

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a light pink bikini, is smiling and touching a man's chest. The man is lying on his back on a bed, looking up at her. The scene is brightly lit, possibly from a window, creating a warm and intimate atmosphere.

Feel great NAKED tonight!

If stripping off is an instant no-no rather than a yes, yes, yes, you need a body-confidence makeover. Our strippers, snappers and sexperts tell you how to undress to impress...

It's so wrong: your new boyfriend's tongue is finally working its way around some very interesting parts that have been craving some extremely personal attention. You're completely in the moment, until you remember: 'My camouflage is off – the truth about my thighs is out!' Suddenly you're right out of the moment, anticipation has turned into anxiety and you're much more tensed-up than turned-on. There's no one to blame but your own self-doubt. You've ruined your own night.

Most of us have fallen foul of this kind of tragedy. Thankfully, a little mental makeover is all it takes to feel confident about stripping your clothes off.

We're offering you a step-by-step guide to getting proud, brazen and sexy as you shed your layers. There's nothing we won't cover – and there's nothing you won't uncover, once you get to the end. Won't you be pleased with the results!

LOVE-YOURSELF-NAKED TRICK #1

Lay the groundwork

There's a lot you can do while you're still fully clothed to make sure you feel better about baring all. Preparing properly won't just boost your confidence, it'll change your entire attitude towards date night, too – ensuring that external stresses don't get in the way of your most important you-time.

ENROL IN A DANCE CLASS Ballet is great, yoga's fine, tap dance is fun and Latin dancing works, too – anything that gets you thinking about your body in a graceful, womanly way is important (grunting your way through the boot camp that is step-class does *not* count).

"All three of us had years and years of dance training," says Angie Pontani, one of the three world-class burlesque performers known as the Pontani Sisters. "Learning to stand with your chest up, shoulders back and spine aligned works wonders. You might have a cute body, but if you stand wrong, you'll ruin the whole effect."

Making a dance, martial arts or other movement class a regular part of your life will make you better friends with your body – and more inclined to love it, no matter what.

SWEAT THE SMALL STUFF The day of your big date is not the time to realise your legs resemble the untamed Amazon

jungle. Get a pedicure a day or two before, make sure you've waxed the appropriate bits and generally keep up the self-maintenance. A fresh set of shiny nails can make you look admirably at your hands and appreciate the contrast of hot-red varnish against your bare skin – and his.

TREAT YOURSELF BEAUTIFULLY

Have a long, hot soak, or at least a refreshing shower, with plenty of oil during and moisturiser after. "Perfumed, polished and powdered – that's what I want when I'm with a woman," says Vinnie Amendola, a photographer who has shot the world's sexiest sirens for *Penthouse* magazine. "It shows she's been looking forward to this as much as I have, and that's a turn-on." But don't do that until you've...

HIT THE GYM ON THE DAY OF YOUR DATE

Of course, if you're having nightly romps with your live-in love, this is a little ambitious, but at least make an effort when you know you're going to have a super-special date night. Whatever muscles you have will be as tight as they can be, minimising whatever it is you worry about. If you've got access to a steam room, spend some time there, too – preferably naked. In fact...

SPEND AS MUCH TIME NAKED AS POSSIBLE

Not just with him, but by yourself, too. The more hours you hang out in the buff, the more natural it'll seem. "The models at my shoots are just another breed altogether," says Amendola. "They come in wearing a robe but they drop it as soon as they can, and they just don't care."

RE-TRAIN YOUR THOUGHTS Every time you start to think something bad about one part of your body, replace it with a good thought about something you do like. Banish 'My butt is fat', bring on 'What pert boobs I have.' Don't let yourself get away with trash-talking your best friend (ie, you).

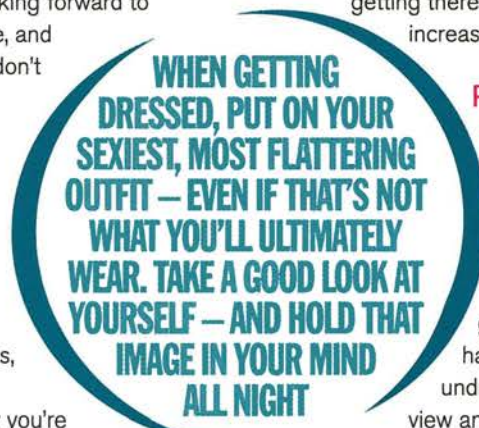
BE UPSIDE DOWN Just before you head out of the door, do some yoga poses and stretch out. "Get blood circulating through your muscles," says Lisa Marie Coffey, yoga and relationship expert and

author of *What's Your Dosha, Baby?* "Lie on the floor and prop your feet against the wall. This is called an inversion pose and it gives your lower extremities a rest from gravity. It also gets some blood to your face so you have naturally rosy cheeks!"

