

By Isaac Beal

*Get A Fresh Start!*

# KICKBOXING

## For A Better Body

EXERCISE USUALLY FALLS BY THE WAYSIDE FOR US THE MOMENT OUR WORKOUTS GET STALE AND REPETITIVE. LET'S FACE IT, RUNNING AND LIFTING WEIGHTS CAN BE AS MUNDANE AS FILING TAXES. SO IT IS NO WONDER THAT, WHEN DISTRACTIONS ARISE, WE OFTEN REPLACE OUR FITNESS ROUTINES WITH LESS TORTUROUS ACTIVITIES (LIKE WATCHING A *TRADING SPACES* MARATHON).

The problem is that many exercise routines don't adequately reward you for your effort. Most people see working out at a gym as repetitive, laborious and completely boring. The sad truth is that they're often right. Running or lifting weights can be miserable activities for many beginner exercisers. The solution is to find a no-nonsense routine that benefits you in every aspect of your life.

We are usually at our happiest while doing activities we enjoy. Obviously, the same logic applies to exercise. When your workout keeps you coming back for more and rewards you with positive results, you know you've reached a state of fitness nirvana.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JASON T. JASKOT  
Photographed at Club KO, Hoboken, NJ



This is definitely the case with fitness kickboxing – a hybrid of boxing, martial arts and aerobics that offers a high-intensity, aggression-releasing workout without the mind-numbing boredom that accompanies some other gym-bound activities. Even better, it burns up to 800 calories per hour and offers many other benefits, including . . .

- Significant weight loss;
- Increased cardiovascular endurance;
- Added muscular strength;
- Increased muscular endurance;
- Improved flexibility;
- Increased metabolism;
- Increased muscle tone;
- Decreased bodyfat levels;
- Stress relief.

Kickboxing also helps women who just gave birth get back into shape. All these results lead to an instant change in your health and appearance and provide incentive to keep you coming back.

But the ultimate reason for any woman to begin fitness kickboxing is to learn self-defense techniques like jabbing, kicking, punching and blocking. The fighting skills this activity teaches, along with how to increase strength and endurance, combine to help you boost your self-control and fitness level. As one of my students has said: "You can totally see your body transforming. You feel bigger, taller and stronger."

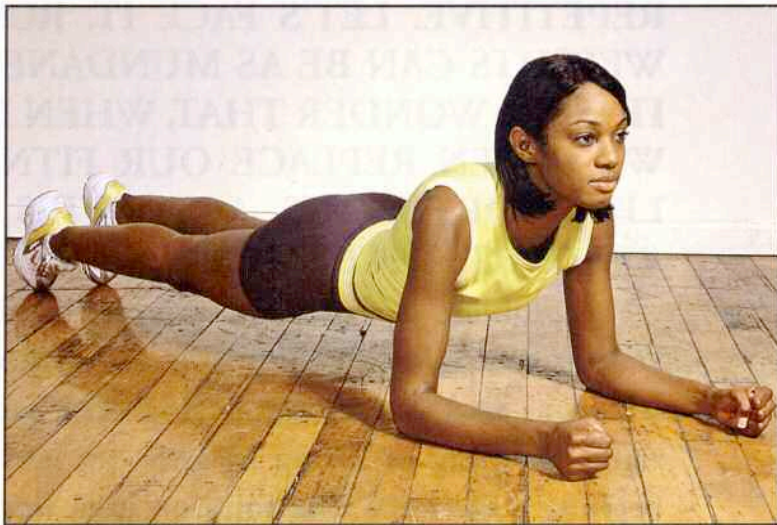
Fitness kickboxing strengthens your character along with your body. It helps you learn discipline, which ultimately leads to better relationships with yourself, co-workers, family and friends.

The following exercises are designed for a home workout. Any kickboxing routine, including the exercises featured here, can be modified to accommodate your fitness level. Before beginning, warm up your muscles with a few minutes of jumping rope or jumping jacks, and thoroughly stretch your arms, legs and back. During the workout, be sure not to overexert yourself while kicking and punching, and stop the workout if you feel dizzy or discomfort.

*Editor's Note:* Isaac Beal is an instructor at Club KO in Hoboken, N.J., the largest kickboxing facility on the East Coast, boasting 75 heavy bags and classes seven days a week. Club KO has locations throughout New Jersey and New York. For more information, visit [www.clubkogyms.com](http://www.clubkogyms.com) or contact Isaac at [isaac@clubkogyms.com](mailto:isaac@clubkogyms.com).

