

24-PAGE SPECIAL

EXPERT WORKOUTS YOU CAN DO OUTSIDE

UK EDITION

Women's Fitness

GET FIT FOR LIFE

KEEP FIT & GET HAPPY

Moves to boost your mood – today!

WORK OUT LIKE A PRO

10 top training secrets revealed

REAL LIFE

'I test my limits in an environment where every second counts'

Inside the mind of a record-holding freediver

6 AT-HOME REFORMER PILATES MOVES

(no machine required!)

NEW KIT ALERT!

- Sporty swimwear
- Hiking clothing
- Cycling gear
- Running buys

TIA-CLAIR TOOMEY-ORR

'I've got so much more to give'

Why this could be her strongest season yet

MAKE NATURE YOUR GYM
Ways to shape up outdoors this summer

REFUEL+ RECOVER

Protein-packed vegan recipes

FIND YOUR FITTEST

Supplement stacks for every exercise goal



July 2024 • £5.50 • womensfitness.co.uk

9 771752 631972 07

NEW VOLTA TREADMILLS

No matter where you are on your fitness journey, Volta's range of cardio equipment is here to support you from start to finish. Equipped with all the comfort, compatibility and incline you could need, these treadmills are designed to bring your home training to new heights.

Exclusive to
**Fitness
Superstore**

**FROM
£499**

VT10 Folding Treadmill

Equipped with a 1.5HP motor, a 12km/h top speed, 15 levels of incline and 15 pre-set training programs.

Our Price £499



VT20 Folding Treadmill

Offering connectivity to some of your favourite fitness apps*, the VT20 is the perfect platform for next-level home runs.

Our Price £699

VT30 Folding Treadmill

The VT30 comes with extra training programs, a powerful 3.0HP motor, a speed range that tops out at 20km/h and 15 levels of incline.

Our Price £899



VT40IT Incline Trainer

Reach sky-high inclines with 40 levels in climb mode, hit top speeds of 18km/h in run mode, enjoy 18 training programs and more on the VT40IT.

Our Price £999



DISCOVER OUR RANGE OF WEIGHT PLATES, BARBELLS, MULTI-GYMS, RACKS, DUMBBELLS & MORE

Try Before You Buy

Expert In-Store Advice

Free Home Gym Design Service

0% Finance Available†



STORES
NATIONWIDE

CHELMSFORD | GLOUCESTER | KENT | MANCHESTER | NEWCASTLE | NORTH LONDON
NORTHAMPTON | NORWICH | SURREY | SHEFFIELD | EXETER

Call 01604 673000 or visit fitness-superstore.co.uk

Prices may vary, see website for current prices. † Subject to age and status. *Subscriptions required.



Scan here
for store
details



WOMEN'S FITNESS MAGAZINE
KELSEY MEDIA, THE GRANARY, DOWNS COURT,
YALDING HILL, YALDING, KENT, ME18 6AL, UK
(PLEASE DON'T SEND SAMPLES TO THIS ADDRESS)

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: SARAH SELLENS
SUB-EDITOR: EVE BOGGENPOEL
ART EDITOR: XAVIER ROBLEDA
SOCIAL MEDIA & NEWSLETTERS: AMY DOWRICK
THANKS TO: LOUISE ATKINSON, SARAH CAMPUS,
WILL DURU, JO EBSWORTH, ROB HOBSON, JESSICA
MAY, LAUREN MAYBANK, LUCY MILLER, LILLY PINCHIN,
LOUISE PYNE, JAMES PUGH, ANDREW SHEPHERD,
GEMMA SPRACK, LILY SMITH

ADVERTISEMENT SALES: TALK MEDIA
HEAD OF INVESTMENT: TOM WHITMARSH-KNIGHT
01732 446725, TOM@TALK-MEDIA.UK
INVESTMENT EXECUTIVE:
DIMA BARBARA 01732 445155, DIMA@TALK-MEDIA.UK
AD PRODUCTION SUPERVISOR:
GRACIE STANDEN 01732 445300
PRODUCTION@TALK-MEDIA.UK
EDITORIAL: WFED@KELSEY.CO.UK

MANAGEMENT
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER: PHIL WEEDEN
MANAGING DIRECTOR: OSWIN GRADY
RETAIL DIRECTOR: STEVE BROWN
AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER: ANDY COTTON
OPERATIONS DIRECTOR: GILL LAMBERT
SUBSCRIPTIONS MARKETING MANAGER:
NICK MCINTOSH
HEAD OF EVENTS: KAT CHAPPELL
PRINT PRODUCTION MANAGER: GEORGINA HARRIS
PRINT PRODUCTION CONTROLLER: HAYLEY BROWN

SUBSCRIPTIONS
12 ISSUES OF WOMEN'S FITNESS
ARE PUBLISHED PER ANNUM
UK ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION: £92.88
EUROPE ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION: £116.88
USA ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION: £116.88
REST OF THE WORLD ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION: £128.88

UK SUBSCRIPTION AND BACK ISSUES: 01959 543 747
OVERSEAS SUBSCRIPTIONS: 0044 (0)1959 543 747
TOLL FREE USA SUBSCRIPTIONS: 1-888-777-0275
UK CUSTOMER SERVICE TEAM: 01959 543 747
CUSTOMER SERVICE EMAIL ADDRESS:
CS@KELSEY.CO.UK
CUSTOMER SERVICE AND SUBSCRIPTION
POSTAL ADDRESS: WOMEN'S FITNESS,
CUSTOMER SERVICE TEAM, KELSEY MEDIA,
THE GRANARY, DOWNS COURT, YALDING HILL,
YALDING, KENT, ME18 6AL, UNITED KINGDOM

FIND CURRENT SUBSCRIPTION OFFERS ON OUR
WEBSITE: SHOP.KELSEY.CO.UK/WF
ALREADY A SUBSCRIBER? MANAGE YOUR
SUBSCRIPTION ONLINE:
SHOP.KELSEY.CO.UK/MYACCOUNT

DISTRIBUTION
SEYMOUR DISTRIBUTION LIMITED
2 EAST POULTRY AVENUE
LONDON, EC1A 9PT
TEL: 020 7429 4000. SEYMOUR.CO.UK

DISTRIBUTION IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND
THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND
NEWSPREAD
TEL: +353 23 886 3850

Kelsey Media 2023 © all rights reserved. Kelsey Media is a trading name of Kelsey Publishing Ltd. Reproduction in whole or in part is forbidden except with permission in writing from the publishers. Note to contributors: articles submitted for consideration by the editor must be the original work of the author and not previously published. Where photographs are included, which are not the property of the contributor, permission to reproduce them must have been obtained from the owner of the copyright. The editor cannot guarantee a personal response to all letters and emails received. The views expressed in the magazine are not necessarily those of the Editor or the Publisher. Kelsey Publishing Ltd accepts no liability for products and services offered by third parties.

Kelsey Media takes your personal data very seriously. For more information of our privacy policy, please visit kelsey.co.uk/privacy-notice. If you have any queries regarding Kelsey's data policy, you can email our Data Protection Officer at dpo@kelsey.co.uk. Information given is not a substitute for medical advice, so ensure you check with your GP, medical professional or other relevant qualified professional before making any changes to your healthcare, diet or exercise routine. Check the latest government guidelines before participating in the activities mentioned in this magazine and always adhere to coronavirus restrictions.



Hello summer!

Do you head outside to exercise when the temperature rises? I've long been an advocate of the green gym. Over the years as a fitness writer and editor, I've attended brand events, product lectures and research briefings about the benefits that outdoor exercise has on physical and mental health. I've interviewed industry experts, top athletes and outdoor fitness fans. And all this has done is make me fall in love with Mother Nature's gym even more.

This organic form of exercise has been proven to limit feelings of stress and depression, boost self-esteem and enthusiasm, and lower levels of fatigue – and there's so much choice, whether you want a solo workout such as a run or cycle, or a group session like a fitness bootcamp. Summer is the best time to discover the myriad benefits that the great outdoors has to offer – turn to page 77 for our special section.

Another thing that really excites me about this issue is our cover star, six-time CrossFit Games winner Tia-Clair Toomey-Orr. Now mum to one-year-old Willow, Toomey-Orr is the most dominant CrossFit athlete of all time. There had been rumours of her retirement, but she is not done yet and will be competing again in the final of the 2024 CrossFit Games this August. How does she keep performing at such a high level? In our interview, we discover being a mum may have made her more motivated than ever. In Toomey-Orr's own, awe-inspiring words: 'To have that passion, there's got to be something deep down you can really believe in – and Willow is that for me'. Turn to page 20 to read more.

This issue also boasts expert protein tips (page 46), training advice from a top personal trainer (page 64), details of how elite athletes train to their menstrual cycles (page 72), and a yoga flow to help you drift off to sleep (page 116). Enjoy!

Sarah Sellens
Editor-in-chief

Also in this issue...



HIT THE FLOOR

A mat-based workout that offers all the benefits of reformer Pilates, from home. **Page 28**



JOIN THE RESISTANCE

Top strength moves for runners that will boost your prowess. **Page 90**



DEEP DIVE

Saudi Arabian freediver Salma Ahmed Shaker on the sport's mental challenges. **Page 112**

Contents

20

Why 2024 could be Tia-Clair Toomey-Orr's best year yet!



REGULARS

06 About you

Air your views on all things fitness

09 Fit buzz

The latest things to do, buy and try

16 Ask the experts

Top advice from the *WF* experts

20 **COVER** 'I still have so much more to give'

CrossFit's Tia-Clair Toomey-Orr talks about her postpartum fitness journey

FIT BODY

28 **COVER** Floor-based reformer

Get stronger all over with this reformer Pilates workout

34 Walk to fitness

Journalist Louise Atkinson sets off for a Nordic walking holiday

38 **COVER** Your feel-good workout

Boost your happy vibes with our mood-enhancing moves

FIT FUEL

44 Fuel up

Discover this month's best food and drink launches in our product round-up

46 6 questions about protein

Everything you need to know about this important macro

50 **COVER** Fast on flavour

Plant-based recipes that are packed with vegan protein

54 5 ways to increase your focus

Strengthen your mental muscle with the food you eat

FEATURES

58 **COVER** Do your supplements stack up?

Formulations that work together to unlock the power of your fitness

64 **COVER** Work out like a pro

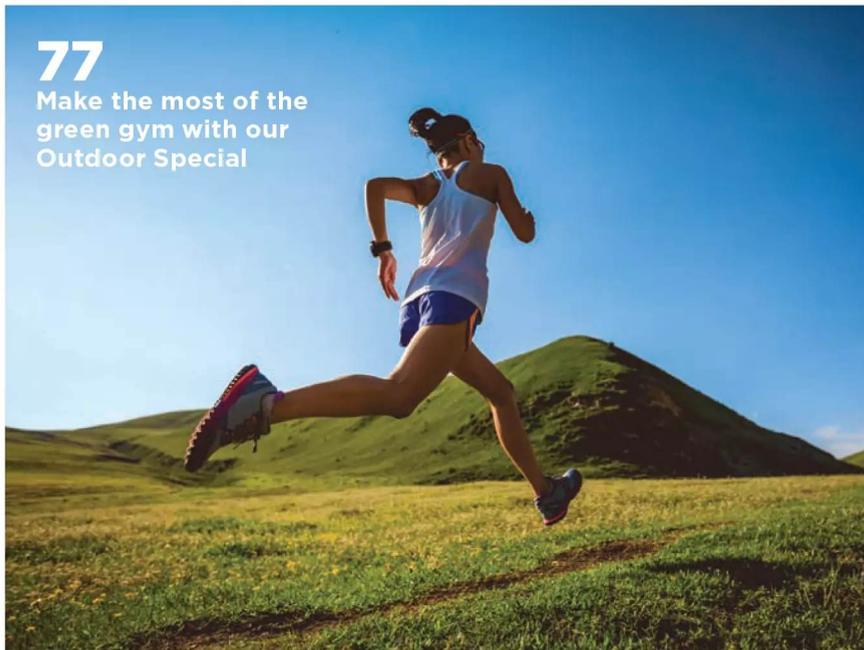
Golden rules for a better workout from personal trainer Will Duru

