

Get your Best Behind

Sexy, strong glutes look good while giving greater alignment, stability and motion. Naturopath **Caroline Robertson** road-tests expert tips to a booty-licious butt.





Tush trend

The appeal for having more junk in the trunk has grown since glute-centric goddesses like Kim Kardashian have made it a compliment to call someone a fat ass and the classic concern about a large arse has changed to “does my bum look big enough in this?” Certain men and cultures, such as African and Latin American, often prefer bigger butts. They denote high estrogen, fertility and femininity; especially when in proportion to the hourglass child-rearing hips, slim waist and ample bosom. For openly infertile Coco-T – the derriere extraordinaire – fertility doesn’t always come with a big bum. Still, it’s shape not size that really matters. A big, baggy bum is not only unappealing, it lacks the vital function of strong glutes. Petite, perky posteriors are just as attractive and effective such as Pippa Middleton’s with its own Facebook page attracting 223,000 likes. Healthy heinies are proportionate while playing a vital part in propulsion and protection of our back and lower body.

“ **Posture, diet and daily activity all contribute to gorgeous glutes. If you’re sedentary for long stretches, try sitting on a ball, meditation stool or lying on your stomach in sphinx pose.** ”

The bottom line

You’re sitting on some of the strongest muscles in your body. The gluteus maximus, medius and minimus sound like gladiators, which is how hard you have to train to tone them. They’re vital for lower limb movement, pelvic stability and whole body alignment. They enable us to walk, jump, run, squat and stand strong. They protect us from injury and

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improve athletic performance. When our glutes don't get into gear it's because they aren't activating or are overridden by other accessory muscles such as the psoas. This can contribute to back pain, when, for example, the back has to do the hip-extending job of the glutes. When the pelvis isn't held into alignment by good glutes, conditions such as femoral bursitis, sacroiliitis, piriformis syndrome, sciatica, lumbar vertebra compression and iliotibial band syndrome can result – all stubborn conditions to overcome. As remedial masseur Ash Shepherd explains, “People often have tight hamstrings, lower back and hips, all related to inefficient gluteal muscles. Overactive hip flexors make the gluteus maximus weak via a process known as reciprocal inhibition. When our butt's slack, the hamstrings and erector spinae work overtime to compensate. This is known as synergistic dominance.”

Perfect Peach

You can't spot-reduce fat but you can build specific muscles. For a rounder, stronger, higher heinies, work your butt with this anti-wobble workout. Be conscious of holding your core pubococcygeal muscles as if holding in a wee, for every exercise. Warm up first and lie down to conclude. Do two sets of 10 repetitions for each exercise, building up to 20 repetitions at your own pace. Expect results in a month.

ON ALL FOURS

The hydrant

Gwyneth Paltrow used this Tracey Anderson trick to defy the droop. On all fours, keeping your right knee bent, lift it up to the side until it's parallel with your hips (like a dog weeing on a üre hydrant). Then, straightening your leg, to the ceiling thrust your foot up to the left side as if poking a hole in the roof.

Pilates poke

On knees and elbows, bring one bent leg up and squeeze at top of range of motion for 10 pulses up.

Alternate stretch

On all fours, keep your shoulders and hips level and stretch your opposite leg and arm out. Squeeze glutes and hold for üve before repeating on opposite limbs.

