

30-day belly blast



These exercises will help you slim down and get a flatter belly

Illustrations: Ben Foxall / Workout: Anne-Marie Lategan

We're not suggesting you can get a pancake flat belly in 30 days, but it's possible to have a flatter tummy and change your exercise and eating habits so that you're less likely to store fat around the middle.

There are different reasons why people store fat around their stomach area. Women of childbearing age tend to store more fat around their hips, bottom and thighs in order to prepare for child birth, but as we get older the amount of oestrogen decreases and fat is more commonly stored around the stomach area. But our plan can get you back on track and leave you with a stomach that feels flatter and more toned after 30 days. Firstly, aim to eat 250 calories

less per day and burn off at least 250 calories per day, which means you'll lose around 1lb per week.

Cardio and weight loss

Follow the 30-day workout plan on page 50. Your cardio can be any form of activity – walking, running, cycling or an exercise class like circuits, Spinning or Boxercise where you feel yourself working hard. Try to be as active as possible during the day – get up from your desk and move around.

Do the tummy toning exercises shown here – the training plan on page 50 will tell you how often you need to do them and how many repetitions and sets you need to do each time. Follow the meal plan starting on page 52 and you'll make great progress in 30 days.

The exercises below are great to strengthen and tone your stomach muscles. The main thing is to be consistent with your exercise and try to follow the healthy eating plan as much as you can.

Upper abs

Weighted crunch

- Lie on your back on the floor.
- Hold a weight with both hands on your chest.
- Lift your head and shoulders off the floor.
- Pull your belly button into your spine.
- Breathe out when you lift.
- Slowly lower back down to the floor.

TIP If your neck hurts, hold the weight with one hand and support your head with the other.



Upper abs

V-sits

- Sit on the floor with your arms reaching forward next to your legs for balance.
- Lift your feet off the floor.
- Straighten your legs while lowering your upper body towards the floor.
- Lift back up to the seated position.



TIP Only lower to the point where you can still return to the seated position and not collapse.

Lower abs

Toe taps

- Lie on your back on the floor.
- Lift your legs up to a right angle.
- Pull your belly button to your spine to ensure that your spine stays neutral.
- Lower your legs until your toes touch the floor.
- Lift your legs up to the starting position.

TIP

Don't let your back arch off the floor.



Side muscles (obliques)

Cross over

- Lie on your back on the floor and keep your knees bent.
- Place your hands next to your ears.
- Lift your head and shoulders off the floor.
- Focus on moving the right side of your ribcage towards your right hip bone.
- Return to the centre position and repeat on the other side.
- Alternate between right and left.

TIP

Push your lower back into the floor and don't pull on your neck.

Side muscles (obliques)

Side leg lift

- Lie on your side on the floor.
- Straighten your arm and rest your head on the top of your arm.
- Lift both legs off the floor.
- Do one set and swap sides.



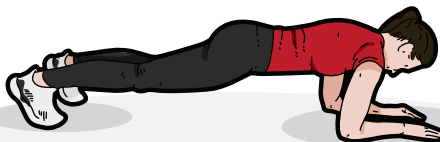
TIP

The floor can be quite hard on your hip bone. Roll forwards or backwards until you find a comfortable position.

Core

Plank

- Lie on the floor with your elbows directly underneath your shoulders.
- Lift your hips off the floor to form a straight line between your shoulders, hips and feet.
- Breathe normally while holding the position for 20 seconds.



TIP

If you feel a pain in your lower back lift your bottom slightly higher to prevent your spine arching.

Cut back on belly-bloating foods

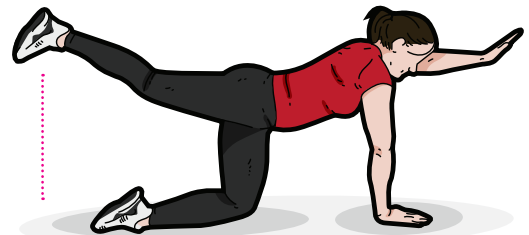
There are certain foods that can give your stomach a more full, bloated appearance, so if you can cut back on them it will make it look flatter. These foods include:

- Beans (swap for pinto and black beans which are easier to digest)
- Onions and garlic (swap to herbs like parsley, basil and chives)
- Broccoli (swap for foods spinach or zucchini)
- Wheat in bread (swap for tortilla wraps or wheat-free bread)
- Apples (swap for berries or citrus fruit)
- Sweeteners (swap for foods with Erythritol, it's easier to digest)

Core

Plank superman

- Kneel down on all floors with your hands directly underneath your shoulders.
- Place your elbows directly underneath your shoulders.
- Lift your right arm off the floor and extend it forwards.
- Simultaneously lift your left foot off the floor.
- Hold the position for two counts.
- Slowly lower your arm and leg and repeat on the other side.
- Alternate between right and left.



TIP

If you experience pain in your lower back lift your hips slightly higher to prevent your lower back from arching.

Lower abs

Scissors

- Lie on the floor and support your upper body on your elbows.
- Keep your legs straight.
- Lift your legs off the floor.
- Open your legs slightly wider than hip width.
- Close them, crossing one leg over the other leg.
- Repeat the move but this time cross the-other leg over.



TIP

Pull your belly button to your spine to prevent your lower back from arching.

How long to get a flat belly?

This depends on a few different factors:

- How determined you are to stick to the diet
- How determined you are to stick to the training
- How much weight you have to lose