LOVE-YOURSELF-NAKED TRICK #2

Banish the duvet

When the time comes to cast off your clothes, you're absolutely forbidden to turn off the lights (though a pink lampshade is acceptable) and hide under the duvet. This isn't as terrifying as it sounds. This is about feeling great naked, so have some fun getting there – and see how that increases your anticipation.

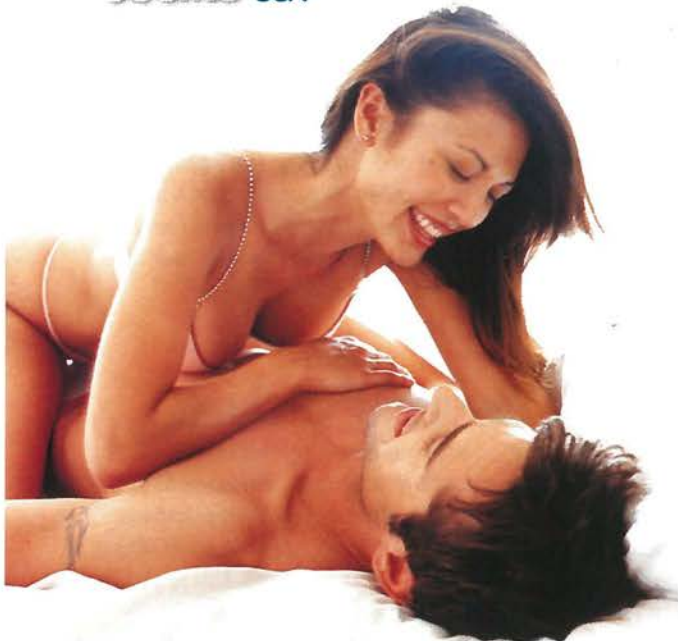


PICK GREAT PROPS Yes, you're aiming to be comfortable completely nude – but if it takes a few accessories to get there, there's no harm in that. Get undressed out of his view and come in wearing nothing but a silk robe. Slink up

to him, letting it fall where it may. "Or just wear an apron and cook up some fun together," suggests Coffey.

PUT THE 'S' IN SEXY Take a page out of burlesque's big book of tricks: "There's something called the S-stance and women use it to make themselves look curvy," says Pontani. "You take one leg, go up on the ball of the foot, and push it against your other leg." You see this pose on every Vegas showgirl, she says. "It accentuates your hips and bust, gives you a more pronounced waistline and just looks elegant." Any time you're standing nude in his presence, strike this pose. We guarantee you won't be reaching for a towel.

STOKE YOUR SELF-IMAGE Seeing yourself in your mind's eye as a super-sexy star and envisioning yourself at the centre of everyone's fantasy will trick you into acting sexier. It's a self-hypnosis trick from Patrick Harbula, a life coach who specialises in sexual issues. "If you have erotic images of yourself in your mind, you'll feel sexier and, in effect, be sexier," he says. So, as you peel your clothes off, >



picture the scene in an erotic movie where you, the heroine, get naked...

BOTTOMS UP, BOOBS OUT!

Whatever position you're in, exaggerate it. "Arching your back makes your butt stick out, which makes the skin tighter," says Amendola. So as you slink up the bed towards him, hold your body in a cat-like, high-bum position. It may feel silly at first, but once he sees your positively sex-tacular pose, it'll soon be second nature.

WHEN IN DOUBT, THINK LIKE HIM

"Men are fascinated by what they don't have – breasts, curves, mysterious sex organs," says Curtis Cherrington, a hypnotherapist who specialises in sex problems. Coincidentally, these are the parts women feel most self-conscious about – but they're your power." Remember: what you worry about, he probably loves the most.