68 Thirsty work

Tips to stay hydrated when running in the summer months

72 Go with the flow

Should you race when on your period? Top athletes reveal their coping tips



77
Make the most of the green gym with our Outdoor Special

OUTDOOR SPECIAL

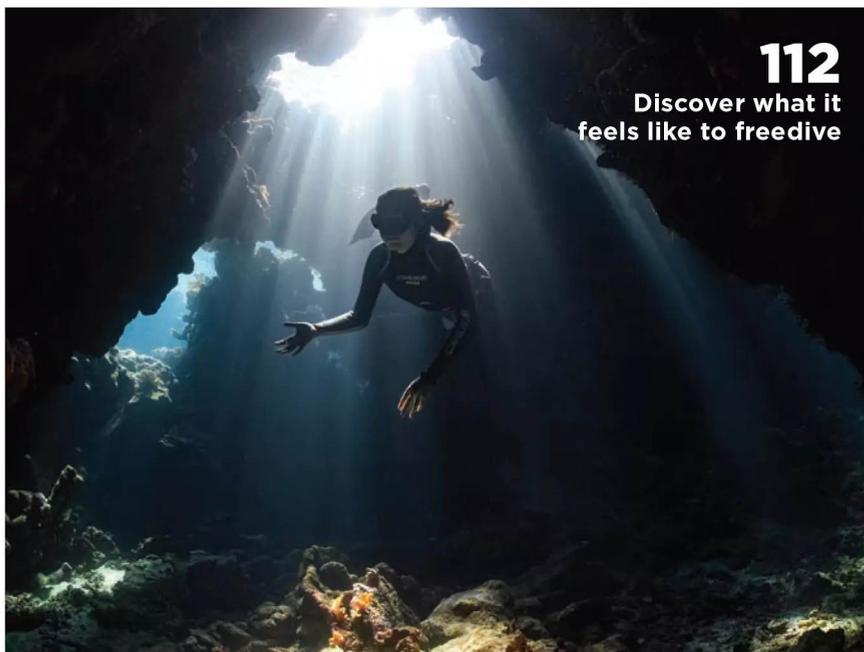
78 COVER Get up, go outdoors!
Head outside to exercise early and reap the rewards

82 COVER Make nature your gym
Take your training outdoors for extra challenges, fresh air and vitamin D

86 Turn your walks into a workout
Training tips to really maximise your fitness levels

90 Strong for running
Boost your runs with this strength-training workout

94 COVER Your outdoor workout wardrobe
Be ready for all your sporty adventures wearing the latest run, bike or hike kit



112
Discover what it feels like to freedive

FIT KIT

102 COVER On test
Tried-and-tested sporty bikinis for your summer water workouts



106 Gym beauty
Look good from top to toe with the latest beauty buys

FIT MIND

112 COVER Into the deep
Saudi Arabian freediver Salma Ahmed Shaker on the joys of the ocean's depths

116 COVER Your sleep survival kit
Struggling to go to sleep or wake and can't get back to sleep? Try our restorative yoga sequence that will help you to drift off



122 'I left education to pursue elite sport'
Jockey Lilly Pinchin tells the story of her rise to the top

ON THE COVER

Model: Tia-Clair Toomey-Orr
Photography: pliability (pliability.com)



Subscribe to WF!

Be the first to get the latest issue before it hits the shelves. Turn to page 56 for our fantastic subscription offer and save money on the shop price!

ABOUT YOU

Share how you stay fit and active, plus let us know what you enjoyed reading in previous issues!

STAR LETTER



'IT WAS REFRESHING TO READ ABOUT OLDER WOMEN'

'I'd like to thank Joanna Ebsworth for her feature on The Body Retreat's new Menopause Retreat (May

issue). Older women can feel that striving for fitness is no longer for them, so it was refreshing to read that one of the participants during the week Joanna took part in was 68 years old. A stay there certainly isn't cheap, but it's packed with so many varied activities, nutritious food and good companionship - sounds to me like money very well spent.'

Maggie, Ripon



'I now realise strength training doesn't need to be scary'

'I really was very grateful for your article *Full-body burn* (June issue).

It was the perfect advice to help me begin my strength-training journey - I now realise it doesn't need to be scary or over-complicated. I've been keen for a while to transform my body and fitness programme, and Nicky McBurney's super barbell workout went down very well! I'm giving the cardio machines a break and showing strength training some love. I love that I am building muscle mass, strength and endurance. And Nicky is right, it's never too late. Brilliant!'

Abby, North Wales

Letters are edited for style and length.



Congratulations Maggie, you've won our star letter prize: a matching sports bra and bike shorts set from Silverwind, worth more than £70! Silverwind has launched its Wild Animal Collection. Inspired by the magnificence of wild animals, with shimmering scales, timeless leopard print and glorious peacock feathers, this vibrant collection is functional and eye-catching. The stretchy, breathable garments use RPET, a sustainable fabric made from recycled plastic bottles which offers four-way stretch and antibacterial properties. Plus, the brand uses sustainable packaging and donates to Ocean Conservancy with every sale. Visit mysilverwind.com



'Dame Kelly Holmes has inspired me!'

'I am a huge fan of Dame Kelly Holmes and enjoyed your article, *Midlife can*

be the best time for fitness! (June issue). Despite injuries, Kelly has amassed seven gold, eight silver and four bronze medals at Olympic, Commonwealth and European levels, and she became the first athlete in more than 80 years to win a double gold on the track. She is a legend and I was keen to learn more about her. The key message I took away from this feature was that self-belief and perseverance are key to success. Anything worth having takes time and nothing is a given. Kelly has inspired me in so many areas of my life. At 54, I am the same age as Kelly, too.'

Paula, Manchester

WRITE IN AND WIN! Want to air your views on the magazine or on a fitness topic? Write to tell us what's on your mind and you could win a prize. Email wf.ed@kelsey.co.uk or write to us at *Women's Fitness* magazine, Kelsey Media, The Granary, Downs Court, Yalding Hill, Kent ME18 6AL.

✉ @WomensFitnessuk 📷 @womensfitnessuk 📺 facebook.com/womensfitnessmagazine



DEBUNKING IRON

In a Q&A, BlueIron expert dietitian **Laura Clark** shares everything you need to know about iron and its role within our bodies

Iron is a micro mineral with a mighty role in the body. Expert dietitian Laura Clark gives a lowdown on this essential nutrient.

WHY DO YOU NEED IRON?

Iron plays numerous critical roles in the body. Most notably, it acts as the carrier of oxygen, ensuring every cell receives the life-giving molecule. But its duties don't stop there. Iron is essential for growth, development, immune function, connective tissue production, and even the regulation of neurotransmitters.

HOW MUCH IRON DO YOU NEED TO HAVE DAILY?

The recommended daily intake varies by age and by gender. For females aged 11-50, the recommendation is 14.8mg, while for males over 19, it's 8.7mg. These numbers underscore the importance of incorporating iron-rich foods into our diets.

CHECKING YOUR IRON LEVELS

Feeling tired, pale, or experiencing heart palpitations can be signs of low iron levels. If your symptoms are extreme, consult your GP.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Certain groups, such as pregnant women and individuals with heavy periods, may require more iron to support increased blood volume or replace lost blood. Similarly, infants, children, and teenage girls in periods of rapid growth have heightened iron needs.

DIET AND SUPPLEMENTS

While meat and fish provide haem iron, which is more readily absorbed, vegetarian sources like lentils, leafy greens and beans contain a non-haem iron that's slightly harder to absorb. Combining non-haem iron with vitamin C-rich foods, like oranges or broccoli, can enhance absorption. However, be wary of

substances like phytates in cereals that can inhibit iron absorption. You can also help bolster your iron levels by incorporating an iron supplement into your balanced diet.

DISPELLING MYTHS

Despite its critical role, iron often flies under the radar until deficiencies arise. Common myths about how to manage your iron levels often revolve around misconceptions on restrictive diets and the unpleasantness of iron supplements. However, awareness and proper supplementation that works for your body can truly mitigate these concerns.

BALANCED DIET, HEALTHY LIFE

Maintaining a balanced diet is key to overall wellbeing. Planning meals ensures you prioritise nutrient-rich foods over convenient but less nutritious options. For fussy eaters, introducing new foods alongside familiar ones can gradually expand the palate and nutritional intake.

So, iron may not always steal the nutritional spotlight, but its contribution to our health is undeniable. By understanding its importance and incorporating iron-rich foods into our diet, our bodies function at their best.

For those who need additional support, supplements such as **BlueIron** offers a convenient solution. The unique Fe3+ Iron in BlueIron is encapsulated in a clever delivery system that enables your body to absorb iron at its own pace. This can help reduce the unwelcome side effects that are commonly associated with other iron supplements. What's more, BlueIron contains wild Nordic blueberries for an improved taste, with one dose providing 100 per cent of the recommended intake of iron. 🍷

BlueIron is available from Amazon (£16 for a 250ml bottle) and is suitable for vegans and for use during pregnancy. Please remember, food supplements should not be used as a substitute for a varied and balanced diet and healthy lifestyle.



Protein ✓

Tasty ✓

Easy ✓



Find us in Tesco stores*

THE GYM KITCHEN

*Available in the majority of Tesco stores, subject to availability.

This month's hottest things to do, buy and try

FITBUZZ



Love all

With Wimbledon and Paris 2024 around the corner, there's never been a better time to update your tennis wardrobe, whether to brush up on your backhand or try out the preppy yet athletic 'tenniscore' aesthetic sweeping our socials. For inspiration, check out the latest New Balance Tennis Range, seen here on US tennis star Coco Gauff, which serves up a stunning range of skirts, shorts, crops and cover-ups made from high-performance fabrics to keep you looking and feeling cool on and off the court. Complete the look with the new Grey Edition of the Coco CG1 shoes, £150, featuring FuelCell cushioning to put a spring in your step; newbalance.co.uk →



DO THIS...
**Prepare for great...
 NESS**

Promising a fantastic atmosphere, breathtaking views and truly memorable experience for all, it's easy to see why the Baxters Loch Ness Marathon and Festival of Running is at the top of so many bucket lists. Returning to the Scottish Highlands this autumn, the festival kicks off on Saturday September 28 with the BBC's Bryan Burnett hosting the free-for-all Runners Café and Sports Expo, while the main event - known as one of the most beautiful marathons in the world - takes place on Sunday 29, for its 22nd instalment. Want to run a shorter distance without missing out on the spectacular scenery? Sign up for the Baxters River Ness 10K or 5K event, and encourage little ones aged five and under to take part in the Wee Nessie race. Find out more at lochnessmarathon.com

BUY THIS...
Bend the rules

Vivobarefoot (vivobarefoot.com) has released its most flexible barefoot shoe to date in the form of the new Motus FLEX, £165. Weighing in at a mere 280g, this innovatively designed, minimally structured shoe features a one-piece knitted sock upper and über-thin, super-flexible outsole to elevate your sensory experience during workouts. Best suited to primal movement enthusiasts, bodyweight fans and those who practise calisthenics, they also help you to engage in natural movement patterns, strengthen the muscles of the feet and legs and improve joint mobility.



TRY THIS...
Fit mama

Just over three years since the launch of the hugely popular holistic prenatal fitness plan The Bump Plan, founder and leading PT Hollie Grant has given The Bump Plan Pregnancy its biggest upgrade yet. The new version - filmed during Hollie's second pregnancy - includes more than 70 new routines, new mini routines, a bonus workout library, and weekly 'Bump Plan Clinics' where members can pose questions to professionals from women's health physios to lactation and sleep experts. Fitness plans are also available for those trying to conceive or get fit postnatally, and all advice/workouts are physio-approved. Membership from £20 per month, with a seven-day free trial available; thebumpplan.com

**DO THIS...****Strides ahead**

Inspired by the belief that gratitude can profoundly impact mental and physical wellbeing, the Run Grateful collective encourages runners to dedicate one mile of their regular runs to reflecting on things they're thankful for. By incorporating a Grateful Mile into their runs to consciously shift their focus from pace and performance to appreciation and reflection - whether it's acknowledging the beauty of nature, expressing gratitude for their body's ability to move or simply being thankful for the support of loved ones - participants report feeling more positive, motivated and connected to their surroundings, as well as more able to cope with stress and anxiety. Find out more about Run Grateful's guided runs, workshops and supportive online community platform at rungrateful.com

BUY THIS...**Happy body, happy mind**

Beloved by ultramarathon swimmers, former Olympians and cold-water enthusiasts alike, size-inclusive swimwear brand Deakin & Blue has unveiled its Sport-Luxe Summer Collection for serious swimmers seeking unparalleled comfort, support and versatility. Created as part of its new 'But First, Me' range - designed to inspire busy women to take time out for themselves for better wellbeing - you'll find new prints, styles and shapes available in sizes 8-24, AA-HH cups, all made from waste fabrics and fibres that are hyper-resistant to chlorine, salt-water, UV rays and oils. We love this Body Happy Suit, £130, based on the award-winning Signature Swimsuit with built-in bust support in a show-stopping contrasting colourway of Violet & Rose. Better still, £15 from its sale will go to the Body Happy Org which promotes positive body image in young children. Explore the full range at deakinandblue.com





BUY THIS...
Fresh kicks

Looking for a pair of runners that look as good as they feel? Step forward the new Skechers Max Cushioning Elite 2.0 - Unbreakable, £100, which feature engineered mesh uppers with ombre detailing and NRT (natural rocker technology) for smooth heel-to-toe transitions. Available in two colourways, these machine washable shoes also boast breathable copper-infused Air-Cooled Goga Mat insoles and super-responsive Ultra Go cushioning for exceptional comfort on the move; skechers.co.uk

WEAR THIS...
Sounds good

Developed with comfort and a secure fit in mind, the all-new Beats Solo 4 headphones (£199.95, apple.com/uk) feature an ultralight design so you can almost forget you are wearing them. The upgraded design weighs just 217g and boasts UltraPlush on-ear cushions, a flex-grip headband, customisable sliders and ergonomically angled ear cups to make sure they stay in place. Available in three colours, you also get up to 50 hours of battery life, voice assistance and personalised spatial audio with dynamic head tracking for a truly interactive surround-sound experience.



