

Strong, lean & supersleek

This Pilates-inspired workout has turned up the cinching and sculpting to give your body a high-def silhouette.

By Sara Angle | Photographs by Arthur Belebeau

FIT FASHION

Our fit phenom model Jeneil Williams is wearing: **Adidas by Stella McCartney Train Body Suit** (\$90, adidas.com). **Roxanne Assoulin Dot Dot Dot... Earrings** (\$75 for set of six, roxanneassoulin.com).

As anyone who has ever taken even a mat class can attest, the body-tightening power of Pilates is undisputed. Here's a workout that amplifies the firming and adds serious calorie burning per rep. It's based on the moves you do on the Megaformer—a more souped-up version of the traditional Pilates reformer that looks like an elevated gliding platform with lots of moving parts and springs. It's also the hot new way to get the toning benefits of Pilates with the added strengthening and aerobic work you might expect from boot camp class. "The Megaformer effectively combines strength, endurance, cardio, balance, core, and flexibility training—in not only one session but every move," says Tracy Carlinsky, the lead trainer at SLT, a popular Megaformer studio with locations across the Northeast.

Here, Carlinsky has distilled one of the Megaformer's most effective muscle-firming tricks—the ability to stretch out the burn of a rep by forcing you to do a slow-motion contraction—into a resistance-band workout with gliding disks (or a set of hand towels). When muscles contract slowly through their entire range of motion without using momentum, it can help activate your slow-twitch muscle fibers, which are notoriously hard to tax, Carlinsky says. (See a snapshot of her routine on these pages, then go to shape.com/megaformer for the full workout.)

The gliders mimic the moving portion of a Megaformer by providing an unstable surface, forcing you to focus on core stabilization as you



Engage your abs throughout the circuit—every move should be a core exercise, Carlinsky says.

Makeup by Christopher Ardoff/Art Department for Kyojin; makeup: hair by Antonio Diaz/Bryon Bantny for Oribe Hair Care; manicure by Rachel Shinn/Artists by Timothy Piana for Dior Vernis

move. The resistance bands re-create the tension of the machine's adjustable spring coils. "Controlling the band slowly as you lift as well as lower places more emphasis on both the concentric and eccentric—or shortening and lengthening—phases of muscle contraction," Carlinsky says. "That's because your muscles have to contract not only to create movement but to resist the rebound of the band while they lengthen."

Her eight-move sequence is designed to "burn out" one side of the body first and then be repeated on the other side. By challenging one side at a time with compound exercises, you'll maximize your results, because each muscle will be effectively stimulated, Carlinsky says. Instead of counting reps for each exercise, you'll focus on what she calls "time under tension"—the amount of time your muscles are continuously working. Then you'll move immediately to the next exercise without resting. If your muscles shake at the end of a set, you'll know you've tapped their limits, and that's where the results really get started.



FIT FASHION Above: American Apparel 2x1 Rib Basic Tank (\$18, americanapparel.net), Adidas Stellasport Cut Out Leggings (\$60, adidas.com). Opposite page: Versakini Sporti-kini bra (\$45, versakini.com), Fit Mama Apparel Micro Short Neon Stripe (\$50, fitmama-apparel.com).

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Move slowly in both directions, keeping the muscle contracted the entire time. The more momentum you use, the less muscle you use.

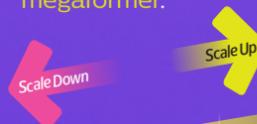


FIT FASHION Above: Solid & Striped The Chelsea suit (\$158, solidandstriped.com). Cover Swim Mesh Long-Sleeved Swimsuit (\$190, coverswim.com). Opposite page: Peixoto Playa One-Piece suit (\$110, bikiniluxe.com).



Try this workout!

Scan here for your step-by-step how-to, including photos, or visit shape.com/megaformer.



SCALE IT FOR BEST RESULTS

Check out the Scale Down and Scale Up cues for customizing these exercises to your fitness level.