

# GET YOUR FITNESS BACK FAST AFTER THE HOLIDAYS

Lying on a beach is great at the time - but a fortnight away can result in up to 2kg on your waistline. If this rings any bells, here's the perfect four-week workout to shed pounds and return you to peak condition

Words Paul Rees Pictures Matt Howell

**W**HETHER LAZING ON the beach or eating and drinking to our heart's content, summer holidays are a rare opportunity to luxuriate in stress-free bliss. Yet attached to this is the unavoidable threat of returning home transformed into a lardy blimp, as all thoughts of fitness regimes vanish over the sun-dappled horizon and pounds pile on.

"Traditional holiday activities are not really conducive to staying in shape and maintaining a healthy and athletic figure," says Andy Clarke, who along with partner Phil Smith runs Cambridge Fitness Academy, a company specialising in fitness training and health and nutritional advice.

According to Clarke, you can put on 2kg of weight during a fortnight's holiday - the equivalent of eating an extra meal and

drinking three additional pints of beer per day. This adds up to a whopping 18,000 excess calories, enough to burst the sturdiest of belts. Since there is a common perception that we gain even more weight through winter, the nightmare scenario is that of months spent waddling about. The truth is rather less gruesome.

"You don't necessarily gain weight in winter," insists nutrition expert Clarke. "It depends on your fitness schedule. If your level of activity is equal to that in summer, you'll stay the same or possibly even lose weight through expending energy to keep warm."

That's the good news. But before then, the holiday flab has to go - so it's over to Clarke and Smith's effective high intensity training programme and sensible dietary advice...

*continues over>*

Have a targeted fitness programme and a sensible eating plan, and any excess holiday weight will fall off

# YOUR 10 KEY WEIGHT-LOSS EXERCISES

Introducing your four-week fat-fighting workout programme



## 1 Pull-ups

**Why:** To build and strengthen lats, middle back and biceps.

**Phil Smith:** "Grab a bar, tree branch or crossbar with hands just over a shoulder width apart, palms facing forward. Let yourself hang with arms straight and then pull yourself up until your chest touches the bar. Squeeze your lats by drawing shoulders and upper arms down and back. Lower back to the starting position."



## 2 Power squats

**Why:** To develop explosive power and strengthen legs.

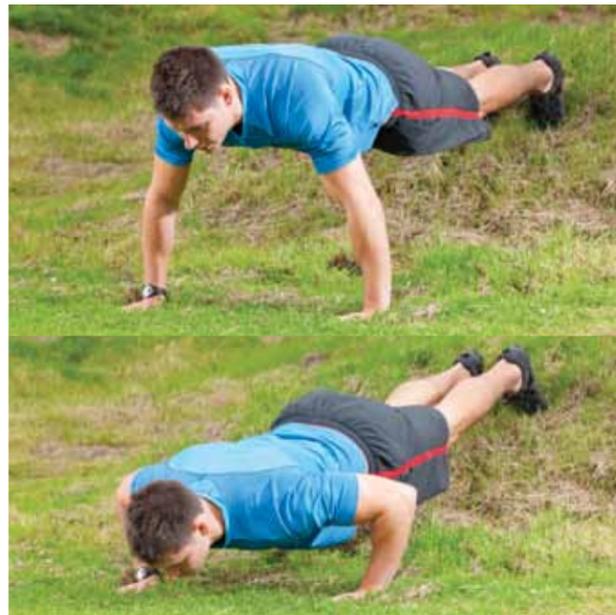
**Andy Clarke:** "Stand straight with feet a shoulder width apart and arms at your side. Bend knees, sticking your bum out whilst also raising your arms to shoulder height. Don't let your knees pass in front of your toes. Once knees are at a right angle, explode up and bring arms back to your side. Go straight into the next squat."



## 3 Single-leg V-sits

**Why:** To tone the stomach muscles.

**Phil Smith:** "Lie flat with arms and legs extended. Lift one leg up to vertical whilst also raising your arms, head and shoulders. Reach for your ankle and squeeze your abs, then lower and repeat on the other leg. Have one leg raised a bit off the floor to make it harder."



## 4 Decline press-ups

**Why:** To strengthen chest, shoulders and core.

**Phil Smith:** "Start with your hands just over shoulder width apart, your feet higher than your hands, your body in a straight line from heels to shoulders and your core tight. Bend elbows until your nose almost touches the ground and then press back up."



## 5 Tricep dips

**Why:** To strengthen triceps but also to work your chest and shoulders.

**Phil Smith:** "Position hands shoulder width apart on a bench, tree stump or step. Extend legs in front of you and straighten out arms. Keep a small bend at the elbows to maintain tension on your triceps. Lower body down until your elbows are at a right angle. With elbows tucked in to the side, push back up to the starting position."