WALK LIKE A DANCER "Burlesque performers walk with an exaggerated swivel step," says Pontani. "As you put one foot in front of the other, flick the leg back then kick it in front." Try the walk in private, then use it for him – or just keep a slinky, sexy and light feeling as you prowl around the room. "The important thing is to keep yourself a bit up on your toes as you walk," she adds. "He won't know what's different exactly – he'll just know you look fabulous."

LOVE-YOURSELF-NAKED TRICK #3

Lose yourself in the moment

Even when things start to get hot and heavy, you can still yank yourself right out

of the moment by worrying that he's consumed with disgust at the sight of your inner thighs. So these are tips and tricks for keeping your confidence and feeling sexy, even during the act.

ENJOY IT It's a cycle – the more excited you get, the better you look. "Blood flow increases in your breasts when you're aroused, so they're at their fullest when you're at your hottest," says Cherrington. Yes, girls: it's in your own vain self-interest to

get really, really turned on. So do your worst – and look your best.

TAILOR YOUR POSITIONS TO YOUR PARTS "Doggy-style is perfect for women with nice bottoms," says Sadie Allison, a San Francisco-based sex educator. "Got great legs? Lie in a spoon position with him behind you, then lift your leg up high to give him rear-entry access. Or get on top to make your gorgeous breasts the centre of focus. Got voluptuous, sexy thighs? Straddle him and wrap them around his head." Just as you accentuate the positive in your mind, show off your best parts during the act. "Of course, if all else fails, you can just pleasure him orally – none of you needs to be on show then."

USE YOUR HANDS If there's a body part you still feel self-conscious about, put your hand over his and smooth it across your soft skin. "Soon, you'll enjoy the caressing so much, you'll forget that it started because of your self-consciousness," says Harbula. "Giving yourself love and pleasure gives you a deeper appreciation of your own inner sensuality."

DID WE MENTION ENJOY YOURSELF? "All the flattering positions and sexy stances in the world won't work if you truly feel uncomfortable," says Coffey. "Do all of this within reason, putting your

own pleasure first – if you're grimacing through a cramp, it's not going to be pretty."

LOVE-YOURSELF-NAKED TRICK #4

Bask in the afterglow

After you've got sweaty and filled your body with pleasure-inducing endorphins, all seems right with the world. Or does it? Doubt can creep in even now, so guard against it with a few final mind-tricks.

UP YOUR SEX-KITTEN FACTOR

There are ways to gild the lily – make the most of your gorgeous self. "We photographers have tons of tricks," says Amendola. "If you're conscious of your belly, stuff a pillow under the small of your back so it flattens out. You can squeeze your breasts together between your arms to make a sort of natural arm-bra. But remember, he's seen you every way there is to see, and you may as well just let it all hang out."

"SIDWAYS LOOKS SLIMMER AND ARMS-UP LOOKS LEANER," SAYS COFFEY. WE'RE NOT SAYING SIDLE UP LIKE SOME SORT OF CRAB-WOMAN, BUT KEEP THINGS OFF-CENTRE AND HAIR-FLIPPINGLY FABULOUS

REMEMBER WHAT'S PUMPING THROUGH HIS SYSTEM

Those endorphins aren't just making you feel great – they're making him feel fantastic, too. Right after sex is when he looks at you with rose-coloured 'sex goggles' and, believe us, you've never looked better to him. He's grateful and gaga. So roll around and enjoy yourself; he's chemically predisposed to see you're gorgeous!

AND IF DOUBTS STILL CREEP IN, COMPROMISE AND DON HIS T-SHIRT

"This is a way of extending the after-play, because even though you feel covered up, you're really not," says Allison. The result? You trick your brain and loll around with the wanton abandon he loves – no unflattering self-consciousness allowed! The important thing, points out Pontani, is to have fun whatever your state of undress. "This isn't complicated. It's not brain surgery," she assures us. "Sexiness is a state of mind – thinking sexy and being proud of your body is the sexiest thing of all." And that, dear readers, is a showstopper if ever we heard one. ☺

BY AMY KETESHIAN. WHAT'S YOUR COSMO. GARY? DISCOVER THE REALITY OF YOUR SEXUALITY IN LIFE AND LOVE (ESSEX, MARGLOWE AND COMPANY), WWW.WHATSYOURCOSMO.COM. FOR INFORMATION ABOUT BURLESQUE, GO TO WWW.PONTANISSEX.COM. FOR INFORMATION ABOUT PLEASURE COACH SADIIE ALLISON GO TO WWW.TOXICITY.COM