Face down

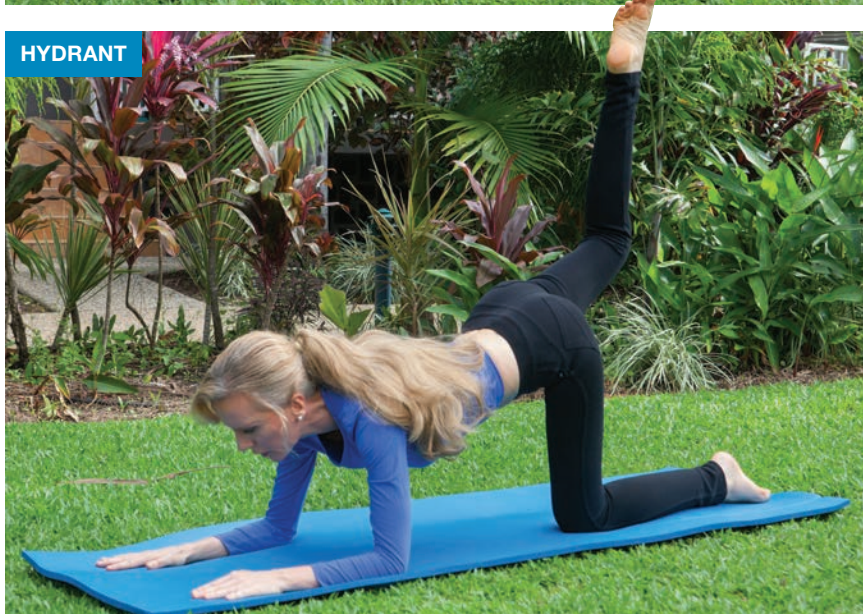
Lie face down with heels pressed together. Extend arms behind back, interlacing üngers. Lift chest and legs off üoor, pointing toes.

Maintain lifted position for a count of three, raising legs higher.

ALTERNATE STRETCH



HYDRANT



PILATES POKE



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**PLIE SQUAT
WITH DUMBBELL**



**WALKING LUNGE
WITH DUMBBELL**

Perfect Peach

STANDING

Squat with kick-back

Sit in a squat then rise and lift right leg straight behind you, keeping hips level, pointing forward while extending arms. Repeat on the left leg.

Plié squats with dumbbells

These are the same as squats but with your feet wider and toes pointing outward like a ballerina. This tones the inner thighs and saddlebags.

Squat and jump

Each time you come out of the squat, leap off the ground, flinging your arms back behind you.

Squat and side leg raise

Keep your weight in your heels, squat, then do slow alternate leg raises, squeezing the glutes.

Crossover lunge

With body upright, lunge left foot forward slightly to the outside of the line of the right

knee. Keep hips forward, spine erect, equal weight on both legs and don't let front leg knee go over toes. Repeat on right leg.

Squats with dumbbells

These are J.Lo's butt secrets according to her trainer Gunnar Peterson, and are the basic beginning to many moves.

Standing with feet shoulder-width apart, hold a two-kg dumbbell in each hand (or two small water bottles with sand). Squat down, as if sitting on a chair. Chest out, hips back, knees not going past toes. Press weight down into heels to push up and squeeze glutes.

Walking lunges with dumbbell

This is Jessica Biel's butt favourite according to her trainer, Jason Walsh. Hold dumbbells with your feet parallel and hip-distance apart and take a giant step forward. Slowly lower your body, bending both knees. Bend your knees no more than 90 degrees, keeping your front knee aligned over your front ankle. Step together and repeat.



