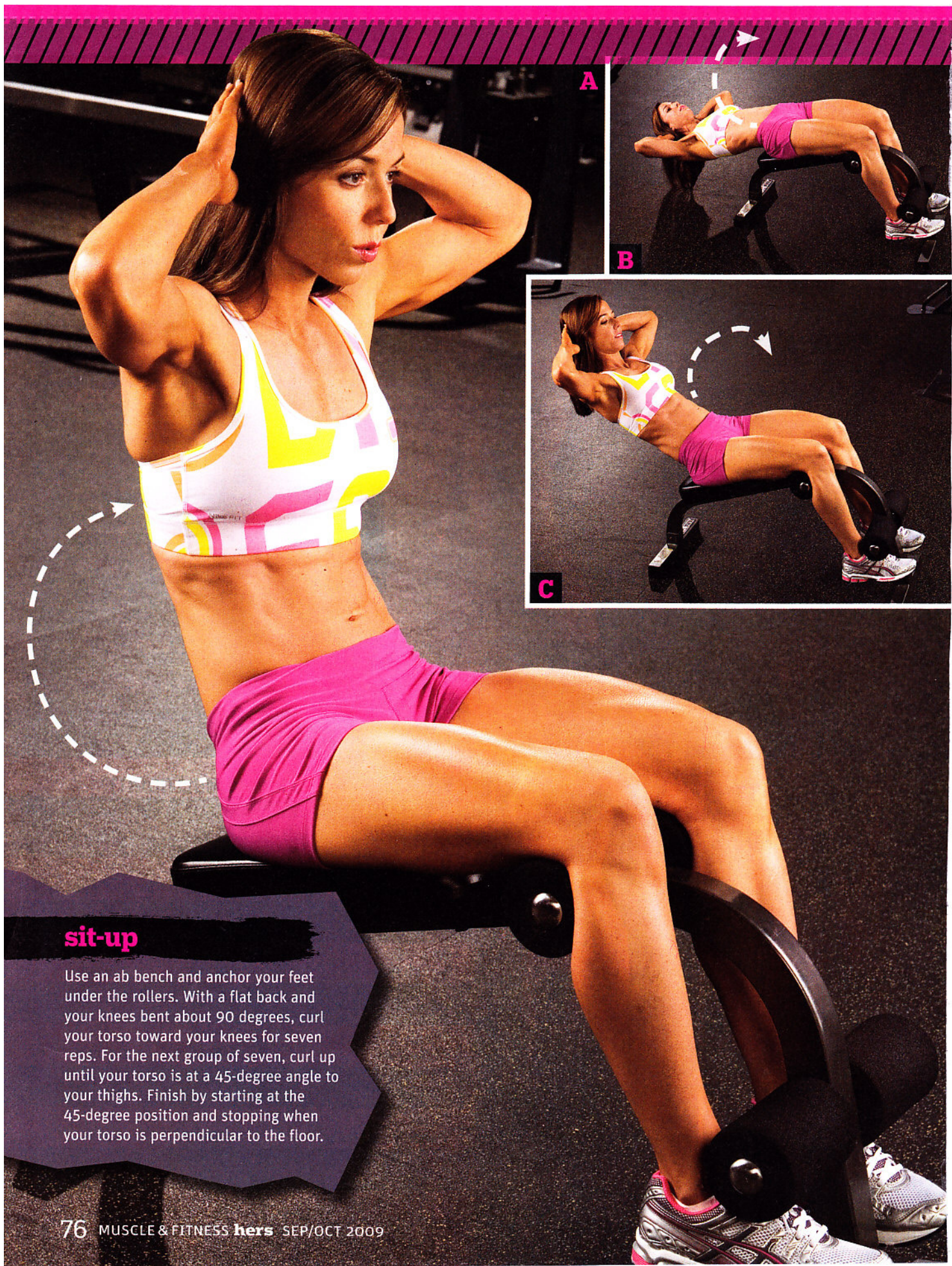
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lateral raise

Stand erect holding dumbbells by your sides with your palms facing in. Lift your arms out to your sides until they're level with your shoulders for the first seven reps. Do the second round of seven starting in the same position, but lift your arms until they form 45-degree angles to your torso. For the final seven reps, start with your arms at the 45-degree position and stop when they come parallel to the floor.

