

Photo: Getty Images

I like to Spin, but the bike saddle hurts my tender bits after 15 minutes — even with padded bike shorts. I love to run, but my knees start complaining after 20 minutes. And I need to work my abs more often, but even a fitness pro like me finds a million excuses to skip my boring crunch routine. Finally, someone put all of these moves together to create the most high-energy, fat-busting workout I've performed in months. And don't even think about blowing off the crunches since former Marine Raphael Verela, founder of

Circuit Works, may get in your face for slacking off.

Verela, owner of the über-popular Circuit Works Studio in Venice Beach, Calif., launched this personal training nook especially for folks like me who get bored easily and want to mix it up but need a little extra oomph. "I wanted to create a way to make Spinning more exciting and relevant for people looking to lose weight and tone up their midsection," Verela says. He says he also wanted to construct "the ultimate cardio workout where you firm up your abs, and focus on



the areas most susceptible to fat deposits, the butt, hips, and thighs.”

Mission: Accomplished!

My high-energy class, accompanied by ear-deafening booming Cuban hip-hop music, featured 10 weight-training machines or “stations” (for legs, abs, chest, back, arms, etc.), plus treadmills and Spin bikes. In one-minute high-intensity bursts, the class of 20 alternated from one weight machine (ab bicycles on a bench, for instance) to either a Spin bike for one minute or a run on a treadmill set to an incline for one minute. “There are always two certified fitness trainers on the floor with stopwatches checking form and safety,” says Verela. I hopped from one minute of leg curls to one minute of treadmill running at 6 mph, to one minute of ab bicycle crunches to a minute of Spinning, etc. And let’s not forget the formidable calorie burn: Because your body is constantly switching from high-intensity weight training to all-out aerobic sprints, the calorie burn is anywhere from 600 to 1,000 calorie per hour! (I was drenched in sweat but not half as sore as I thought I’d be, and I wasn’t bored for a nanosecond.)

If weight loss is your primary aim, and you want to cross-train like we did in this class, finesse your running workouts first, and then add biking or core training weight moves onto that.