

Your exercise excuses **busted!**

Glamour gets top trainers to pep-talk away your every slothful urge.

Yeah, yeah—you're tired, you're busy, you hate spandex. There are a million questionable reasons not to exercise, but if you've wormed your way out of working out for a week, three weeks or (yikes!) more, you need better anti-excuse artillery. Here, personal-trainer-stamped solutions to shoot down your every "I can't!"

Unacceptable Excuse No. 1: **"I'm too tired."**

Trainer Pep Talk: Actually, workouts make you pumped, not pooped. So trick yourself into your exercise gear. "Tell yourself you'll work out for five minutes," says Jeff Rutstein, owner of Custom Fitness Personal Training in Boston. "By starting out slow,

Unacceptable Excuse No. 2:

"I have gym phobia—I feel like everyone's looking at me!"

Trainer Pep Talk: Reality-check your insecurity. "It may seem as if all eyes are on you, but really, most people are too busy doing their own workouts to bother with yours," says Steven Zim, owner of and trainer at A Tighter U, a personal-training service in Culver City, California. Other anxiety-blasters: Hire a personal trainer to show you how to master the exercise machines and build a routine—having a pro on your side will make you feel less self-conscious, says Jon Giswold, a New York City personal trainer and author of the fitness guide *Basic Training* (St. Martin's Press). If you truly hate the gym, there's nothing wrong with being a homebound hard body. "You can get a great workout jogging around your neighborhood and doing strength exercises with barbells in your living room," says Rutstein.

Unacceptable Excuse No. 3: **"I'm PMS-ing."**

Trainer Pep Talk: Working out will help! Sweating actually decreases the salt content in your body. This means you bloat less—and feel less like the Michelin man, explains Giswold. Or dive in for a swim—the underwater pressure compresses the body, relieving the uncomfortable feeling of bloating.

Unacceptable Excuse No. 4: **"Why bother working out? I never see results!"**

Trainer Pep Talk: Think realistically, advises Zim. If you're just starting to work out, you'll need at least 30 minutes of weight training three times a week and 30 minutes of cardio three to five days a week to lose one percent body fat or a one-half inch from your waist and hips in six weeks—though you'll feel stronger even sooner. Change your routine every six weeks, because your

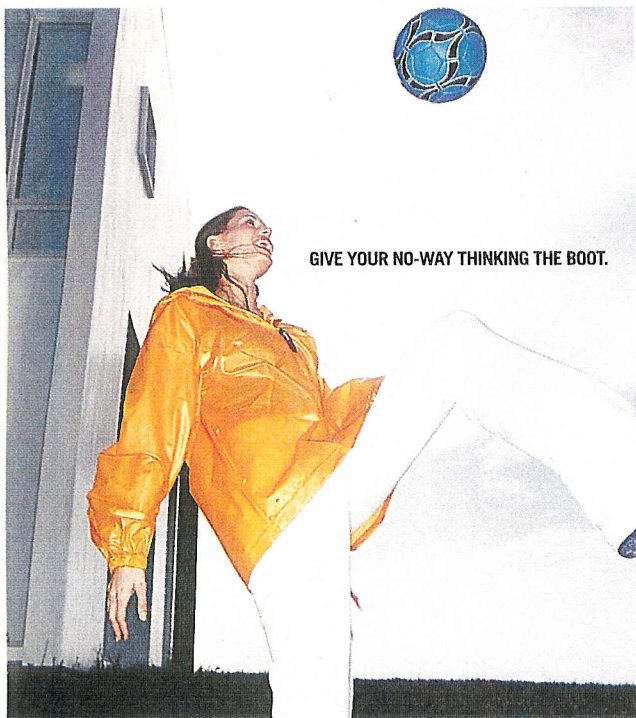
body can plateau, meaning your muscles become bored from doing the same activities and, as a result, you burn fewer calories. If you take a new class, try a new sport or up your exercise intensity, you'll stimulate muscle fibers that weren't being used in your everyday workouts.

Unacceptable Excuse No. 5: **"I get so sore when I work out."**

Trainer Pep Talk: Work out regularly and increase your intensity very gradually—that's the best way to build muscle endurance and stave off extreme soreness, which is caused by microscopic tears in worked-out muscles. To minimize soreness, stretch your muscles before and after working out. If you're sore the day after a workout, either take the day off or do something low intensity, like an easy, 30-minute walk. Gentle movement shouldn't stress your muscles, and it can help soreness by increasing blood circulation and reducing inflammation, says Richard Cotton, an exercise physiologist and spokesperson for the American Council of Exercise. You should also regularly eat protein-rich foods, such as low-fat yogurt, chicken, egg whites or fish—the amino acids in them help muscle fibers heal faster, explains Ken Baldwin, chairperson of the personal-trainer's committee for IDEA, the top national fitness-professionals' association.

Unacceptable Excuse No. 6: **"Exercising can be such a snooze!"**

Trainer Pep Talk: Experiment! Maybe it's your routine that's boring, says Giswold. Try to learn two new exercises a month, or venture into a new class every six weeks. There are innovative classes popping up at gyms everywhere: "Rolling" is a new aerobics class in which students do strength training exercises with basketball-size balls; "Boot Camp" workouts are based on military training. Setting grander workout goals can help too: If you constantly challenge yourself, you'll find that you can reach any fitness goal you set your mind to, which is inspiration enough to keep moving.



with no pressure on yourself, you're likely to find not only that you can keep going, but that you want to." Other ideas: Schedule a slow-mo, lower-intensity session of your regular workout. If you typically run a hilly route, do an easy jog on a kinder course instead. And look for ways to up your energy before you work out—for example, nosh on a carbohydrate-heavy snack (like a piece of fruit) or take a 10-minute power nap.

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