TRY THIS...
Fruity boost

We all have different tastes, which is why super-supplement brand Revive Active has launched a new Berry Burst version of its hugely popular citrus-flavoured Zest Active drink (£29.95 for 30 sachets, reviveactive.com) – a vitamin, mineral and amino acid blend specially formulated with 25 active ingredients to boost your immune system, support mental wellbeing and supercharge your natural energy stores. So, are we Team Citrus or Team Berry after taking the taste test? Well, the WF team is split evenly between the two, but agree with three-time Olympian Eilish McColgan that both are highly refreshing!



WEAR THIS...

Fit for purpose

According to the latest reports from *Outdoor Swimmer*, women make up 65 per cent of open-water swimmers, with their average age being 47.7 years old. With that in mind, *WF* is delighted to reveal that endurance sport apparel brand HUUB has launched one of the world's first wetsuits designed specifically for older women going through menopause, following extensive research into the way that decreasing oestrogen levels can impact the female body and cause fat to be stored in different areas. Developed with top wetsuit designers and leading women's health and fitness community, Her Spirit, the Araya Wetsuit aims to remove a major barrier for women of all shapes, sizes, ages and abilities seeking to reap the benefits of open-water swimming in a wetsuit designed to comfortably fit curves. The tailored fit offers more room in the midsection and greater support around the thighs and bottom while still providing the flexibility, warmth and buoyancy required for a comfortable swimming position. Available in sizes XS to XL with a SS (short and stocky) version also available, the Araya Wetsuit costs £299.99 and is available to purchase from [huubdesign.com](https://www.huubdesign.com)



**WORKOUT
TEST-OUT**



TRY THIS...

MOVE with Mariko

Designed with the busy woman in mind, new online fitness and wellness platform MOVE with Mariko is aimed specifically at the 30+ woman who is pushed for time and wants to get the most out of her workouts. Founded by ex-Barry's instructor Sarah Mariko, whose celebrity clients include Vanessa White from The Saturdays, the platform is built around the '30 for 30s' principal, with effective 30-minute home and gym workouts for women juggling work, family, friends and society pressures, plus 30-day fitness programmes and wellness challenges, forgiving nutrition plans with delicious 30-minute, easy-to-make recipes and a supportive online discussion area.

There's a vast range of workouts to try, from strength training and HIIT to boxing, running and stretching, all informed by the latest research which calls for tailor-made fitness for the female anatomy. As such, each short and sharp workout features targeted movements for maturing bodies, with a particular focus on 360-degree glutes workouts to boost performance and make everyday tasks easier, plus basal metabolic boosters and compound moves to strengthen the posterior chain, maintain bone density and muscle mass, and improve inter-muscular co-ordination.

Each week, you get a suggested weekly schedule to follow of five daily workouts from Monday to Friday, so you can relax and let off steam at the weekend. You can also select on-demand classes any time, anywhere, based on your fitness goals or areas of the body you'd like to target, such as 'Abs & Ass' or 'Upper Body Strength'. We really like Mariko's bubbly but grounded delivery and down-to-earth training style, as well as her constant mix of training methods, including Metcon, Tabata, Supersets and Trisets, to keep us on our toes and constantly challenged.

The real star of the show is Mariko's 360 approach to glute training, which focuses on moving in all directions and combines vertical movements such as squats, Romanian deadlifts and Bulgarian split-squats, with horizontal moves like hips thrusts, and single-leg glute bridges, and hip-abduction moves like banded clamshells and lateral raises. If you sign up for the free seven-day trial and try only one class, make it a lower-body Bunda workout - it might leave you unable to walk for a few days, but the burn is a satisfying one! 🍷

Find out more at movewithmariko.com or download the Move with Mariko app. Monthly membership costs £15.99, while an annual subscription costs £150.

FIT KIT Essentials

Fuel your workouts with the latest fit nutrition, plus SPF for outdoor workouts, and a training programme to get you fitter than ever

Eesa does it!

Let me introduce you to Cecilia who lost a total of 24kg and now has an amazing new physique! Cecilia enquired about my coaching services after injuring her knee, and her biggest goal was to be able to play sports again. Now she is the fittest and strongest she has ever been. Cecilia has been working with me for the past 30 weeks and in that time she's fully rehabilitated her knee, had a pizza almost every weekend and lost 24kg. But the most important thing - besides the fact that she's now back playing football, hiking and rock climbing - is that she's found a new love for the weights room, a love she never even knew was there. See what you can achieve by training with me. Simply scan the QR code or visit my Instagram @petru.eesa and @eesa_training.



Healthier snacking

HIPPEAS is spreading the 'Peas & Love' with the launch of its Flavour Blast! Chickpea Puffs line in two far-out flavours: Bohemian BBQ and Blazin' Hot. Hippeas Flavour Blast! Chickpea Puffs (£1, uk.hippeas.com) offer the crunch and explosive flavour of your favourite snacks but were developed with the better-for-you attributes HIPPEAS is known for: a clean label with chickpeas as the first ingredient, vegan, totally free from allergens and 100 per cent delicious. HIPPEAS Flavour Blast! Chickpea Puffs are available now at selected retailers including Morrisons and Ocado, as well as on amazon.com



Hydration station

Elevate your hydration with Wassen Hydrate + Replenish (£11.99, wassen.com). A tangy green-apple flavoured drink, it's packed with vitamins and minerals to support your fitness performance, including magnesium for muscle function and energy release, and chromium for blood sugar balance. Feel revitalised with spirulina and green tea, plus caffeine for an extra workout boost!



Sun-safe workout

Designed for athletes, Pelotan Sun Protection (from £11, pelotan.cc) lasts up to 8 hours at SPF30, even with sweat. Engineered for use in sports where the skin's ability to breathe and sweat is essential, Pelotan's unique formula binds with the skin without blocking pores, meaning you can regulate temperature and fully commit to your workout this summer. Trusted by Olympic champions, Tour de France winners, IRONMAN champions and thousands of athletes at all levels, Pelotan has become a go-to product for people living an active lifestyle and comes in a Spray (£22) and a unique Roll-On (£11), giving protection whenever and wherever you need it.



What to do about muscle soreness

Prevent and soothe those post-workout muscle aches, with these top tips from the *Women's Fitness* experts



STEVE AHERN

Ahern is a personal trainer at Goal Plans powered by MuscleFood (goalplans.com). He's a level 3 certified PT

and has more than 10 years' experience in the fitness industry, working with a range of clients from athletes to celebrities all over the world.

Q What stretches and exercises should I include in my warm-up and cool-down to prevent myself from feeling achy after a workout? I'm never quite sure when to do dynamic or static stretches for best results!

A Many people overlook the importance of incorporating a proper warm-up and cool-down routine into their workout regime.

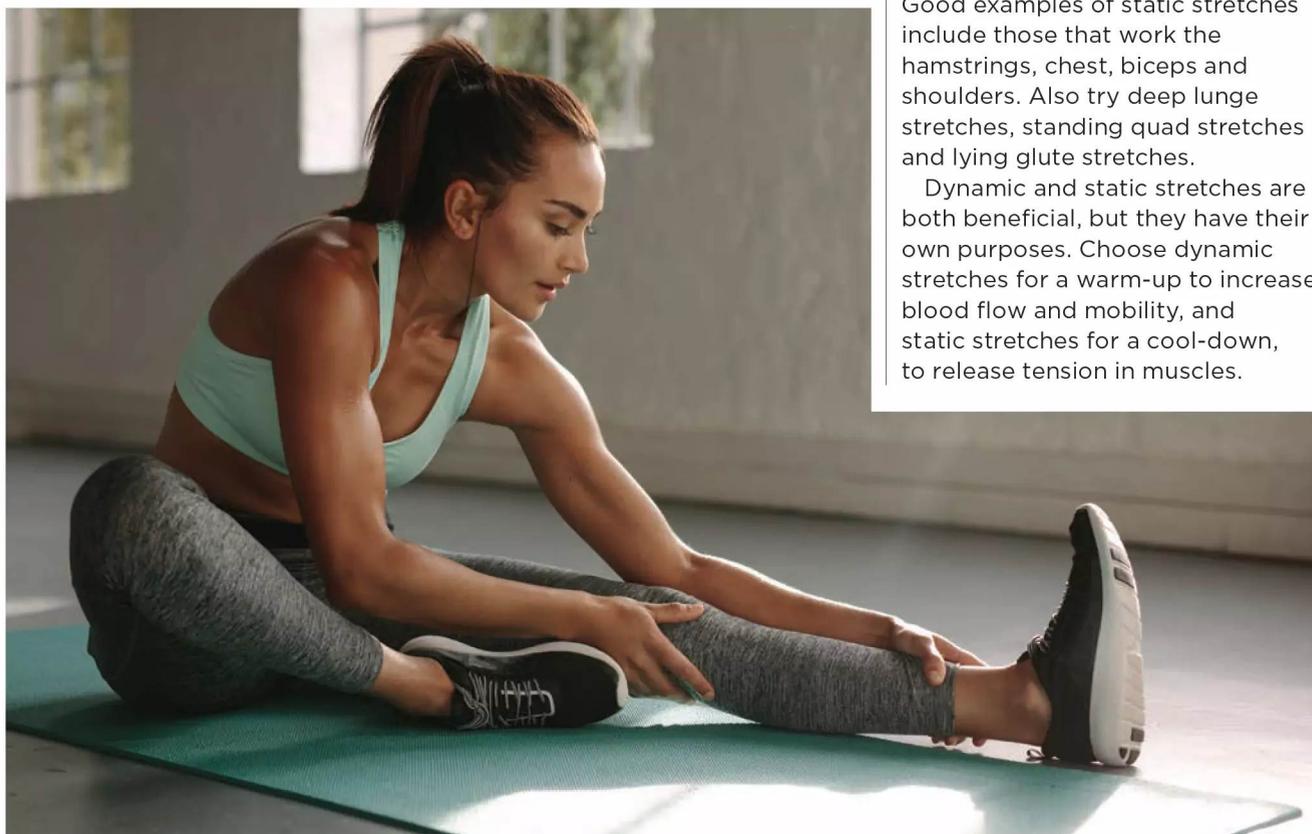
However, dedicating even just five minutes before and after a workout to perform a few stretches or exercises that focus on muscle recovery can make a significant difference in preventing or reducing muscle soreness.