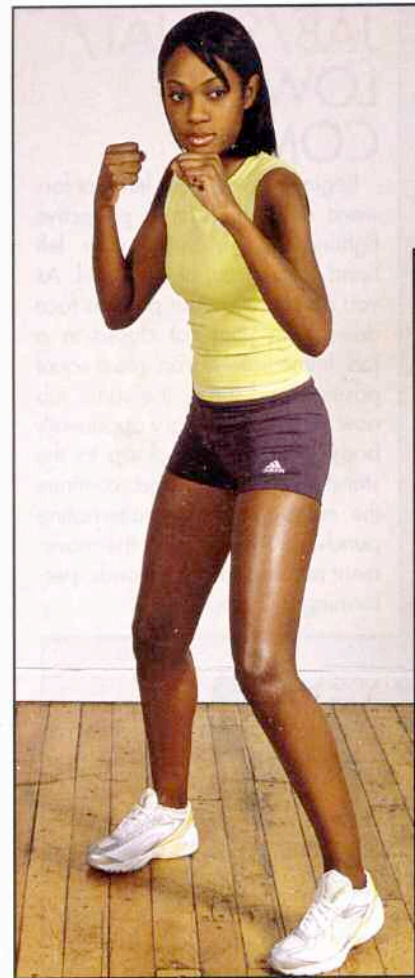


*Kickboxing instructor Isaac Beal takes our model through the basics of a killer workout.*



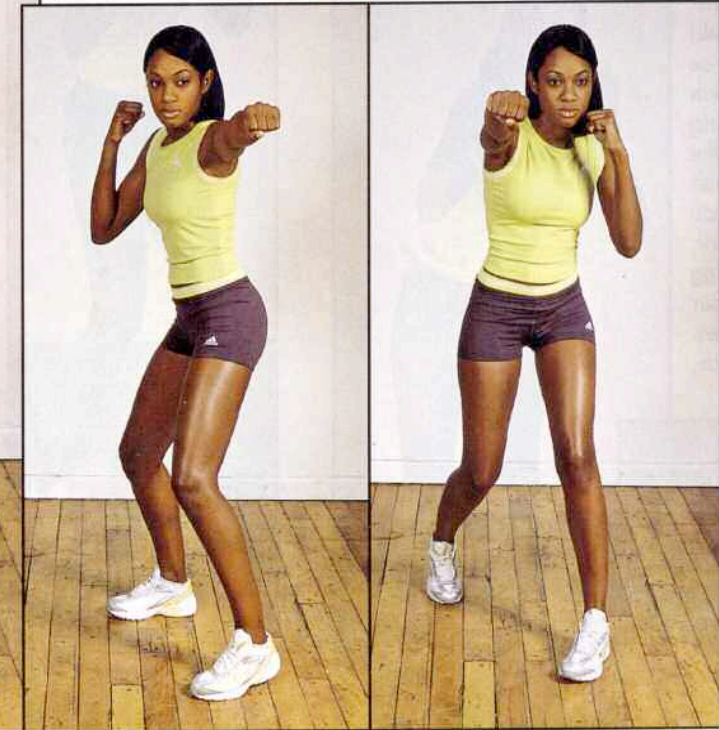
## THE PLANK

Assume a push-up position on the floor with your bodyweight balanced between your hands and toes. Now, drop down to your forearms (round your back a little to crunch your abs) and hold for three minutes or as long as possible. Breathe fast through your mouth when it begins to burn, as this will enable you to hold it longer. Complete 1-3 sets.



