



8 *secrets*
**TO BODY
CONFIDENCE
ON THE BEACH**



8 secrets TO BODY CONFIDENCE ON THE BEACH

Does the thought of getting into swimwear fill you with dread?

Do you spend all your time on the beach covered up?

Do you feel self-conscious instead of relaxing and enjoying your time away?

Want to know how to be part of the Body Appreciation Club

Want to learn the secret to feeling happy in your own skin?

This expert guide will teach you how to throw aside any insecurities and radiate confidence on holiday - and all year round. You are just eight steps away from feeling fantastic.

So let's get started

Secret 1

Do your “nutritional homework”

Often the reason we don't feel confident on the beach is not actually down to our size or shape. It's because we feel self-conscious that our tummy is sticking out and we feel uncomfortable and bloated. The secret to beating the bloat and creating the appearance of a flatter tummy is easier than you might think.

You just need to do your “nutritional homework” before you hit the beach. That means starting the day with a cleansing cup of fresh ginger and lemon tea (mix peeled and grated ginger and squeezed lemon juice with boiling water). This will rev up the metabolism and cleanse the digestive system. Then you need to up your protein intake, ideally two weeks before you go away to notice results. So that means eating lots of fish like salmon, cod, haddock and mackerel. The protein in the fish will make you feel fuller for longer and stop you snacking in the day, while the anti-inflammatory omega-3 fats will make your skin glow!

You want to find yourself thinking ‘where's the protein’ at every meal and snack but this is one of the key ways of keeping your energy levels (and weight) balanced. Protein-based snacks can include a piece of low sugar fruit like an apple, pear or a couple of plus a small handful of nuts, hummous and veggie sticks, or even some unsweetened nut butter on toast. Next, stock up on asparagus, which contains high levels of amino acid asparagine - a natural diuretic. In other words, eating more of the spears can help flush out excess fluid and salt from your body, which can help you look leaner and feel more confident on the beach.



Secret 2

You are what you eat

Carbs certainly aren't the enemy, and the body uses the right kinds of unrefined carbohydrates - like brown rice, lentils, and oatmeal - to generate energy. But if you're trying to lose a few pounds pre-holiday, then ditching processed (also known as refined) carbs is an effective way to see quick results. This is because simple carbohydrates like white pasta, white bread and potatoes are metabolized very quickly into sugar by the body.

Sugar is then turned into fat - especially if not balanced by something containing protein. Calories don't make you feel full - nutrients like fibre, protein and healthy fats do. Sadly, refined carbs are lacking in all three so no matter how much you eat, your body will still feel

hungry, meaning you're more likely to over-eat.

So in the run up to your holiday, you can boost your body confidence by cutting back and swapping refined carbs for high-fibre foods like beans, brown rice and nuts. Instead of white toast and sugary jam for breakfast, toast some tummy-friendly rye bread (which doesn't spike your blood sugar levels) and eat with a protein-rich poached egg, which will fill you up until lunchtime. For lunch, have a crisp green salad with king prawns or mackerel and lots of raw veggies. Then feed your body with nutrients with a dinner of stir-fried chicken and broccoli with brown rice. Alternate your lunches and dinners with different proteins and vegetables, and you'll soon see the pounds fall off.



Secret 3

Try the toothbrush workout!

Fitting exercise into our busy lives isn't always easy. Even with the best intentions, after a long day at work or taking care of the kids, often a workout is the last thing we feel like doing. But you can make a real difference to how you look and feel about your body with as little as ten minutes of exercise a day - without pricey gym memberships or personal trainers.

All you need to do for that perfect peachy bum is to squat once in the morning for five minutes while you clean your teeth, and again at night-time. To squat, stand with feet hip width apart. Then lower your knees and push your bum out as if you're sitting down on a chair. Rise up to standing position and repeat until you've finished brushing your teeth!

The squat is a full body workout that not only helps to create a perky posterior and lean legs; it also works the abs giving you a flatter stomach and bags of bikini body confidence. Exercising in the morning before you've eaten breakfast also forces your body to burn stored fat, instead of the food you've eaten earlier in the day!





Secret 4

Drink yourself slim

Water is one of the most important elements in the body. It makes up about 60 per cent of our bodies and every single cell needs water to function properly. Drinking the stuff also keeps you energised and your skin hydrated. So if you're full of energy and your skin is glowing, that's one surefire way to feel good on the beach.