I'd recommend dynamic stretches for warming up and static ones for cooling down. Dynamic stretches activate your muscles and take your joints through their full range of motion. A dynamic warm-up will also increase your heart rate and body temperature, which helps prepare your body for exercise. Good examples of dynamic stretches include lunge dips, leg swings, arm circles, high-knees, lateral lunges and jumping jacks. Doing a couple sets of dynamic stretches before your workout can

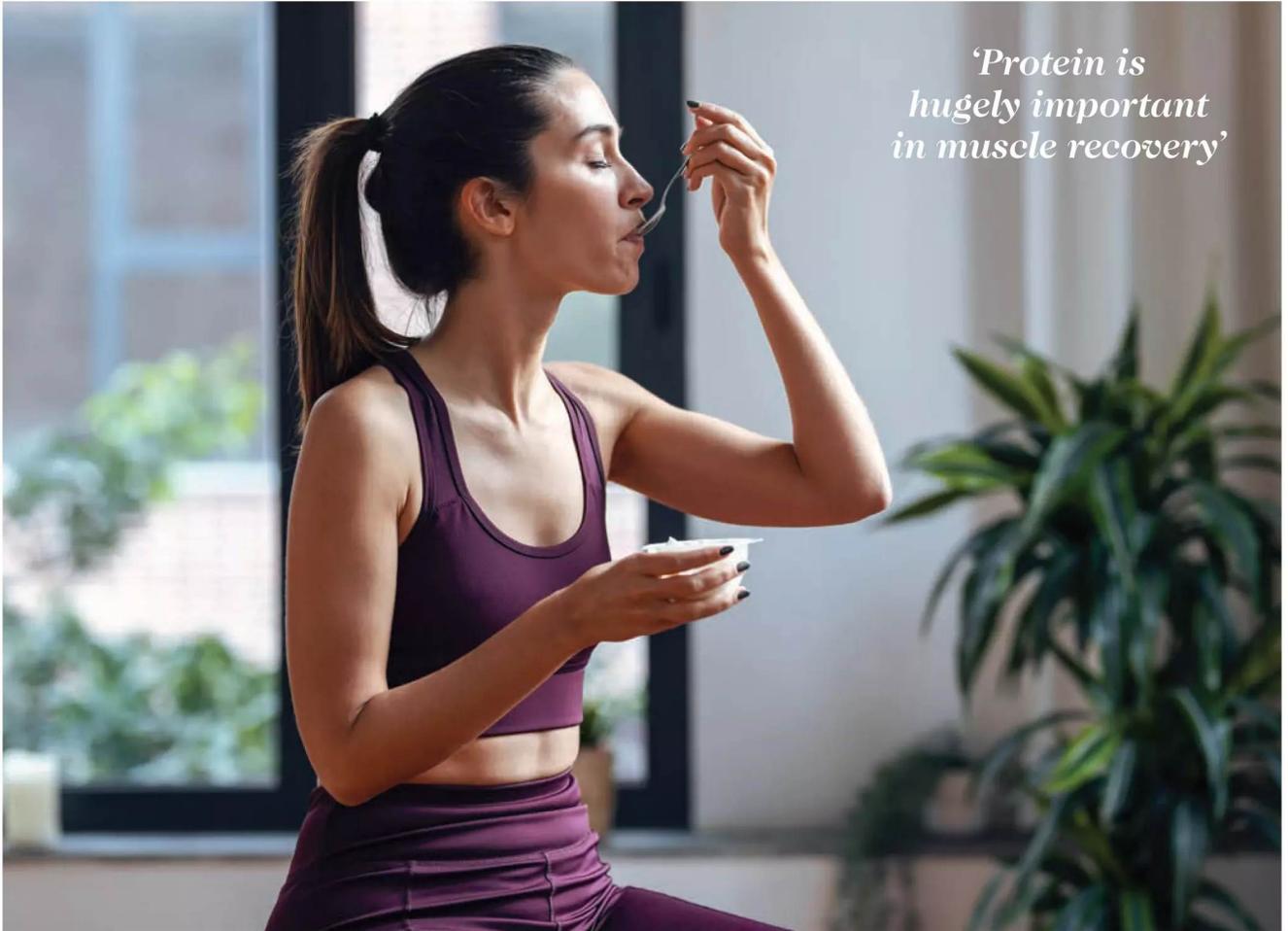
help prevent injuries and improve your performance. Whether you want to crush a HIIT sweat session or lift heavier weights, warming up your body beforehand is a great way to set yourself up for success, as your muscles will be activated already and will turn on faster.

Static stretches are more suitable for the cool-down because they help muscles relax and recover. Slowly lean into the stretch and stay in the position for around 30 seconds to allow muscles to lengthen - this will prevent soreness. Muscles tend to tighten during physical activity, but doing some post-exercise stretching can increase the range of motion around your joints. Aim to have at least one stretch for each muscle group in your cool-down routine. Good examples of static stretches include those that work the hamstrings, chest, biceps and shoulders. Also try deep lunge stretches, standing quad stretches and lying glute stretches.

Dynamic and static stretches are both beneficial, but they have their own purposes. Choose dynamic stretches for a warm-up to increase blood flow and mobility, and static stretches for a cool-down, to release tension in muscles.



*'Protein is
hugely important
in muscle recovery'*



PENNY WESTON

Weston is a fitness, wellness and nutrition expert who also runs Moddershall Oaks, an award-winning health spa, and MADE, a leading wellness centre complete with a boutique fitness gym, studios, treatment rooms, retail shop and health café. Find out more at pennyweston.com

Q I always take time to warm up and stretch, but still struggle with the dreaded aches and pains the day after a workout. Are there any specific foods I should be eating to prevent achy muscles after exercising?

A Firstly, make sure you drink lots of water as this will rehydrate your muscles and help prevent soreness in the muscles. You could flavour your water with lemon or cucumber slices to make

it more interesting. A warm mug of ginger tea can also help as ginger has anti-inflammatory effects, which can soothe achy muscles.

Fruits that are high in vitamins and nutrients, such as berries and bananas, can also help muscles recover faster and prevent soreness while recovering. Bananas are loaded with carbohydrates and potassium, which are two muscle-friendly post-workout nutrients. Berries, especially blueberries, are incredibly high in antioxidants which are great for muscle recovery and overall health.

Leafy greens, such as spinach, are also jam-packed with nutrients that help with inflammation. Just some of the minerals found in spinach include calcium, iron, zinc, phosphorus, potassium, copper, magnesium and manganese.

Chia seeds are another good option for supporting muscle

recovery. They are a great plant-based source of omega-3 fatty acids, which are known for their anti-inflammatory and cardiovascular benefits. Chia also provides a source of B vitamins, niacin, calcium, magnesium, phosphorus and potassium.

Protein is hugely important in muscle recovery. Eggs are an amazing source of protein, especially if you are vegetarian. Some eggs are also fortified with omega-3s.

Certain foods to avoid for muscle recovery are high-fat foods which can slow digestion and the process of turning carbs into glucose. It's important to include a varied diet for muscle recovery, so although vegetables are filled with nutrients, it's important to note that eating a vegetable-only diet won't contain enough of the macronutrients helpful for recovery.



STEVEN DICK

Dick is the director of The Fitness Group, the UK's leading provider of personal training courses, which was set

up to equip aspiring personal trainers with a robust foundation encompassing health, nutrition and fitness, including pre- and post-natal. Find out more at thefitnessgrp.co.uk

Q Can I still exercise and lift weights when dealing with post-workout muscle pain, or should I rest until it subsides?

A When you are experiencing DOMS (delayed-onset muscle soreness) after a workout, this is the result of tiny, microscopic tears in your muscles and the inflammatory response by your body. Don't worry though - this is your body positively responding

to the strain you have put your muscles under during your workout. In essence, it is your body rebuilding those muscles fibres, so that they are stronger for the next time you exercise.

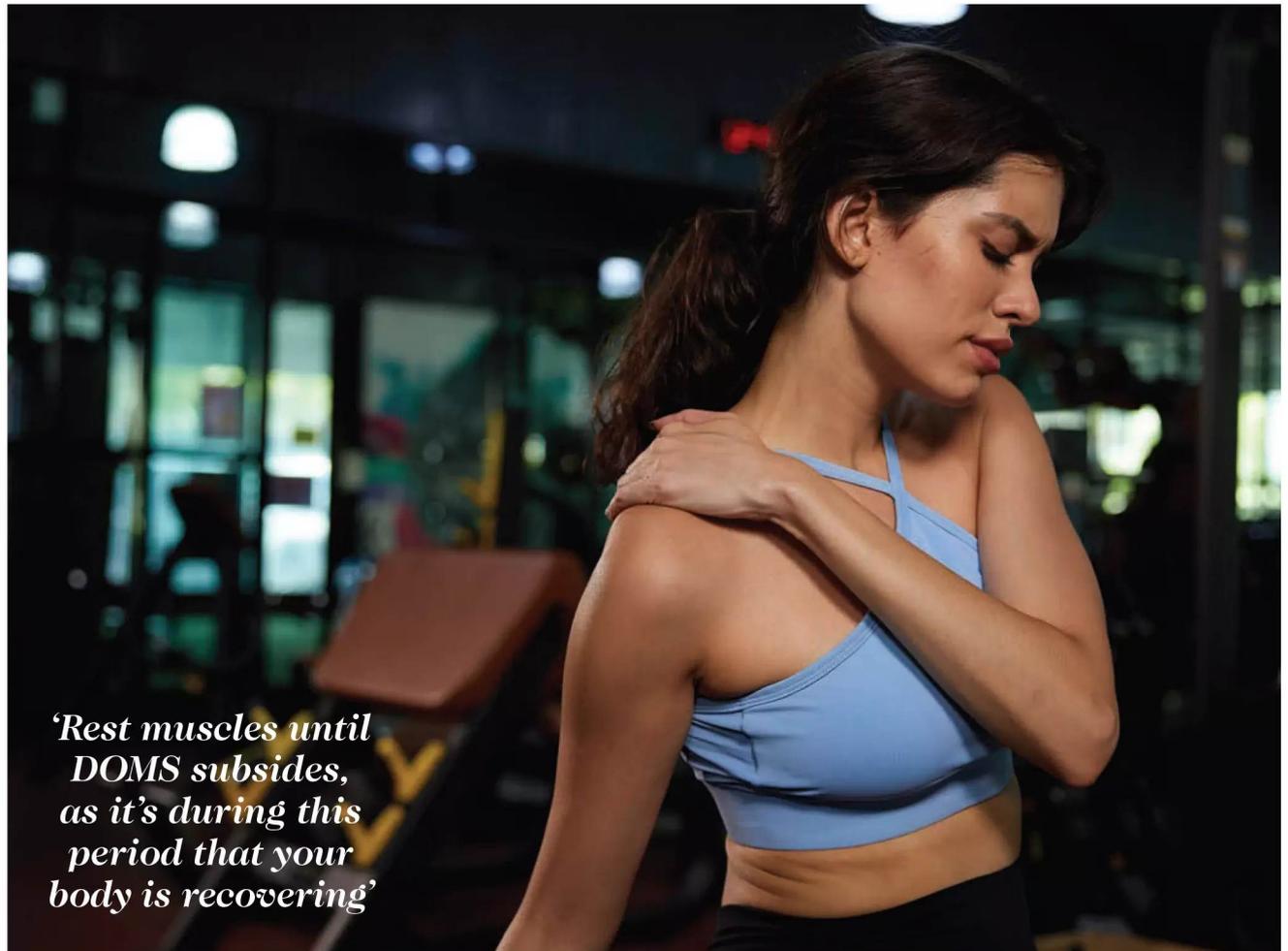
You do not need to experience DOMS to signify that your workout has been effective, however you are more likely to experience DOMS when an exercise is new, or you have increased the intensity (say you have increased the weight you are lifting, for example).

You should rest that muscle group until the DOMS subsides, as it's during this period that your body is recovering and repairing the muscles. Remember: muscular growth happens after training and during the recovery period, not while you are in the gym!

Instead of re-training the muscles which have DOMS, instead focus on

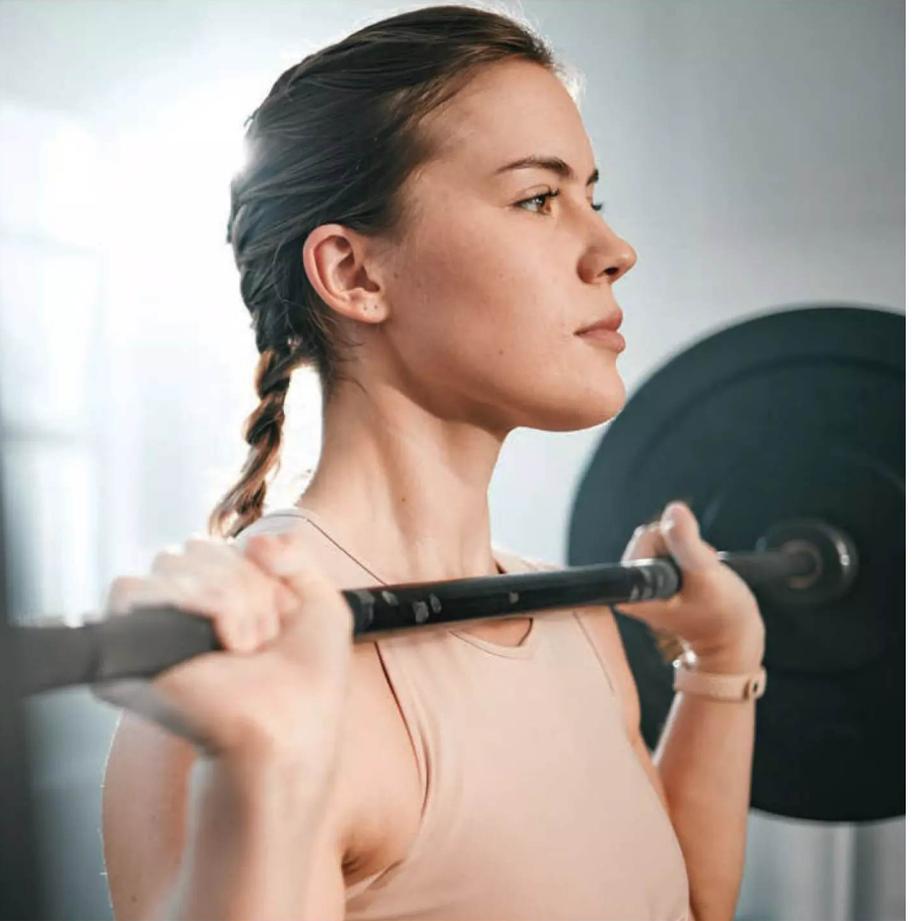
training other muscle groups and body parts that are not affected. This will give your sore muscles adequate time to repair and recover. Furthermore, if you were to train the muscle group that is in pain, you would not be able to exert the same level of intensity. Plus, your reduced capacity for muscular strength could impair your control of a weight, which could increase your risk of injury.