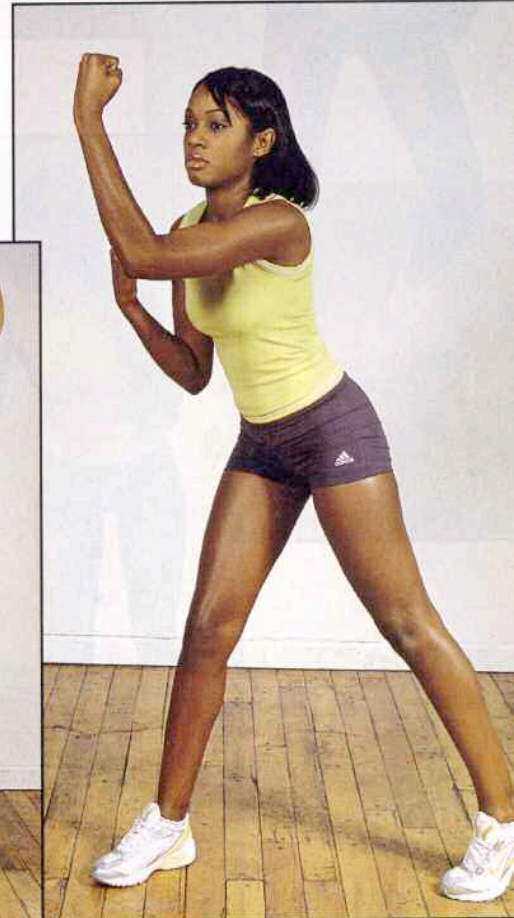
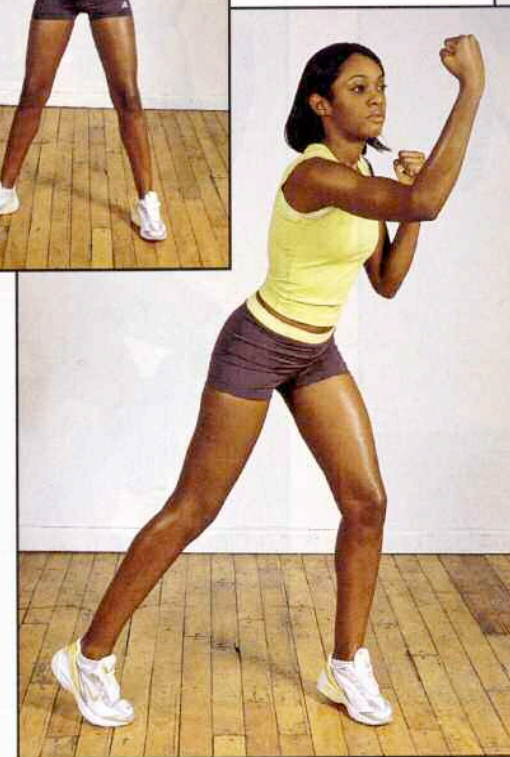
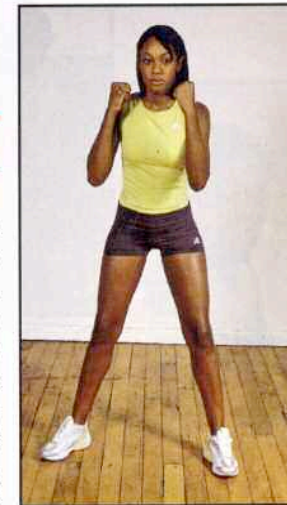
## JAB/CROSS BURNOUT

Assume a fighter's stance with both hands up in a protective position. Bring your strong side back and hold your strong arm to your ear like you are holding a telephone. Your lead hand should be at chin level. Throw your lead hand first in a jab at chin level, with your palm facing down in a closed fist. As that hand comes back, fire your strong arm at chin level in a cross, palm down. This should be executed at full speed. You should pull your arm back twice as fast as it went out. Continue for 90 seconds, completing 3-5 sets.



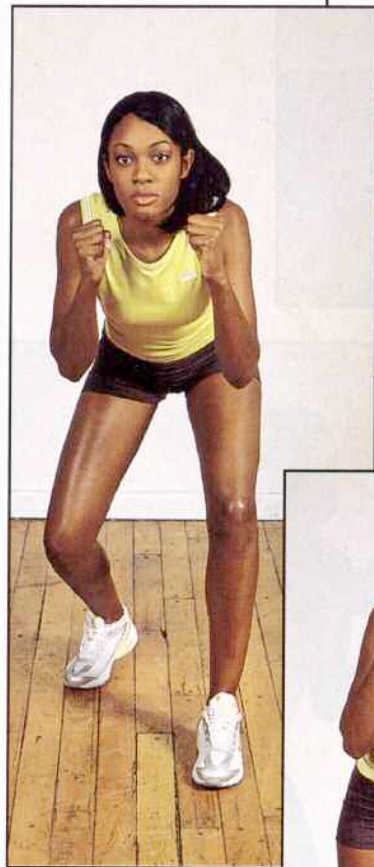
## UPPERCUT BURNOUT

Assume a fighter's stance with both hands up in a protective position. Bring your strong side back and hold your strong arm to your ear like you are holding a telephone. Your lead hand should be at chin level. Dip your body, twist your torso and drive up off your legs. As you do so, throw your strong fist upward in an uppercut to chin level, with your palm facing up in a closed fist. As that hand comes back, reset yourself quickly and fire another uppercut with the opposite arm. Continue in rapid succession. Repeat for 90 seconds, completing 3-5 sets.



