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FOR A RESISTANCE BAND
WORKOUT VIDEO!


Training tip: Examine your resistance bands like you would your tires – check for wear and tear often to prevent injury.

JUST JESSICA

AGE: 29 | **HEIGHT:** 5'4" | **WEIGHT:** 119 LB (CONTEST); 125 LB (OFF-SEASON)
CAREER WINS: 2006 IFBB NEW YORK PRO – 1ST PLACE (FIGURE); 2009 IFBB JACKSONVILLE PRO – 1ST PLACE (FIGURE); 2011 ARNOLD CLASSIC BIKINI INTERNATIONAL – 4TH PLACE. **SPONSORS:** OPTIMUM NUTRITION, AMERICAN BODYBUILDING. **KEEP IT CLEAN:** JESSICA ALWAYS USES MAKEUP WIPES AND ASTRINGENT POSTWORKOUT. "IT'S IMPORTANT TO GET THAT MAKEUP AND SWEAT OFF YOUR FACE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE," SHE CAUTIONS. **MUY CALIENTE!** MEXICAN FOOD, INCLUDING FAJITAS, GUAC AND MARGARITAS, ARE AMONG HER FAVE TREATS.

When time is short, you can rely on resistance bands to give those muscles a new – and yes, equally tough – **challenge.**

BY KAREN ASP | PHOTOGRAPHY GREGORY JAMES | MODEL JESSICA PAXSON



YOUR **PERFECTLY** PORTABLE GYM

TURN THE PAGE FOR MORE. ▶

THE HOLIDAYS ARE FAST APPROACHING, and you know what that means: your fitness routine will likely be KO'd thanks to your busy schedule. But get rubber resistance on your side (or, at the very least, in your suitcase), and you'll emerge at the end of the festivities with a smile on your face – and a tight body to match.

If you've always thought elastic resistance was for rookies – or worse yet, wimps – you're in for a surprise. "Research has found that you get the same level of muscle activation with elastic resistance as you do with free weights," notes Phil Page, PhD, CSCS, director of research and education for Thera-Band, and author of *Strength Band Training* (Human Kinetics, 2011). That means you can get an equally effective body-sculpting workout without having to heave dumbbells.

Even more surprising? Resistance bands give you benefits you don't get with free weights. For starters, you're not limited by gravity. "With elastic resistance, you're relying on the tension of the band or tube, which means you are able to train with more movements and directions of motion," explains Page. As a result, exercises become more functional in nature, training you to move as you do in life.

Another bonus is that you can do high-speed training with elastic resistance – something you can't do with weights. And unlike working with dumbbells, it's pretty tough to cheat because, as Page notes, "You can't use momentum to get

the weight into position." Two other benefits? Elastic resistance is portable and inexpensive at just under \$20 per tube or band. Your abdominals are also worked with laser-like precision with multi-muscle moves like the V-sit and flye, or the squat and side raise, which create a rocky and unstable environment for your core.

MAXIMIZE YOUR TRAINING TIME

You have a few options when it comes to how you format this routine. You can take the conventional approach by completing two or three sets of 10 to 15 repetitions of each exercise. Or, you can perform the exercises as a circuit, with little to no rest between moves. Page says this allows you to get a lot done in a short amount of time, which will stress both the cardiovascular and musculoskeletal systems.

For the circuit, perform each exercise for 30 seconds, moving from one move to the next and resting no more than 15 seconds in between; repeat two to three times.

Try either version whenever you are tight on time, and you'll emerge on the other side of the festive season a fitter, tighter and more energized you!

band squat with side raise

TARGET MUSCLES: quadriceps, gluteus maximus, gluteus medius

SET UP: Stand in the middle of a band with your feet shoulder-width apart, and hold a handle in each hand. Bend your elbows, keeping them close to your body, and raise the handles in front of your shoulders [A].

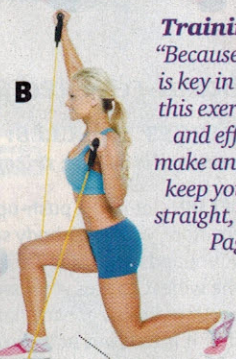
ACTION: Lower into a squat, bringing your thighs parallel to the floor and keeping your knees behind your toes [B]. As you rise, lift your right leg to the side, pressing against the band [C]. Place your foot back down and repeat; alternate legs with each repetition.

Training tip: Reserve the work for your legs by keeping your arms and shoulders stationary during each rep. This isn't a push-up, after all!





Training tip: As you lift your leg, avoid leaning to the side; keep your torso tall.



Training tip: "Because posture is key in keeping this exercise safe and effective, make an effort to keep your back straight," advises Page.

band-resisted donkey kick

TARGET MUSCLES: *gluteus maximus, erector spinae*

SET UP: Tie a band into a circle (or use a circular band) and loop it around your knees. Kneel on the floor on your hands and knees, with your wrists under your shoulders and knees under your hips.

ACTION: Keep your head in line with your spine as you lift your left knee behind you until it's almost in line with your hips. Return to the start and repeat. When you have completed your set, switch sides.

Training tip: Avoid hyperextending your back by keeping your head neutral (eyes on the floor below you), and letting the move originate from your glutes, not your back, notes Page.

split squat with press

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TARGET MUSCLES: *gluteus maximus, quadriceps, deltoids, triceps brachii*

SET UP: Start in a staggered position with your right foot in front and your left foot back. Place the band under your right foot, hold a handle in each hand, and raise them to shoulder height, keeping your elbows close to your body and your palms facing forward [A].

ACTION: Bend your legs, stopping when your right thigh comes parallel to the floor. As you hold, press one handle, then the other over your head [B]. Extend your legs to stand, and repeat. When you are through, repeat on your other side.

TURN THE PAGE FOR MORE. ▶

THE HOLIDAYS ARE APPROACHING, and what that means is your fitness routine will be on a tight schedule. Here are some exercises you can do in less than 10 minutes to get you in the best shape for the holidays.

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band-resisted push-up

TARGET MUSCLES:

pectoralis major, triceps brachii, serratus anterior

SET UP: Get into a push-up position on the floor, with your body supported on your hands and feet. Place a band across the widest part of your back and secure one handle under each hand, ensuring that it is taut but not uncomfortable [A].

ACTION: Contract your abs and glutes as you bend your arms to lower your body towards the floor. Stop when your chest is a few inches from the ground [B], then press through your palms to return to the start.

Training tip: Keep your head in a neutral position and don't let your back sag as you lower to the floor. If the band makes this too tough, do the move without it and add it back in after you've gained strength.



V-sit and flye

TARGET MUSCLES:

anterior and posterior deltoids, hip flexors, abdominals, rhomboids, trapezius

SET UP: Lie face up on the floor with the middle of a band under the soles of your feet. Cross the band and hold a handle in each hand, keeping your arms at your sides on the floor.

ACTION: Keeping your back straight and using as little momentum as possible, lift your legs and upper body from the floor to form a "V". At the same time, open your arms until they come in line with your shoulders. Return to the start, lowering your back vertebrae by vertebrae, and repeat. ■

Training tip: If this is too difficult, sit with your legs extended on the floor in front of you and the band wrapped around your feet, and keep your hands close to your chest with a handle in each. Slowly lean back just a few inches as you open your arms out to the sides; release to return to the start, and repeat.