So, the next time your muscles are sore after a workout, resist the urge to work that muscle group again - the rest will be more beneficial to your progress and your gains! Take the time to rest with adequate sleep and nutrition, and allow your body to recuperate. This will ensure you can exert maximum intensity when you return to the muscle group after the DOMS subsides.



'Rest muscles until DOMS subsides, as it's during this period that your body is recovering'

'As you continue to work out, your muscles become better equipped to handle the demands you place on them'



CARLOS COBIELLA

Cobiella is a highly skilled London-based consultant orthopaedic surgeon at The Shoulder Practice in Marylebone,

with a special interest in upper-limb and sports injuries. Find out more at theshoulderpractice.com

Q Is muscle soreness a good sign after a workout? Does it mean the workout was effective? I used to get really sore when I first started strength training, but it's less common now – am I still strengthening my muscles?

A Muscle soreness after a workout can be a sign that you've challenged your muscles in a new way or pushed them beyond their usual limits. It typically occurs 24-48 hours after exercising, and is caused by microscopic damage to muscle fibres. This damage is a natural part of the muscle

rebuilding process, and, as your muscles repair and grow stronger, they adapt to better handle the stress they were subjected to during your workout. Muscle soreness can be seen as a positive indicator that you've effectively stimulated your muscles and triggered the process of muscle growth and adaptation.

However, it's essential to differentiate between normal muscle soreness and pain that might indicate an injury. If the soreness is severe, persistent or accompanied by sharp pain, it's essential to listen to your body and potentially adjust your workout routine to something more gentle.

Muscle soreness tends to diminish as your body becomes more accustomed to the exercises you're doing. This phenomenon is known as the repeated bout effect. Essentially, as your muscles adapt to the stress of exercise, they

become more resilient and better able to handle subsequent workouts without experiencing as much soreness.

As you continue to work out consistently, your muscles become stronger, more flexible and better equipped to handle the demands you place on them. As you become more experienced with your workouts, you're likely to refine your technique and minimise unnecessary strain on your muscles, further reducing the likelihood and severity of soreness.

Introducing new exercises, or increasing the intensity or volume of your workouts, can still lead to some degree of muscle soreness as your body adapts to the new routine. So, while muscle soreness may decrease over time with consistent training, it's not entirely avoidable when challenging yourself with new activities or higher levels of exertion. **WF**

'I STILL HAVE SO MUCH MORE TO GIVE'

CrossFit legend **Tia-Clair Toomey-Orr** talks about her postpartum fitness journey and tells us why she thinks 2024 could be her best year yet

Words: Joanna Ebsworth







'I always thought the day I fell pregnant would be the day I turned the page and started a new chapter,'

reveals Australian weightlifter, CrossFit Games athlete and mum-of-one Tia-Clair Toomey-Orr, 30. But, in a surprise turn of events that has stunned the CrossFit world – and her, too – the six-time Fittest Woman On Earth is currently in training to compete in the final of the 2024 CrossFit Games this August, following the birth of her first child – daughter Willow – in May 2023.

'As it turns out, I didn't even realise I was pregnant during the early part of my first trimester,' says Toomey-Orr. 'I was traditionally taking some time off after the CrossFit Games in 2022 to let my mind and body relax, and I figured I might have adrenal fatigue because something didn't feel quite right, but everything fell into place once I found out I was pregnant. From that moment on, my only focus was to enjoy my pregnancy and listen to what my body needed.'

Toomey-Orr says she and her husband and coach, Shane Orr, tried to heed as much advice as

possible during her pregnancy – which included being told that she 'shouldn't move so much' – but admits any ideas of resting up were soon overpowered by her natural inclination to move. Towards the end of my first trimester, I decided to try moving more because I am very active, and being outside makes me really happy. We had just returned to Australia at the beginning of summer, and the weather was so beautiful – I just found my body felt better the more I moved.

'It actually felt amazing to move my body just for me,' she confesses. 'I would go to the



Having 'me-time' in the gym was important for Toomey-Orr

pregnancy, I couldn't help but think that moving my body would help me to not be in such a physical deficit on the off-chance I did want to come back.'

Toomey-Orr's longest-standing partner, pliability (pliability.com), came to her to see if she was interested in collaborating on a project while she was pregnant. Pliability saw her pregnancy as an opportunity to continue telling her story to thousands of women who could benefit from this chapter.

'I decided to take up the offer because I felt it would set me up for success in the future, whether I wanted to have more kids or compete again,' she explains. 'Shane has always been a big believer in the importance of the inner core but, as you can imagine, training absolutely every muscle all the time for CrossFit is just not possible. We would do accessories on top of daily training to keep my joints moving nicely and to strengthen the smaller muscles of my core and pelvic floor, but in working with pliability, alongside The MINT Prjct (themintprjct.com),

gym and do whatever I wanted to. And for the first time in so many years, it was refreshing to walk into the gym and have some "me time" - to work out because it made me feel really good, rather than walking into the gym with a purpose of standing on top of the podium at the end of the season. Not having that focus of winning was so refreshing, and while I didn't know what to expect in terms of my competitive future, I knew I wanted to have a really nice pregnancy and, hopefully, a good birth.'

While Toomey-Orr admits to having felt overjoyed about the prospect of becoming a first-time mum, she also recognises she was, perhaps, harbouring some niggling doubts about her retirement from CrossFit, even though she would potentially be bowing out on the highest high after winning the 2022 Games: a feat that cemented her place in the history books as the most dominant CrossFit athlete of all time after competing at eight Games and winning six consecutive titles.

'At the time, I felt that if that was the end of my competitive career, I would be so proud and happy with what I'd achieved.' she continues, 'But for some reason, when I looked back at my 2022 season, I just didn't feel I executed the CrossFit Games to the best of my true abilities. I felt that finishing my career there wouldn't sit well with me later in life and, while I was enjoying every minute of

Teaming up with recovery app pliability was a no-brainer



which specialises in supporting and guiding pregnant and postpartum women with programs that make exercise safe and effective, I was able to understand the pelvic floor.

‘Prior to being pregnant, I just didn’t comprehend it all,’ Toomey-Orr explains. ‘But by talking to people who have really studied the pelvic floor, I learnt how all these tiny muscles are in overdrive all the time. I realised we really don’t give that much appreciation to them, and I now understand much more about how to brace properly compared to what I was doing before. I mean, you have to give it to Shane, because he always thinks outside the box with my training, but learning how important the pelvic floor is for performance has been a real eyeopener.’

Physical fitness aside, Toomey-Orr says working with The MINT Prjct and pliability teams also gave her the confidence to continue exercising in the face of mounting criticism – a period



Toomey-Orr’s love for daughter Willow is a source of strength

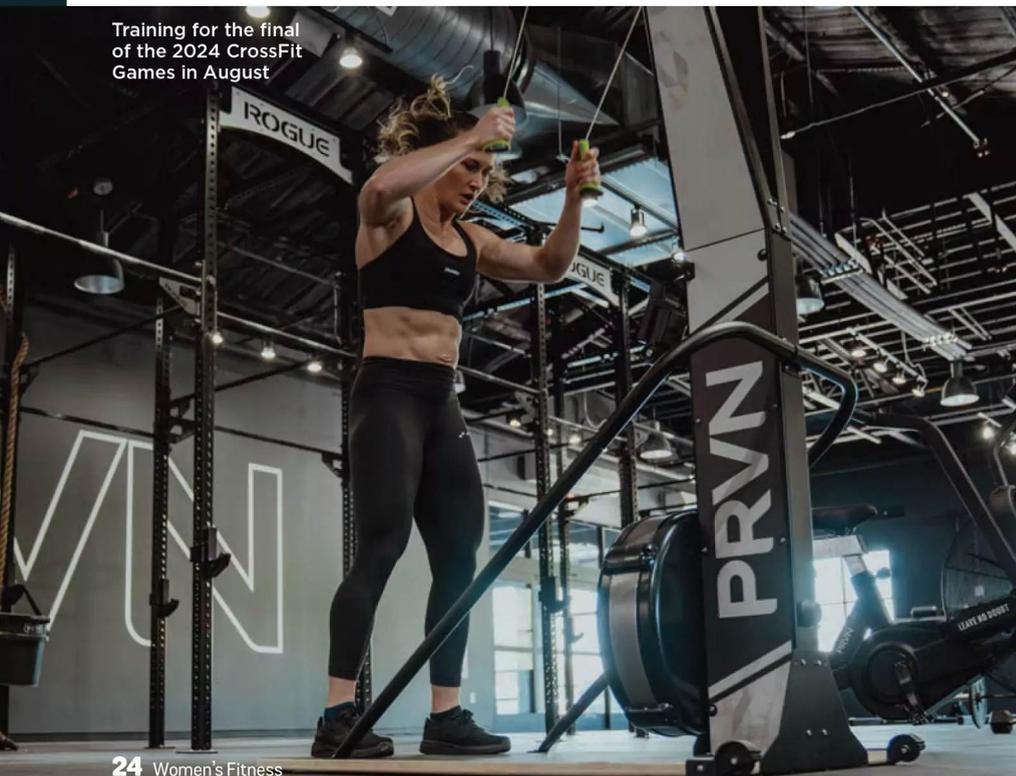
she refers to as ‘almost scary, because you’re always worrying that you might not be doing the right thing. I don’t know if you read any of the comments on my social media, but for every post where I was exercising, there was a lot of good, but also a lot of negative attention. People said horrible things. Which was hard because I felt

‘With each competition I do, I’m building more confidence. I’m right where I need to be’

so good, and those people didn’t even know me.

‘I couldn’t help but second-guess my actions because I’d never gone through it before, so having guidance from The MINT Prjct ladies on how to move my body as I got bigger was invaluable,’ she continues. ‘None of the exercises were super groundbreaking, and it was all really manageable stuff, but that was a valuable lesson for me. Sometimes, especially as an athlete, you think an exercise has to hurt in order to make you better, but it’s the complete opposite in pregnancy. Slowing things down and staying calm and letting my body open up naturally was so important. And then I had Willow, and it was all about, “How do I recover faster?”’

With a ‘rather ambitious’ goal in mind of returning to the competition floor five months postpartum for the 2023 Rogue Invitational event, Toomey-Orr says she kept her focus on progressing through her recovery slowly, as opposed to rushing it, especially after her plans for a natural birth were swapped for an emergency c-section. ‘For two weeks after having Willow, I was sore, tender and very, very swollen, so there was no getting back to the



Training for the final of the 2024 CrossFit Games in August

gym straight away because I was struggling to roll out of bed and get off the couch!' she says. 'But the thing about pliability's Postpartum Program that distinguishes it from other offerings is it starts from day one with breathing exercises, stretches and mindfulness activities, while providing two different pathways for mums to follow depending on whether you've had a natural birth or a caesarean.

'Of course, everyone's individual experience is different,' she continues. 'But I found starting out with something as simple as breathing was really beneficial for me, because your body has had to change so much over nine months and your organs are all over the shop inside. That's how basic my recovery was in the beginning, but the program allowed me to slowly progress at my own speed with gentle movements and stretching, and I was able to build a really solid foundation so I could move on to the guided walks which feature positive affirmations to help keep things light – because things can feel quite dark at times, and the adjustment for some people can be quite overwhelming.

'That's why I keep emphasising the happiness of mums and doing what feels right for them,' she elaborates. 'I was so grateful that I did exercise through my pregnancy because I was strong in my upper body and that meant I could hold Willow and not be in pain. It's so important to have people like pliability and The MINT Prjct out there saying "it's okay for you to move", because the reality is it's hard on your body and mind to just stay at home for six weeks and do absolutely nothing.'

'Since we launched the Postpartum Program, I've had so many women who are past their 12-week mark tell me they wish they'd known it existed, or that it was around when they were day-one postpartum. But I think we have to remind ourselves that it is never too late to heal your pelvic floor, or focus specifically on your mobility as a mum, or even connect to the affirmation and mindfulness components. I still get so much value from it, and I like to think I've reminded women that it's okay to start now... you'll still get the benefit out of it.'