## WHAT'S THE BEST TIME OF THE DAY TO EXERCISE?

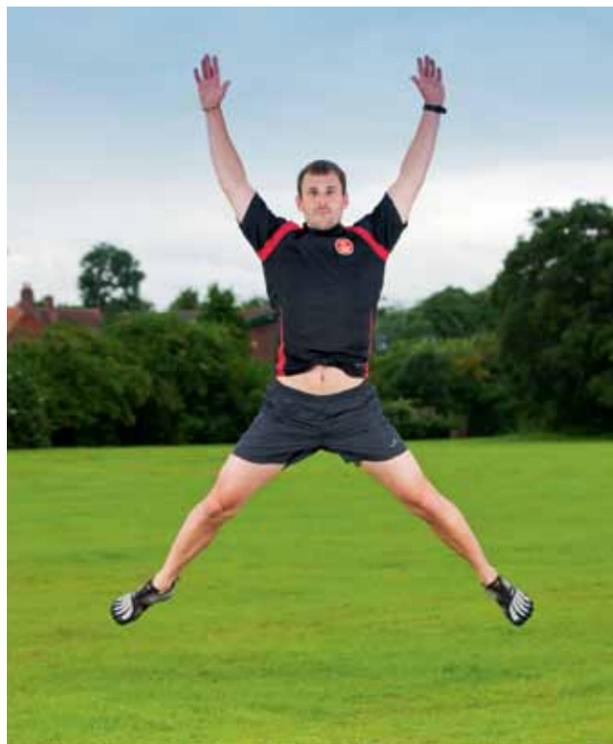
**Andy Clarke:** "It's important to really rev up your metabolism to burn off excess calories, so a quick pint of water to hydrate yourself in the morning and straight out before breakfast is the best and most effective way to lose weight. But if you find that you don't have the energy first thing to complete your exercises properly, then do so at a time you're better suited to. Doing a quality workout at a convenient time is much better than a sloppy, forced one when it doesn't agree with you."



### 6 Hanging knee raises

**Why:** To tone stomach muscles.

**Phil Smith:** Hang from bar with hands a shoulder width apart, palms facing forward and arms extended. Let yourself hang, legs slightly bent at the knee. Raise knees up towards chest, extend legs and hold for a second, squeezing abs. Lower legs back down and repeat. It is important not to swing during this movement - keep your body as still as possible."



### 7 Explosive star jumps

**Why:** To develop explosive leg power and hone your anaerobic endurance.

**Andy Clarke:** "Stand with feet together and reach towards your toes, knees bent. Explode up, pushing with your legs, and make a star shape at the highest point. Make sure that your back is straight. Land softly with feet together and immediately repeat."



### 8 Burpee jumps

**Why:** To target the entire body - developing strength, power and anaerobic endurance.

**Andy Clarke:** "Start in a low squat position, hands on the floor. Kick back feet and then immediately return them to the squat position, pressing up with your arms. Leap up as high and as far in front of yourself as possible, then repeat."



### 9 Crawls

**Why:** For core and upper body strength.

**Andy Clarke:** "Start in the bottom position of a full press-up. Crawl forward, moving opposite arms and legs, making sure you keep as low to the ground as possible. Keep your core tight and back flat."



**"A quick pint of water in the morning and straight out for this workout before breakfast is the best way to lose weight"**



### 10 Interval Sprints

**Why:** To increase metabolic rate, expend calories and power legs.

**Andy Clarke:** "Before sprinting, always do a light warm-up run - it's easy to pull a hamstring if not. There's no more effective way of burning off calories than sprinting. Follow the four-week programme, start with a 10-second interval sprint and build up each week in increments of 10 seconds."

### HOW TO EAT TO LOSE WEIGHT

**Andy Clarke:** "There are any number of faddish diets out there, each promising the same unrealistically fast results as the next. The simple truth about good nutrition is this: eat a natural and varied selection of fresh foods. Try to follow the basic rule that if a food doesn't look like it did when it was alive or growing then don't eat it, so avoiding processed food is important. Bread and pasta aren't necessarily bad for you, but natural is better. You should also stay hydrated at all times and avoid alcohol or too much caffeine."



### IDEAL DAY MENU

**Breakfast:** Spanish omelette with spinach  
**Snack:** Mixed nuts, seeds and dried fruit  
**Lunch:** Leftovers - smoked salmon and roasted veg salad (parsnip, peppers, tomatoes) dressed with olive oil  
**Snack:** Mixed berries and grapes  
**Dinner:** Fresh chicken, ginger and chilli vegetable stir fry with rice

# YOUR FOUR-WEEK WEIGHT-LOSS PROGRAMME

This one month high intensity programme is tough, but guaranteed to shed excess pounds

	MONDAY	WEDNESDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY OR SUNDAY
WEEK ONE	5-minute warm-up run 5-minute comfortable run	5-minute warm-up run 5-minute comfortable run	5-minute warm-up run 5-minute comfortable run	One activity with friends or family such as a bike ride, swim or walk
	1x10sec interval sprint 10secs rest 3x10sec pull-pps 10secs rest in between	1x10sec interval sprint 10secs rest 3x10sec decline press-ups 10secs rest in between	1x10sec interval sprint 10secs rest 3x10sec tricep dips 10secs rest in between	<b>WEEK 2</b> Repeat programme with interval sprints, exercises and rest periods all increased to 20secs each
	1x10sec interval sprint 10secs rest 3x10sec power squats 10secs rest in between	1x10sec interval sprint 10secs rest 3x10sec explosive star jumps 10secs rest in between	1x10sec interval sprint 10secs rest 3x10sec burpee jumps 10secs rest in between	<b>WEEK 3</b> Repeat programme with interval sprints, exercises and rest periods all increased to 30secs each
	1x10sec interval sprint 10secs rest 3x10sec single-leg v-sits 10secs rest in between	1x10sec interval sprint 10secs rest 3x10sec crawls 10secs rest in between	1x10sec interval sprint 10secs rest 3x10sec hanging knee raises 10secs rest in between	<b>WEEK 4</b> Repeat programme with interval sprints, exercises and rest periods all increased to 40secs each

For more information on Cambridge Fitness Academy visit [cambridgefitnessacademy.co.uk](http://cambridgefitnessacademy.co.uk)