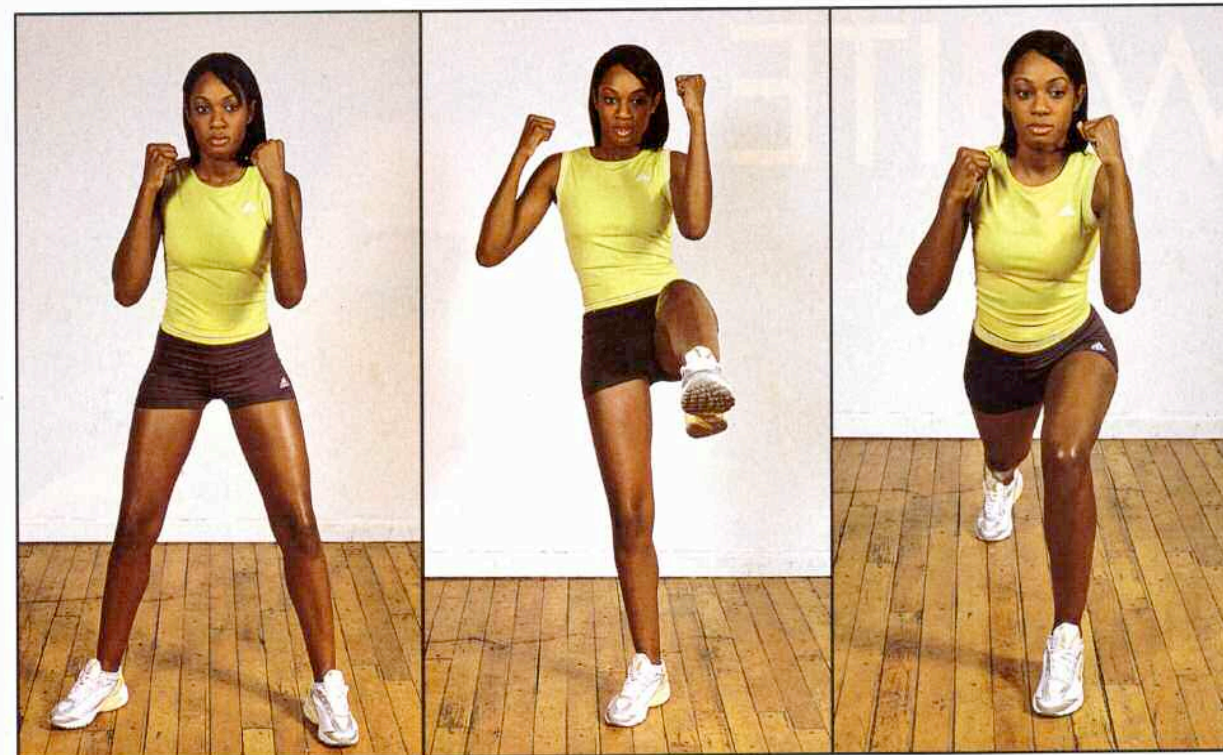
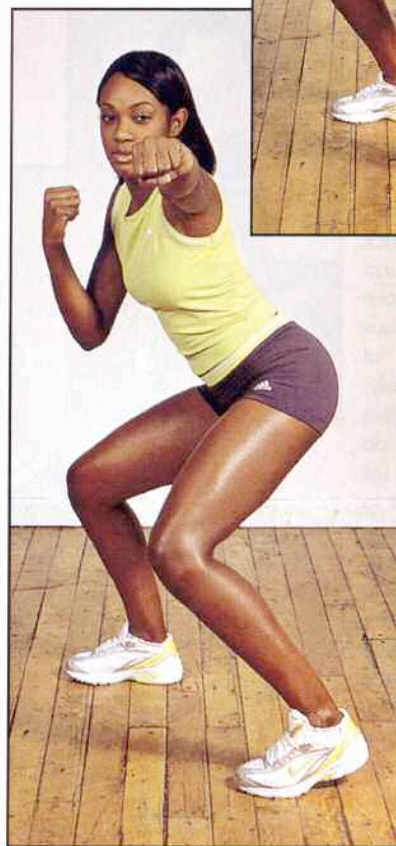
## BOB-AND-WEAVE

Assume a fighter's stance with both hands up in a protective position. With your right side back a bit, drop your hips in a smooth partial squat. Keeping your ears over your hips, shift your bodyweight to your left leg and stand up straight again. Now drop your hips and shift back to the right to assume the starting position. There should be no pause at the top as you move back and forth to both sides. Performing the bob-and-weave is like drawing a "u" shape with your forehead. As you perform the movement, you should feel a burning in your legs. Keep your hands up at all times. Continue for 90 seconds, completing 3-5 sets.



