

ON THE REBOUND!

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Keen to bounce
your way to fitness?
Get ready to
explore the world
of rebounding.

BY CHARIS TORRANCE

Bounce Studio by Fit Panda in
Sea Point, Cape Town, is a space
dedicated to all things rebounding.



Susan McAlpine brought her love of rebounding to Cape Town when she opened Bounce Studio in Sea Point and Fit Panda Studio in Claremont.

world of rebounding began a decade ago, when she was living in Amsterdam.

Her local gym offered rebounding classes, and she

quickly fell in love with this invigorating workout. Back in

South Africa, she found limited options for rebounding classes in her area. 'That was when I opened my own studio, called Fat Panda Studio. I decided to give it a shot and bought a few rebounders.' It was a hit, and in September 2023 she opened Bounce in Sea Point, a dedicated rebounding studio.

WHAT MAKES REBOUNding UNIQUE?

Whereas traditional workouts rely on repetitive movements in a single plane, rebounding introduces a vertical dimension. 'The main distinction between rebounding and other exercise lies in the use of a trampoline,' Susan says. 'Being on this platform creates a continuous up-and-down momentum, what I like to call a push and pull against gravity. This dynamic generates a pulsating effect within your body, effectively creating G-force during the vertical movement phase.'

Trampolines aren't just for kids; it turns out that there are significant benefits to spending some time jumping for joy. Rebounding is a workout trend that's been gaining momentum and winning the hearts of fitness enthusiasts everywhere. This dynamic form of exercise, done on a mini trampoline, offers a blend of fun, efficiency and health benefits.

Trampolines go way back; historians have found evidence of trampoline-like devices in ancient China, Egypt and Iran. The modern trampoline was designed in the 1930s, primarily for gymnastics training and military pilot training. Over time it developed into the rebounding we know and love today.

Susan McAlpine is a passionate advocate for this innovative fitness regimen. Her journey into the

THE MANY BENEFITS OF REBOUNding

There's a lot she loves about rebounding, Susan says. 'It's fun and addictive. It doesn't feel like exercise; it feels like you're having a great time.' And, of course, there are plenty of key health benefits associated with it.

In fact, in the 1980s, NASA scientists conducted a study that compared the fitness benefits of trampoline training to the more traditional method of running on a treadmill. They found that rebound exercise was more efficient and effective. The study found that vigorous bouncing on a rebounder for 10 minutes burnt more calories than running on a treadmill for 30 minutes did. Who are we to argue with NASA?

In case you're not convinced yet, Susan is quick to add that rebounding offers an array of health advantages beyond simple calorie burning:

- **Improved oxygen circulation:**

Rebounding helps to distribute oxygen throughout your body and

'It's fun and addictive. It doesn't feel like exercise; it feels like you're having a great time.'

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The reverse abdominal crunch is great for your core and arms.

into your bloodstream, which can complement activities like weight training, potentially reducing muscle soreness.

• **Enhanced flexibility:** Some swear that rebounding before stretching enhances your overall flexibility, as the continuous movement throughout your body prepares your muscles for stretching, potentially increasing your range of motion.

• **Cardiovascular fitness:** Rebounding gets your heart pumping, improving your cardiovascular endurance. It can be an excellent addition to your cardio workout routine.

• **Lymphatic system support:** Bouncing on a trampoline stimulates the lymphatic system, aiding in the removal of toxins from the body.

• **Bone density:** Rebounding can contribute to better bone density. The gravitational forces at play help to compress and release

bones, making it particularly beneficial for those concerned about bone health as they age.

• **Low-impact:** Unlike running or high-impact exercises, rebounding is gentle on your joints, making it ideal for people with joint issues or those recovering from injury.

• **Improved balance:** The instability of the trampoline surface challenges your balance and coordination, helping you enhance these essential skills.

• **Muscle engagement:** Rebounding engages various muscle groups, including the legs, core, and even the upper body when you incorporate arm movements.

WHO CAN REBOUND?

Susan believes that rebounding is a versatile exercise form that can be enjoyed by everyone, no matter your age. 'What I love about rebounding is its adaptability,' she says. 'It is a safe and accessible exercise no matter your fitness level or ages.' Even if you're not particularly fit or you're a little older, she says you can start by just doing the movements and not really thinking about bouncing. As you become more comfortable and confident, you can gradually incorporate bouncing into your routine. That said, there are some considerations to keep in mind before you jump in.

1 The maximum weight capacity of rebounders differ. Keep that in mind to ensure the rebounder you choose can accommodate your body weight.

2 If you have high blood pressure and are on medication, exercise caution with any form of cardio, including rebounding. Consult your doctor for personalised guidance.

3 If you have severe spinal disc degeneration, approach rebounding cautiously, as the up-and-down motion could exacerbate this condition. Susan advises minimising the intensity of your bounce, and instead engaging in gentle movements on the unstable surface to reap the benefits without putting unnecessary strain on your spine.

GETTING STARTED

If you're looking to create a rebounding space at home, Susan offers some valuable insights. 'Invest in a good-quality rebounder that suits your needs,' she says. There are two types of rebounders: spring and bungee. 'While spring-based rebounders are more durable, I personally prefer bungee-based rebounders, which have what I call a deeper,

How High?

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The shoulder press can be combined with scissors to elevate your heart rate while working your shoulders.

slower bounce, while spring rebounders have a firmer, faster bounce.' Also, consider the weight limit and mat size, as well as the number of bungees or springs for optimal balance during your bounce. 'Some cheaper rebounders will have fewer springs or bungees. In this case, more is better.'

Susan says you should take off your shoes. 'I find it best to bounce barefoot so you can activate the muscles in your feet.' Then invest in a good sports bra, and find an online programme or YouTube video to follow.

Susan recommends starting with your basic bounce. 'Keep your feet parallel underneath your hips and your knees slightly bent,' she says. 'Avoid locking your knees during jumps to prevent strain.' Focus on articulating through your feet, using both heels and toes, while following the rhythm of your favourite music.

As you become more comfortable, experiment with alternating foot patterns and one-footed bounces to challenge your balance. 'Start with simple movements and gradually build up to more complex exercises.' And when you're ready to level up your rebounding experience, you can add dumbbells, ankle weights and resistance bands to your set-up.

'For beginners, I would suggest rebounding once or twice a week, with sessions lasting about 20 minutes. As you progress, you can work your way up to 40-minute sessions.'

But you might find yourself doing it every day. 'It is addictive, so you'll quickly want to do more,' Susan says. 'I rebound almost every day.'



Rebounding no-nos

Susan emphasises the importance of avoiding these common mistakes during your rebounding sessions:

1 WEARING TRAINERS: Rebounding is best enjoyed barefoot. 'While some places may teach rebounding in shoes, going barefoot allows you to engage the muscles in your feet and toes, improving balance and overall foot health.'

2 JUMPING TOO HIGH: You may be tempted to relive your childhood and try to jump as high as you can, but don't! 'Instead, focus on pushing down into the trampoline's surface. This controlled motion minimises the impact on your joints and ensures a safer workout.'

3 LOCKING YOUR KNEES: Keep your knees slightly bent during your bounce to prevent unnecessary strain on your joints. 'Locking your knees can lead to discomfort and potentially to injury.'

4 OVERUSE OF THE T-BAR: While many rebounders come with a T-bar for balance, avoid relying on it excessively. 'Holding onto the T-bar can limit your full-body engagement.' Use it only when necessary, like during moments of instability. ■

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