Studies have also shown that drinking water raises your metabolism and improves your fat burning rate. If that wasn't reason enough to start knocking back the H₂O, drinking water before a meal can help you feel fuller and eat less. A good goal is to get yourself a 1.5l bottle of water from the shops (and refill at home on subsequent days) and ensure you finish this by the end of the day – on top of any other drinks you're having.

The bottle is a visual reminder of how well you are doing. Ideally, you want to work up to having 2l a day. Not a fan of water? You can still blast fat by drinking Pu'erh tea (available at all good supermarkets and health shops). The tea, pronounced 'poo-air', is one of China's best-kept secrets and contains high levels of polyphenols (flavonoids, catechins and theaflavin), which are known for their antioxidant qualities. These powerful chemicals are also brilliant fat burners. Coconut water is another great option for keeping you hydrated, while controlling your blood sugar levels. Low in fat, it can help you feel fuller and reduce cravings.

Secret 5

Work with what you've got!

Feeling confident in a swimming costume or bikini isn't really about losing weight or having a super-model body. Confidence comes from feeling good about how you look, and finding a flattering swimsuit for your body shape is key.

If you have a boyish figure, rock a bikini with ruffles to create some shape. For women larger than a C-cup, avoid triangle-style bikinis that don't provide any support. Instead take advantage of bra-style, underwired swimwear for a customised fit.

Smaller busts can fake a cleavage by investing in one of the many great padded bikini tops out there. Websites like [Swimwear365.co.uk](http://www.swimwear365.co.uk) have a handy "body shape calculator" (http://www.swimwear365.co.uk/shape_calculator) to help you work out the right style for you. High Street stores like M&S, Boden and Topshop have lots of pretty swimwear options with inbuilt secret slimming panels to help you feel your best on the beach.



Secret 6

Embrace your uniqueness

One of the easiest ways to feel bad about how you look is to compare yourself to others. When you feel envious of what someone else has, be it long legs, a flat tummy or toned arms, you are creating negative feelings around your own appearance, which crushes confidence and mood.

Remember: to wish you were someone else is to waste the person you are. Why not be as nice to yourself as you are to the people you love? Ask yourself: would I say this to my best friend, my sister, or my mum? If you can't imagine saying something so nasty to them, then why are you saying it to yourself? Rather than use negative language to describe your body and the areas you dislike, pinpoint the bits you're happy with. Silence your inner critic and the positive feelings will soon overtake the bad.

Tell yourself... aren't I lucky to have such a peachy, curvy bum! Doesn't my back look fantastic in that halter-neck dress! Isn't my hourglass figure lovely! Aren't I fortunate to have a fuller bust that really fills my bikini! Spending time with negative people will also have an impact on how you view, and feel about, yourself.

The more you complain about your own perceived flaws, the more you're likely to believe they are real. Confidence is contagious so banish body shaming and surround yourself with positive people who make you feel good. These kinds of friends will also make you smile and laugh more, which releases happy hormones called endorphins.



Secret 7

Stand up straight

Good posture not only makes you look confident, it also helps you appear long and lean. Even the most toned women in the world don't look their best when they are hunched over. And no matter how flat that tummy is, slouching will naturally curve the spine forward, creating rolls on the belly.

It can also make you appear inches shorter than you really are. Posture can even affect your frame of mind. A recent study by researchers from Harvard University found that when a person stood tall and erect, it altered their hormone levels, decreasing the stress hormone cortisol and increasing testosterone, causing them to feel more powerful and in control.

For good posture simply throw the shoulders back, puff the chest out and hold your head high. For an added confidence boost, treat yourself to a spray tan. We all feel great when we have a bit of colour on our skin, so give yourself a head start to the holiday with a lovely summer glow.



Secret 8

Love the skin you're in

Being happy and confident doesn't mean that everything (and that includes your body) is perfect. It simply means that you've chosen to accept and embrace life, warts and all. Our bodies were designed to function, so think of all the amazing ways your body has been good to you.

Celebrate daily how incredible you are and be grateful that you have a healthy, working body! This is fantastic exercise that sends a really empowering message to the brain to feel happy and confident.

Next, think about being 20 years older than you are right now. Would you like to look back on your life and think: "I wish I had accepted myself and been happier in my skin" or would you prefer to think: "I had the best time on that beach with my friends and family and I really enjoyed myself"?

Thinking with the benefit of hindsight gives us a better sense of perspective about what we should be minding, and what really matters.



Get the support you need for a qualified health and weight loss expert.

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