Toomey-Orr is keen to stress she really did take her time with her recovery, and only started to train harder one month out from the Rogue Invitational. 'That was significantly very short compared to what I would normally do, but I had four months of doing my homework and working on my mobility and pelvic floor,' she notes. 'And I certainly didn't do any big CrossFit moves such as Toes-to-Bar or anything that would put a big strain on the midline. Even Shane was a little more conservative than what I wanted, but it was probably a good thing because I can be a bit eager,' she laughs.

'It's been an interesting battle because your body is telling you one thing and your mind another, but I don't mind – having Willow reminded me that I first embarked on my CrossFit journey to create memories and stories I could tell my future children. And then I realised how cool it would be to actually live that reality: having her come to the gym with me every single day while I was trying to be the best in the world. I still feel there



Toomey-Orr is preparing for her best year ever

is so much more to give,' she affirms. 'And with each competition I do, I'm building more confidence. I'm right where I need to be, and while there are things I still need to work on, I really believe that this is going to be my best year yet.

'Willow has come at the most important time, whether I knew that or not. I look back and believe there is a reason why I fell pregnant at that time, and she has definitely extended my career, for sure,' concludes Toomey-Orr. 'Sometimes, you get to a point in your career where you start to wonder why you're doing it. You can always find a reason, but in order to have that passion, there's got to be something deep down that you can really believe in – and Willow is that for me. My love for her makes me feel invincible.'

The pliability app is available to download now on iOS, Android and any web browser. Videos can be watched on-demand, streamed to any screen or downloaded for offline use. All users get a seven-day free trial before a flat rate of £16.95 per month or £169.95 annually.

GO DIGITAL | YOUR ULTIMATE HEALTH GUIDE

GET FIT FOR LIFE

RECEIVE 12 DIGITAL ISSUES FOR ONLY £29.99



IN EVERY ISSUE...

**WORKOUTS
& TRAINING
PLANS**

**NUTRITION
ADVICE**

**OUTDOOR
ADVENTURE**

**PRODUCT
TESTS &
REVIEWS**

GREAT REASONS TO SUBSCRIBE

- Save £17 on the shop price
- Every issue accessed straight from your device
- Expert advice on toning up with workouts to suit your lifestyle and nutrition tips to improve your diet
- Receive the free weekly e-newsletter

**VISIT [SHOP.KELSEY.CO.UK/WFDIG24](https://shop.kelsey.co.uk/WFDIG24)
OR CALL 01959 543747 and quote code WFDIG24**

HOTLINE OPEN: MONDAY-FRIDAY, 8.30AM-5.30PM. CALLS ARE CHARGED AT YOUR STANDARD NETWORK RATE

Terms & conditions: Offer available for UK Direct Debit customers only. You will pay £29.99 every year and receive the digital version of Women's Fitness. *Savings are based on the standard digital cover price of £3.99 for one year. Offer ends 31st December 2024. Your subscription will start with the next available issue, and you will receive 12 issues in a year. Prices are correct at the time of print and subject to change. For full terms and conditions visit shop.kelsey.co.uk/terms. Data protection: We take great care in handling your personal details and these will only ever be used as set out in our privacy policy which can be viewed at shop.kelsey.co.uk/privacy-policy. You may unsubscribe at any time.

More Newspaper and Magazines Telegram Channel join Search https://t.me/Magazines_8890050582 (@Magazines_8890050582)

SCAN HERE



Exercise news * Workout plans * Active travel

FIT BODY

p28

Reformer Pilates moves you can do on a mat

p34

The joy of Nordic walking in Southern Italy

p38

Boost your mood today with our feel-good workout

Want more workout inspiration? Head to [womensfitness.co.uk](https://www.womensfitness.co.uk) and also follow us at [instagram.com/womensfitnessuk](https://www.instagram.com/womensfitnessuk)

Photography: Shutterstock

FLOOR-BASED reformer

Reap the strength-solidifying benefits of reformer Pilates at home with this mat-based workout from Pilates instructor **Jessica May**

Reformer Pilates has boomed in popularity in recent years. The workout uses a reformer bed with adjustable resistance to support and intensify Pilates moves. While the machine may seem like the holy grail of Pilates equipment, in reality, the essence of each exercise lies in the

principles and movements themselves. So, by modifying exercises and swapping a machine for gliding discs and resistance bands, you can benefit from some of the most effective dynamic reformer Pilates moves on your mat – and for a fraction of the cost – in the comfort of your own home.

HOW TO DO THIS WORKOUT

Complete this workout on a flat, hard surface, such as tiles or wooden floors. You will need an exercise mat, a resistance band and two gliding discs. Simply work your way through each exercise for the specified number of reps and sets. Enjoy!



◀ 1. FEET IN STRAPS

Benefits: This move improves core strength and mobility, specifically through stretching the hamstrings.

Reps: 8 **Sets:** 2

- Lie on your back with your legs extended straight up toward the ceiling and feet hooked into the resistance band. Hold each side of the band in your hands, keeping elbows on the floor at either side of your body.
- Aim to complete this movement in an imprinted position, with the whole spine flat on the mat (or, if more advanced, a neutral spine). Avoid hyperextending or lifting the spine throughout.
- With legs together and long, point the toes and press the feet into the band to lower them towards the ground, only going as far as you can while maintaining an imprinted or neutral spine. Then, lengthen them back up towards the ceiling while flexing the feet.

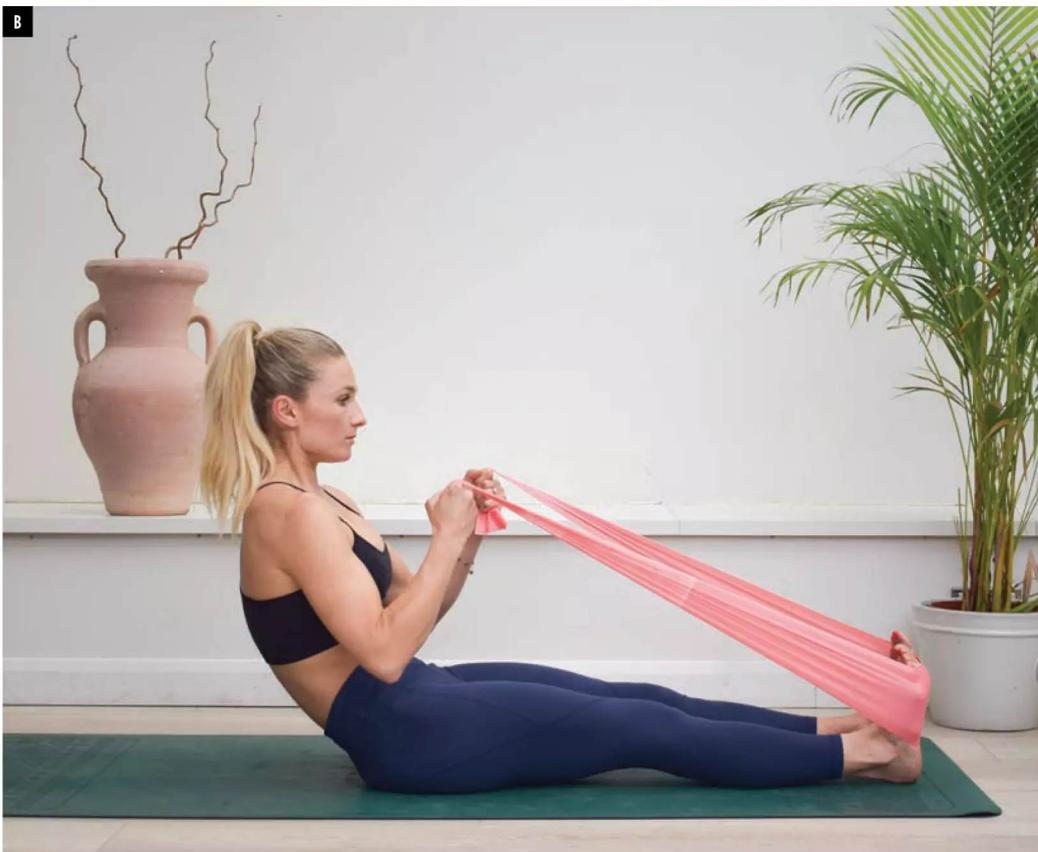
Variation: You can keep the head on the mat (A) or lift your head, neck, and shoulders off the mat as the legs lengthen towards the floor (B).

◀ 2. ROLL DOWN WITH BICEPS CURL

Benefits: Combining core engagement, spinal mobility and upper-body strength training, this move is great for improving posture and core strength. The aim is to create a c-curve with the body through flexion of the spine.

Reps: 8 **Sets:** 3

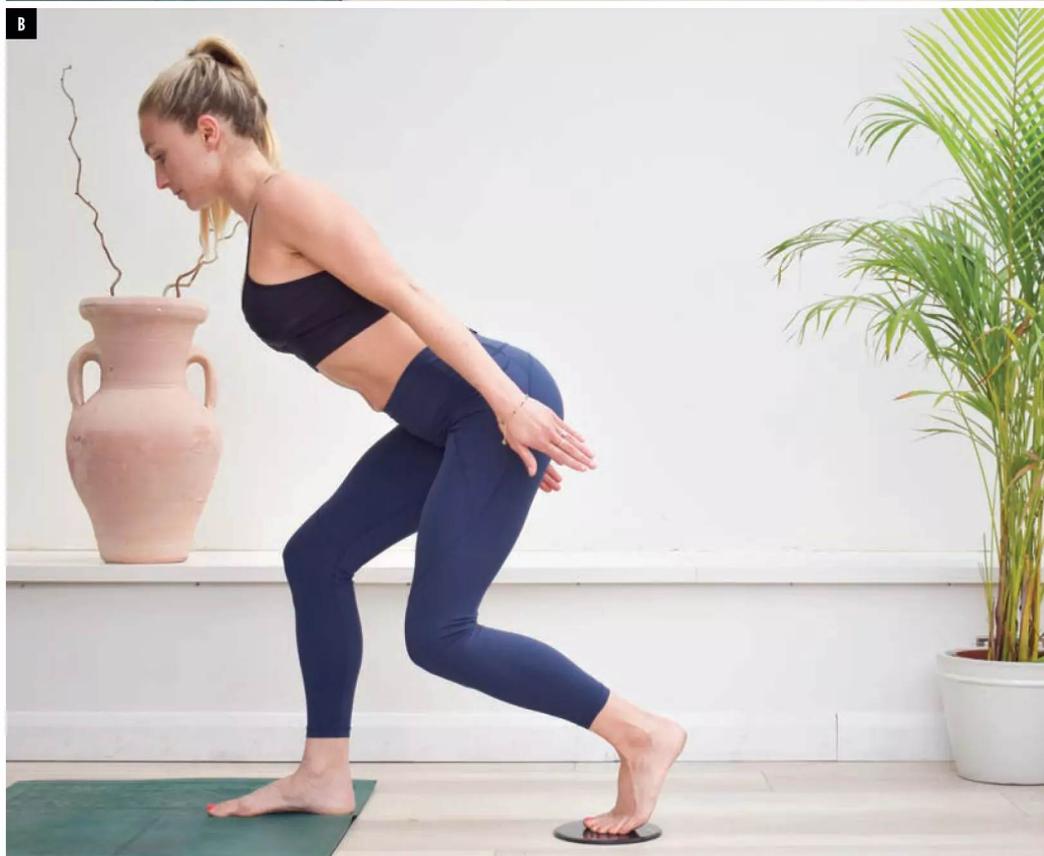
- Sit up straight, with legs extended and the band hooked over your feet. Hold each end of the band in your hands at either side of your body (A).
- Biceps curl the arms as you draw the ribcage towards pelvis, leaning backwards and resisting into the arms. Create a c-curve with the body to activate the core, using your exhale to deepen the engagement (B). Inhale to lengthen back up to a sitting position.



▶ **3. SCOOTER LUNGE**

Benefits: This classic lunge is made more dynamic by scooting the leg back, which challenges the balance, co-ordination and glute engagement.
Reps: 8-10 each side

- Start in a long-line lunge position with the back leg extended and foot on the gliding disc. Bend the front knee, ensuring your knee and ankle are in a straight line (A).
- Inhale to bend the back knee in towards yourself, pulling the gliding disc in while maintaining a neutral spine (B). Then, exhale to push the back leg straight and activate the glute of the moving leg.



◀ 4. SIDE SCOOTER LUNGE

Benefits: This dynamic exercise adds another dimension to your lower-body workout, engaging your glutes, quads and hamstrings while improving balance and stability.

Reps: 8-10 each side

- Begin in a parallel squat position with one foot on a gliding disc and the other foot on the ground. Engage your core and maintain a neutral spine throughout the movement.

- Slide the foot on the gliding disc out to the side, coming into a side lunge position (A). Keep your weight balanced and the knee on your supporting leg tracking over your toes.