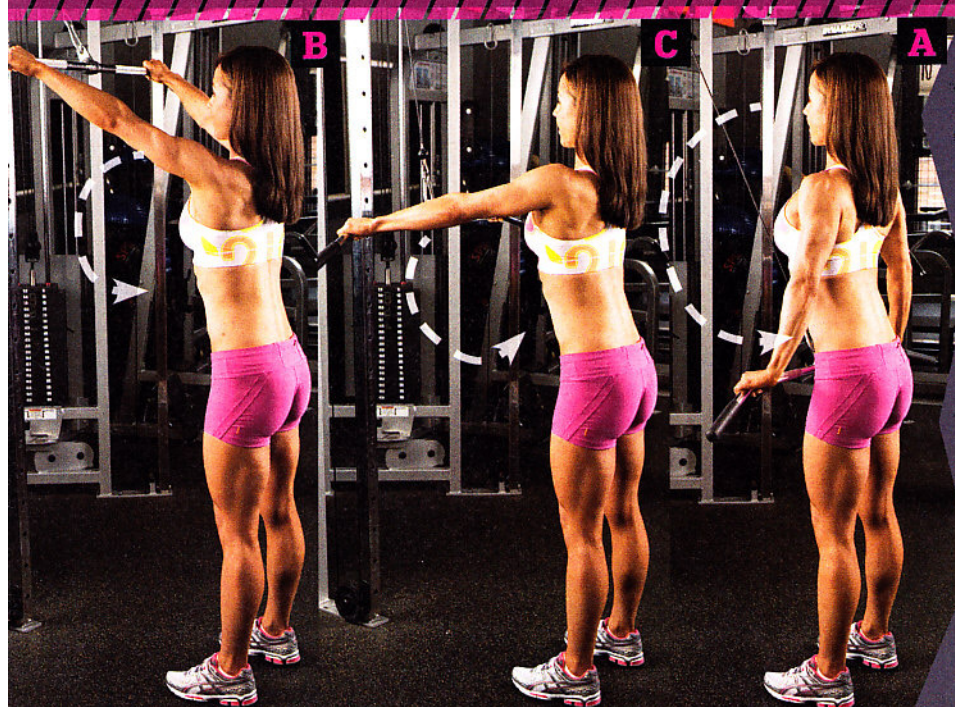
WORKOUT 2 (STANDARD MULTIJOINT)

EXERCISE	SETS/REPS	REST
Quads Squat	4/8-10	1-2 min.
Hamstrings/Glutes Romanian Deadlift	4/8-10	1-2 min.
Chest Incline Bench Press	4/8-10	1-2 min.
Back Barbell Row	4/8-10	1-2 min.
Shoulders Overhead Press	4/8-10	1-2 min.
Biceps EZ-Bar Curl	4/8-10	1-2 min.
Triceps Close-Grip Bench Press	4/8-10	1-2 min.
Calves Standing Calf Raise	4/10-15	1 min.
Abs Hanging Leg Raise	4/to failure	1 min.



sit-up

Use an ab bench and anchor your feet under the rollers. With a flat back and your knees bent about 90 degrees, curl your torso toward your knees for seven reps. For the next group of seven, curl up until your torso is at a 45-degree angle to your thighs. Finish by starting at the 45-degree position and stopping when your torso is perpendicular to the floor.



straight-arm pulldown

Stand erect in front of a lat pull-down machine. Grasp the bar using an overhand, shoulder-width grip, and start with the weight a couple of inches off the stack. Do seven reps through the full ROM, pulling the bar down to your thighs while maintaining a slight bend in your elbows. Fully contract your lats, then release. For the next seven reps, start at the same point but stop when your arms form 45-degree angles to your torso. To finish, start with your arms at the 45-degree position and stop when the bar touches your thighs. Squeeze your lats before returning to the start.



leg extension

Sit in the machine so your knees line up with the axis of rotation. Start with your knees flexed at an angle smaller than 90 degrees. Move through the full ROM for seven reps, making sure to squeeze your quads at the top. Perform seven more by starting at the 90-degree position and stopping just past where your knees form 45-degree angles. New research from the University of Miami has shown that this range of motion best targets the vastus lateralis on the outer quad. For your final seven reps, begin with your knees just shy of the 45-degree position and go to full extension. The same researchers found that this ROM best targets the vastus medialis muscle, the teardrop just above the inside of the knee. **hers**