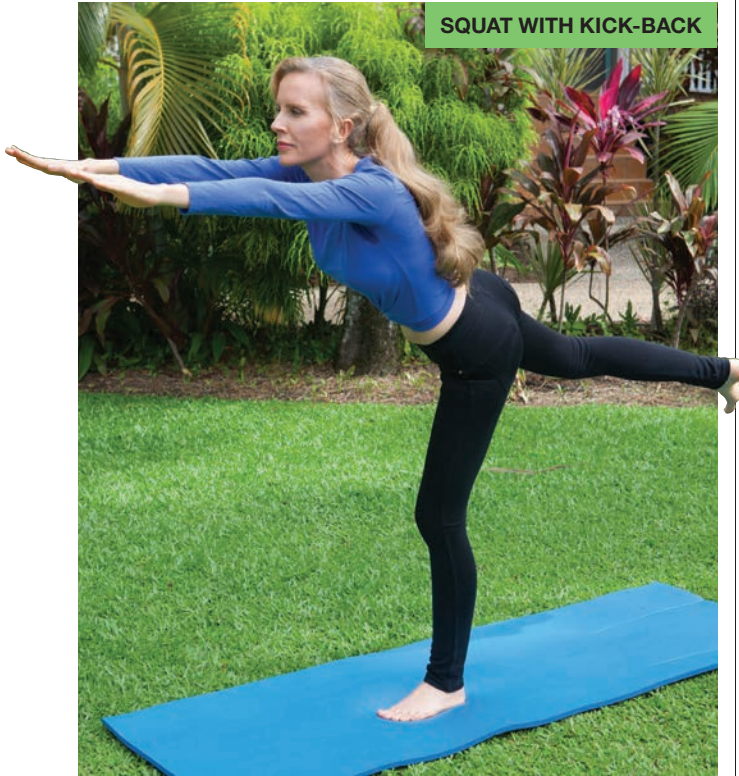
**SQUAT WITH
DUMBBELL**

The glutes are the central foundation of the interconnected body, so even ankles can be strained if misaligned from inactive glutes. Buns of steel prevent knee injuries too as they keep your optimal form during exercise. When you're a lazy bum, it forces other muscles to take the strain, such as hamstrings, lower back, quadriceps and calves, which become tight. You only have to look at Olympic sprinters to see that strong glutes support speed and power. A personal trainer and physiotherapist can help to coax a reluctant rump back into action. A functional



CROSS-OVER LUNGE

SQUAT WITH KICK-BACK



SQUAT AND SIDE LEG RAISE



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movement screen will show your weaknesses also.

Beautiful butt facial

For a superior posterior, follow these steps twice weekly.

Cleanse. Apply a foaming cleanser with salicylic acid or tea tree oil to stop a spotty bot. Wipe off with a warm washcloth.

Exfoliate. Use scrubbing gloves, ground coffee beans or Epsom salts to smooth and reduce cellulite.

Mask. Apply a green clay mask for firm, peachy skin. After 10 minutes, shower in hot, cold, hot, cold water to stimulate circulation.

Moisturise. Massage in a moisturiser with toning, cellulite clearing qualities such as 200ml coconut oil with five drops each of essential oils of birch, grapefruit, juniper, lemon and sage. Use firm upward strokes for five minutes.

Reshape your rear

Posture, diet and daily activity all contribute to gorgeous glutes. If you're sedentary for long stretches, try sitting on a ball, meditation stool or lying on your stomach in sphinx pose. Regularly squeeze your glutes and rise

up and down 10 times if you can't go for a proper walk. When you do walk, switch your rear on by placing your hands behind your back over your

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upper bum and feel them contract as your legs come back.

Take the stairs, carrying weight when possible. One hundred-metre sprints are also great for building butt bulk. **NH**

Caroline Robertson is a naturopath and exercise enthusiast. Contact her for consultations, health retreats and guided meditations at carolinerobertson.com.au

Ash Shepherd can be contacted at Queensland's Massage Shack on (07) 4057 8818.

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SIDE

Side leg raises

This smooths saddlebags, gives the waist definition and raises the rump. Lie straight on your side, resting your head and raise your straight upper leg. Repeat up and down then turn over to complete other side.

BACK

Butt bridge with weights

With dumbbells just below your hip bones, lie on your back with knees bent and feet on the floor, hip-width apart. Slowly peel your spine off the floor from the bottom, tightening the glutes until you've created a diagonal line from your shoulders to your knees. Return to the floor slowly.

One leg bridge

Hold the knees tightly together and extend one leg at knee level while in the bridge position. Do all repetitions on one side, then switch.

Foot ball

Lie flat with feet on ball. Push ball forward and raise your hips up squeezing your glutes. Hold for three then slowly come down.



SIDE LEG RAISES