- Then, push off with your gliding foot, using the outer thigh and glute muscles to bring your leg back to the starting squat position (B).



► **5. PLANK TO PIKE**

Benefits: This exercise strengthens the core, upper body and hip flexors, while improving stability, increasing core strength and enhancing overall body co-ordination.

Reps: 8 **Sets:** 3

- Start in a plank position with both feet on the gliding discs (A).
- Exhale to pike the hips up towards the ceiling, keeping on the tips of your toes and gliding the discs across the floor towards your body while keeping the legs straight. Curl the upper body over wrists and tuck the head and chin under (B).
- Inhale to hold, then exhale to glide the discs away from the body and back into a plank position.



Words and photography: Jessica May



READER OFFER
 Use the code WF100 at jessicamaywellness.com to access your first class for free!

▲ 6. PLANK TO KNEE-LIFT HOVER

Benefits: This exercise specifically focuses on engaging the deep abdominal muscles while maintaining a neutral spine, which is essential for developing core strength and enhancing pelvic stability. This movement also contributes to building shoulder stability as you hold the position.
Reps: 8 **Sets:** 3

- Start in plank with both feet on the gliding discs (A).
- Exhale to pull the gliding discs in, bending the knees under the hips and hovering the knees above the mat. Aim to maintain a neutral spine throughout (B).
- Inhale to hold, then exhale to glide the discs away from the body and back into a plank position. 🎯



Meet the expert

May is an experienced Pilates instructor and founder of Jessica May Wellness. Her virtual reformer Pilates studio offers a range of group and one-to-one online classes, including mat-based sessions and options for those who have their own reformer machine at home.

Walk TO FITNESS

Journalist **Louise Atkinson** sets off for a Nordic walking holiday and discovers it can burn more calories per hour than dancing, jogging or cycling!

As we scramble off the beach and turn to face a short steep hill up to the café I hear our instructor's voice from the back of the pack: 'Hang on to that lottery ticket! Squeeze those lemons!' We'd been romping along a coastal path, enjoying the Italian sunshine but this incline presents our first real challenge. We are not just walking, we are Nordic walking, which means using poles. The old me would be leaning forward, groaning, sweating and probably cursing, and taking short steps on the balls of my feet – calves screaming. But the Nordic

walking me is taking big 'heel-then-toe' strides, squeezing an imaginary lemon under my big toe to activate the power of my glutes, and gripping tightly to a fictitious lottery ticket I have been told to clench between my buttocks!

With each stride I extend my straight arm out in front of me as if to shake hands – muttering 'How do you do?' under my breath just to make sure I get the correct amount of forward stretch – loosely gripping the pole with my little finger and ring finger and planting it behind me to propel myself forwards. With so many



Using Nordic poles for walking reduces stress on joints by 30 per cent

instructions swimming about in my brain, I am surprised when I arrive at the top in record time, barely puffed. As I look over my shoulder at the steep slope behind me, non-plussed, it feels as though someone has been gently pushing me from behind.

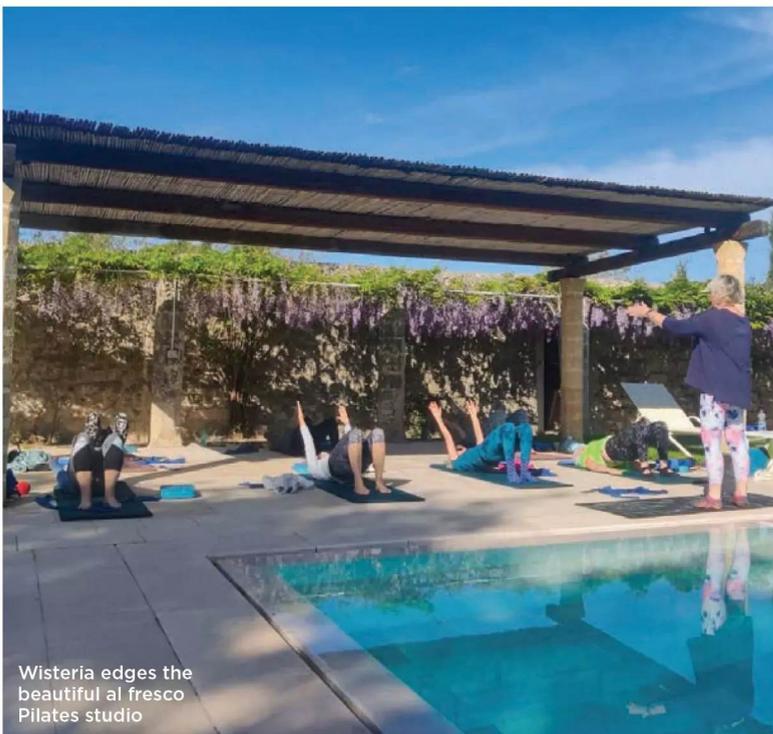
I'm in Southern Italy as a guest of a British company called Flavours, holidaying with a group of women all keen to perfect our Nordic walking technique. And I have to confess, I thought Nordic walking was an oldie's thing – a bit like using walking sticks to stop you wobbling. However, it turns out this is a sport originally developed in the 1930s by cross-country skiers to mimic the action and maintain their fitness during times of no snow, and it is most definitely growing



Flavours' food is based on local ingredients



Atkinson indulges in some impromptu fun in the sun



Wisteria edges the beautiful al fresco Pilates studio

in popularity. The great news is swinging those poles confers health benefits that far exceed the gentle rise in heart rate you get from going for an ordinary stroll. That's because those poles both propel you *and* support you.

For instance, when you are striding out with poles flying, the muscles of your arms, chest, abdomen and core come into play, meaning you are engaging almost twice as many muscles – 90 per cent of your body compared to 40 per cent – as with pole-free, ordinary walking. The correct action also helps improve your posture by encouraging you to walk with your shoulders back and your head held high.

But the poles offer support, too, reducing stress on your

joints by up to 30 per cent. Apparently, a good Nordic walk will burn 20-40 per cent more calories than a stroll without you actually having to go any further or faster. And at a high intensity, it can burn more calories per hour than dancing, jogging or even cycling, helping you burn fat and strengthen your cardiovascular system.

LA DOLCE VITA

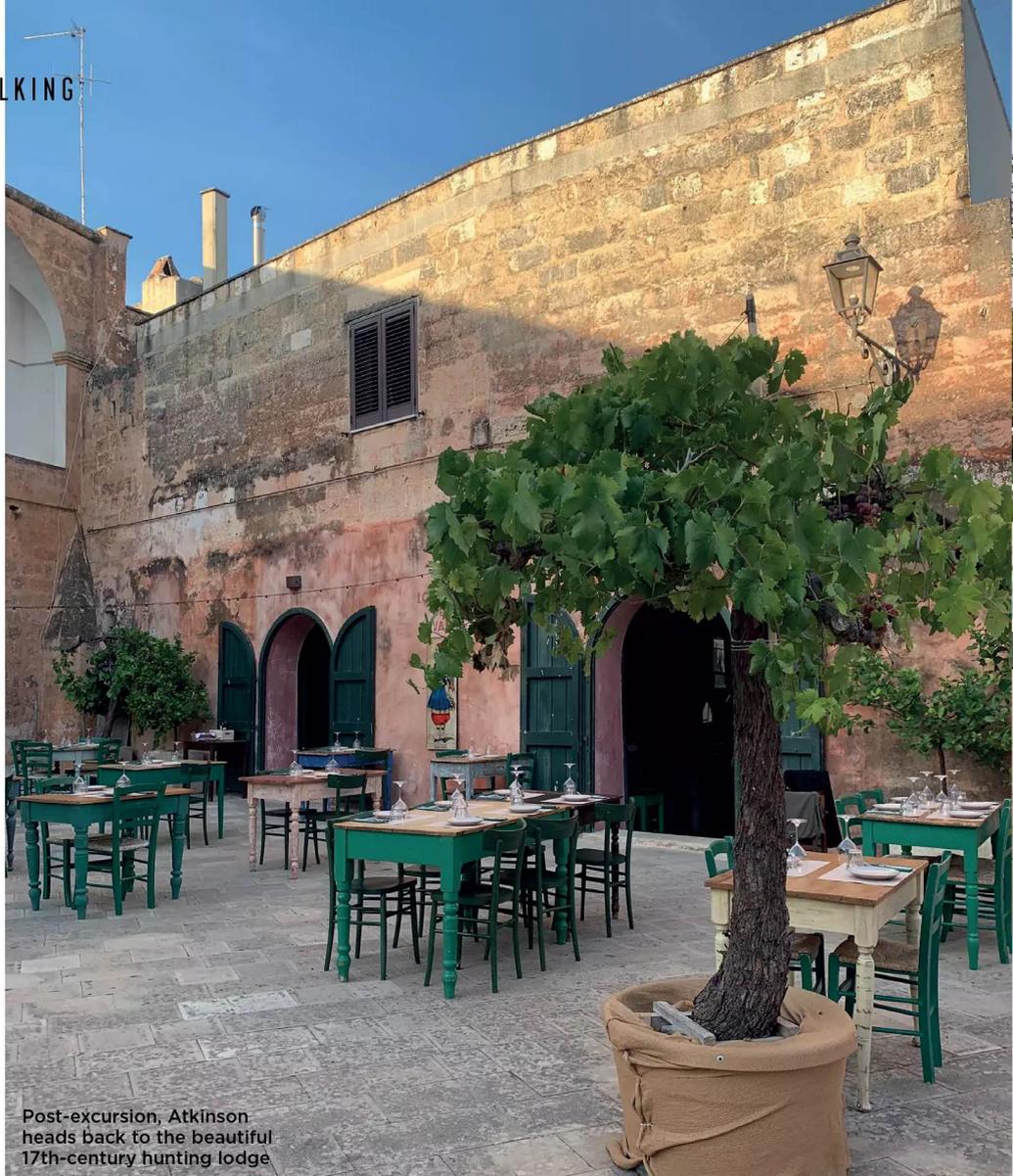
Our base for the week is Casino Pisanelli, an old 17th-century hunting lodge in the heart of rural Salento, with delightful rooms in the stables that surround the carefully manicured walled garden.

Each morning we gather in the beautiful wisteria-draped garden for a gentle session of Pilates by the pool before breakfast, and then head off to explore one of the historic towns and cities (Tricasse, Specchia and Lecce, known as 'the Florence of the South'), or a stretch of rugged coastline (Santa Maria di Leuca). On most days there's a bit of Nordic walking thrown in.

As we walk, Valentina, our host, tells us about local history and customs, plucking at wild plants and herbs for us to rub between our fingers and sniff. Who knew that a shrub that looks just like cow parsley could be a form of wild carrot? That the wild dill that grows in the hedgerows makes an excellent aniseed-scented limoncello?



Meals are prepared in the traditional way



Post-excursion, Atkinson heads back to the beautiful 17th-century hunting lodge



Guests strengthen their legs for walking with Pilates by the pool



Atkinson gets some one-to-one tips from the Pilates instructor

‘I dig those poles deeper and there it is – a turbo charge that propels me forwards as if I had new batteries’

Some days we are treated to lunch at a café or dinner at a local trattoria (most of us opting for seafood or the specialty, ear-shaped orecchiette pasta) but most of our meals are prepared for us at the villa by professional chef Giulia, who is passionate about creating dishes typical of the region, using local ingredients. My favourites are the steamed leaves from poppy plants tossed in oil with tiny black olives from Giulia’s garden, her beetroot carpaccio, and an unctuous, buttery asparagus risotto which, true to the traditions of the region, must be flipped and not stirred.

I love the way we are encouraged to embrace the Italian-ness of life in Puglia. When visiting a town, we simply *must* find a sunny spot to enjoy

gelato – much more exotic than nipping out for an ice cream! And each evening is marked by a 7pm gathering for ‘aperitivos’ i.e. a chilled glass of prosecco and local taralli nibbles as well as sweet and fruity Primitivo wine served with supper.

AND RELAX...

At other retreat-style holidays I’ve lurched from one activity to another, but the Flavours way is more relaxed. In the afternoons, we are left to our own devices to read, snooze or sunbathe by the pool; small groups pull out sketch pads and water colours using skills learned on previous Flavours holidays to capture the beauty of the villa, its gardens and the Puglian countryside.

We are a mix of ages and fitness levels – I notice the fittest in the group slip out in the



The buttery asparagus risotto was delicious!

afternoons for an extra trek through the olive groves that surround the villa. And, although the Flavours cooking courses often attract couples, this week we are all solo women (Flavours has no singles supplement). On the final day, I join them for a pole-swinging romp to the nearby village of Speccia, to burn off a few pasta calories and to consolidate my new Nordic walking technique.