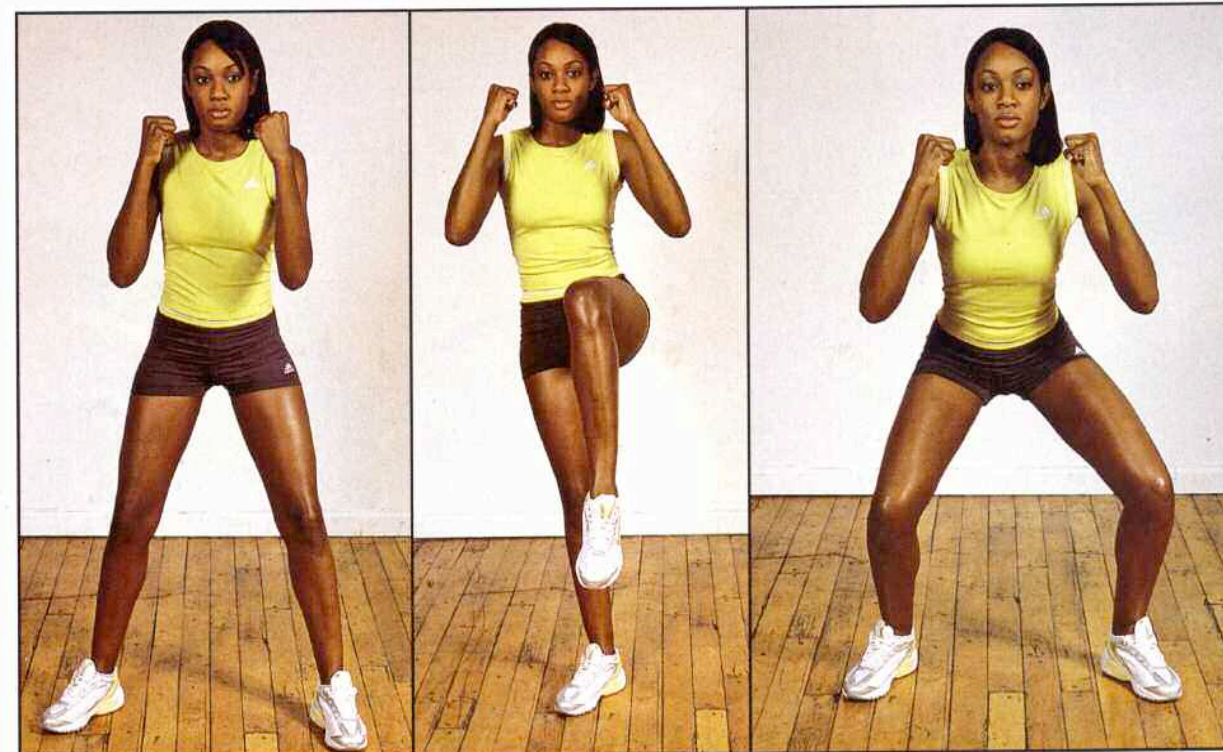
## JAB/SQUAT/LOW JAB COMBO

Beginning with your left foot forward and hands in a protective fighting stance, throw your left hand straight out at chin level. As you do so, twist your palm to face down with your fist closed in a jab. Immediately drop into a squat position and throw the same jab now at your imaginary opponent's body level. Push back up to the standing position, and continue the entire movement, alternating punching arms. Repeat the movement nonstop for 90 seconds, performing 3-5 sets.



## FRONT/KICK LUNGE COMBO

Begin by standing with your left leg back in a fighting stance. Raise your left knee to a chamber position at waist level, then kick your left foot straight out in front of you. Bring it back into the chamber, then move your left leg back to the standing position. Immediately perform a lunge under full control. Step around to switch your stance so that your right leg is back, and then throw a right front kick. Now lunge in the same manner to the left. Repeat nonstop for 90 seconds, performing 3-5 sets.



## KNEE-TO-CHEST/SQUAT COMBO

Begin by standing with your stance squared up and your hands up in a defensive fighting position. Balancing your bodyweight on your right foot, bring your left knee up as high as possible to your chest. Push it back down and then squat until your thighs are parallel to the floor. Press back up to the standing position, then bring your right knee up in to your chest and squat. Repeat the entire motion in an alternating manner for 90 seconds, performing 3-5 sets. ★