

# TIME

By Julie Rawe | Monday, December 7, 2009

## Helping Women Get Their See Legs

I have to admit it's a pretty slick ad campaign: the TV spots Reebok is running 3,000 times in November and December for its new EasyTone shoes all feature Victoria's Secret--worthy models showing off their assets, and the camera never lingers too long on the less-than-sexy sneakers that supposedly helped these women sculpt their perfect bodies. The tagline: "Better legs and a better butt with every step."

Reebok is the latest shoemaker claiming to be able to tone a woman's body by making her feel unsteady on her feet. The idea is that built-in instability--in the case of EasyTone, two bulbous pods on the sole act a bit like balance balls--forces muscles to work harder. Gluteus maximus muscles get 28% more of a workout with EasyTone than with a regular sneaker, according to a study Reebok commissioned.

Reebok is playing catch-up with MBT, short for Masai Barefoot Technology, which since 2004 has sold more than a million pairs of toning shoes in the U.S. with soles shaped like the bottom of a rocking chair.

I trudged around in both designs, which took some getting used to. Stairs were not easy. Neither was picking up my toddler. But both made me sore where I was hoping they would. The \$110 EasyTones were cheaper and more normal-looking, but I preferred the \$245 MBTs, in part because they have the added benefit of making me stand up straight.