Clutching that lottery ticket, the lemons, tummy in, shoulders back, reaching to shake hands with imaginary strangers at every stride, I have to pull out all the stops in a bid to keep up, but for the last mile, I dig those poles a little deeper and there it is – a turbo charge switch that propels me forwards as if someone has just installed new batteries. It’s a revelation!

After just one week of walking, drinking and chatting, I feel deeply relaxed but fitter, stronger and enriched by my new-found knowledge of Southern Italy – and I am most definitely putting Nordic walking poles on my birthday wish-list. 🍷

TRIP NOTES Flavours Holidays offer Nordic Walking and Pilates tours to Italy and Spain throughout the year, as well as cooking, painting and language-learning breaks. The Nordic Walking and Pilates trips start from £1,899pp for an all-inclusive hosted week including destination transfers. Flights not included. Visit flavoursholidays.co.uk

Your feel-good WORKOUT

Want to exercise for happy vibes? Try this mood-boosting workout from personal trainer **Sarah Campus**

Exercise is a boon to your mental health. It releases a cocktail of 'happy' hormones (dopamine, serotonin, endorphins), and has been shown to improve mood and self-esteem while decreasing feelings of stress, anxiety and depression. You don't have to do a lot to feel these effects – studies show that a short 15-minute run is enough to stave off the risk of major depression – and the rewards can be felt almost instantly. But when it comes to moving for your mental health, does the type of exercise you do matter?

Not necessarily. Some forms of low-intensity exercise (yoga, tai chi, light walks) have been shown to reduce levels of stress hormone cortisol. But if it's an 'exercise high' you're after, further data suggests that exercise intensity matters. Indeed, research in the journal *Neuropsychopharmacology* reveals high-intensity interval training (HIIT, short bursts of high-intensity exercise teamed with periods of rest) leads to a significant rise in the release of endorphins.

With that in mind, PT Sarah Campus has created this short and speedy outdoor circuit, to crank up your heart rate, boost blood flow around the body, and get those happy hormones flowing. Do each exercise for 30 seconds and take 15 seconds of rest between moves. Have a further one-minute rest after each round, completing four rounds in total. Enjoy!

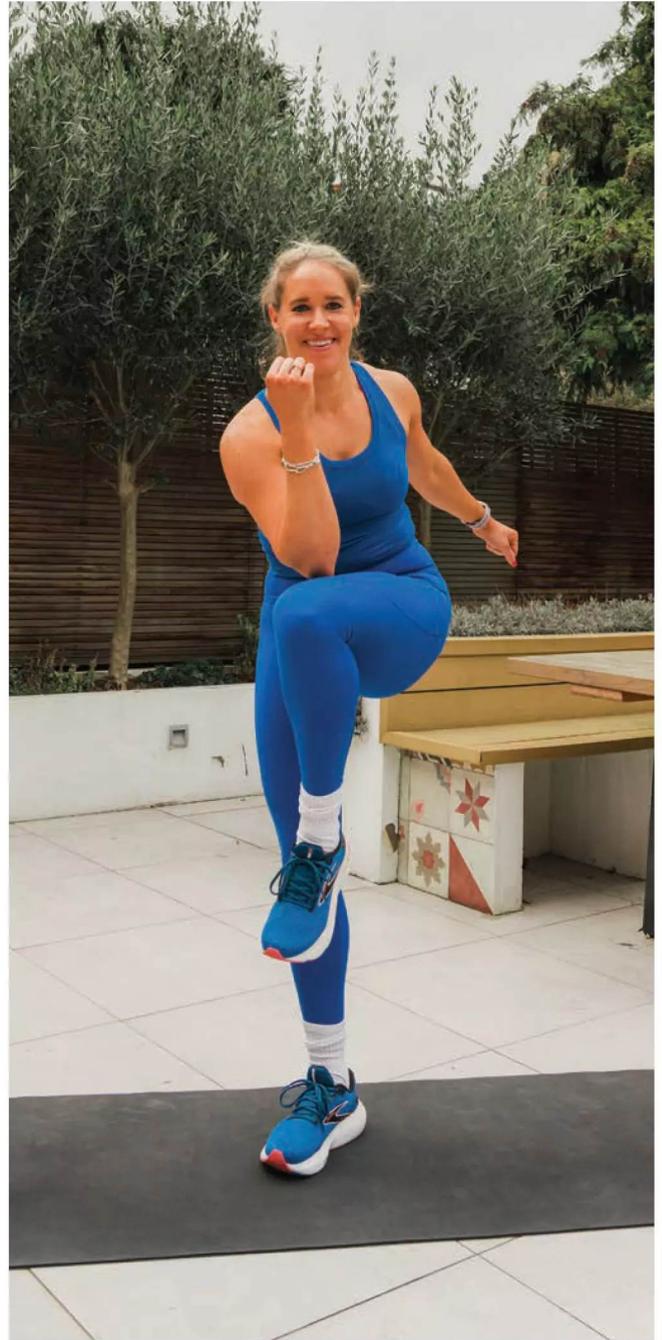
▼ STAR JUMPS

- Start in a quarter-squat position with your back flat, feet together and palms touching the sides of your legs.
- Jump up, raising your arms and legs out to the sides (your body should form an 'X' in mid-air; pictured).
- Land softly with your feet together and immediately lower yourself back into a quarter-squat, then repeat.



▼ SQUAT REACH

- Stand with feet shoulder-width apart and engage your core.
- Hinge at the hips by driving your hips back, bending at the knees to lower into a squat. (Strive to eventually reach parallel, meaning knees are bent to a 90-degree angle.)
- Drop your arms between your knees (A) and press your knees slightly open with your upper arms. Press into your heels, engage your glutes and straighten your legs to return to a standing position. As you stand, reach your hands up high (B). Repeat.



▲ CROSS ELBOW TO KNEE

- Stand straight with your feet shoulder-width apart.
- In one movement, exhale as you move your right elbow to meet your raised left knee in front of your torso.
- Return to the starting position in one smooth movement, inhale.
- Repeat the movement for the set time, then switch sides and repeat with the other arm and leg.

▼ REVERSE LUNGE KNEE-DRIVE

- Start in a lunge position, pressing your front foot into the floor to 'load up' your working leg by engaging your glutes and hamstrings (A).
- Forcefully push through the floor to stand, squeeze the glutes and drive your back knee up to thigh-height (B).
- Return slowly to the start, by hinging from the hips and lowering the back leg. Repeat for the set time, then switch legs.



▲ FRONT KICK

- Start standing with your left hand raised at shoulder height and left leg slightly behind you (A).
- Snap up your left leg at the knee and simultaneously pull the left arm down (B).
- You want to get a lot of momentum going here - the more force and speed you put into the snap, the more force you'll hit your 'target' with. Strike that target!
- Lower to the start and repeat for the set time, then switch sides.

▼ SLOW MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS

- Start in a push-up position with your hands shoulder-width apart, directly beneath shoulders (A).
- Slowly and gently, pull your left knee towards your chest without letting it touch the floor (B), then return to the start position.
- Repeat the step above with your right leg, then continue alternating for the given time.



◀ JUMPING OBLIQUE TWISTS

- Stand with your feet together. Bring your arms to shoulder height (A).
- Keeping your upper body facing forward, jump 3-4 inches off the ground and, as you land, rotate your feet to the right while rotating your arms to the left (B).
- As soon as you land jump up again and rotate your feet to the left, arms to the right.
- Alternate back and forth for the time. 🏆



Meet the expert

Sarah Campus is a highly qualified women's PT, Nutrition Coach, mum-of-three and founder of LDN MUMS FITNESS. For more info, visit [Idnmumsfitness.com](https://www.idnmumsfitness.com) and [@Idnmumsfitness](https://www.instagram.com/idnmumsfitness)

SUBSCRIBE AND SAVE UP TO £44*!

GET FIT FOR LIFE



Get expert advice on toning up with workouts to suit your lifestyle and tips on nutrition and beauty to help you look and feel amazing. Every month you will get a workout handbook, a review of the hottest looks every month in our Gym Style section, and several articles on how to eat smart with great recipe ideas. Women's Fitness is packed with features that will provide inspiration and motivation to get you moving! Enjoy features such as Fit Mind, Fit Mama and Fit Fuel every month focusing on mental well-being, how to stay fit before, during and after pregnancy and nutrition advice.

GREAT REASONS TO SUBSCRIBE

- Save up to £44*
- Delivery directly to your door before they hit the shelves
- Never miss an issue
- Complete control - manage your account online
- Free weekly e-newsletters

SUBSCRIBE TODAY

VISIT SHOP.KELSEY.CO.UK/WFHA
OR CALL 01959 543747 and quote code WFHA
Scan our QR code - the easiest & quickest way!

HOTLINE OPEN: MONDAY-FRIDAY, 8.30AM-5.30PM. CALLS ARE CHARGED AT YOUR STANDARD NETWORK RATE



Terms & Conditions: UK Direct Debit offer only. You will pay £47.90 every 12 months. *Savings based on the standard basic annual rate of £92.88 which includes the cover price of £4.99 plus Kelsey Media's standard postage and packing price per single issue for one full year (12 issues). Offer ends 31st December 2024. Your subscription will start with the next available issue, and you will receive 12 issues in a year. Prices correct at time of print and subject to change. For full terms and conditions visit shop.kelsey.co.uk/terms. Data protection: We take great care in handling your personal details and these will only ever be used as set out in our privacy policy which can be viewed at shop.kelsey.co.uk/privacy-policy. You may unsubscribe at any time. If you decide to cancel your subscription we will put a stop to any further payments being taken and will send the remaining issues that you have already paid for.

More Newspaper and Magazines Telegram Channel join Search https://t.me/Magazines_8890050582 (@Magazines_8890050582)

Food news * Healthy recipes * Nutrition advice

FIT FUEL

p44

The latest fitness fuel to support your goals

p46

Discover the protein foods to have instead of a shake

p50

Vegan-friendly recipes from cookery writer Rukmini Iyer

p54

Nutritionist tips to help increase your workout focus

Want more nutrition tips?
Head to [womensfitness.co.uk](https://www.womensfitness.co.uk)
and also follow us at
[instagram.com/womensfitnessuk](https://www.instagram.com/womensfitnessuk)

Fuel up

Keep your eyes on the finishing line with the help of this month's fit fuel foods and drinks

Clean greens

Vitamin B12 is super important if you follow a plant-based diet but, thankfully, Ro-Gro Biofortified Microgreens (£4, Wholefood stores) has your nutrient needs covered. Sustainably grown, the pea shoots have been biofortified with vitamin B12 to help people that struggle to get enough of the hard-to-obtain vitamin. The salad staple is also rich in vitamins A, C and K, as well as fibre and protein. Throw a handful into summery salads or layer into sandwiches for a nurturing treat.



Dairy delight

Elevate your post-workout shakes, and your morning porridge, with SMUG Dairy Blended Oat & Dairy Milk (£1.95, Tesco stores). The kind-to-the-planet blend combines cow's milk with oat milk, resulting in a delectably creamy texture, that saves up to 54 per cent CO2e emissions per kg compared to traditional dairy. And to top it off, the blend is fortified with a spectrum of healthy nutrients, including calcium, fibre and vitamins B, D and E.



Gut lover

Keep gut bugs happy throughout summer and beyond with Bio&Me's gut-loving bars (£1.20, bioandme.co.uk). The flapjack-style treats come in three different yummy flavours - Toffee Apple, Superberry and Cocoa Hazelnut. Each bar is crammed with no less than nine plant-based ingredients including wholegrain oats, pumpkin seeds and almonds plus zero added sugar or nasties, so that you can make a nutritionally informed choice when you're on-the-go.



Muscle-boosting meals

Fuel your workouts whilst getting two of your 5-A-Day with The Gym Kitchen's macro-counted meals. The freshly prepared range includes the likes of Chicken & Paella and Chicken & Mushroom Fettuccine (£3.75, gymkitchen.com), to meet your post-gym protein needs. Each meal is microwavable, scores big on flavour and fibre, and packs in up to 30g protein whilst being naturally low in fat and calories.



Power performance

Taking sports fuel to the next level, the ingredients in Perple Sports Drink (£13.50 for a six pack, drinkperple.com) are all natural to help you sidestep any tummy troubles, blood-sugar spikes or unpleasant jitters, which can be the downside of many mainstream fitness fuel products. The vegan formula is laced with stamina-inducing coconut water and sweet potato juice, then sweetened with a twist of brown rice syrup and agave. Take your pick from the line-up, which includes three refreshing flavours - Golden Mango, Blood Orange and Fresh Lime & Mint.



Feel-good fungi

Mushrooms are all over the wellness space right now, and the latest addition, Lucid Peanut Butter Jelly adaptogen bar (£14 for a pack of four, itslucid.world) ramps up energy levels, making it the perfect pre-workout snack. Featuring cognitive-enhancing lion's mane and energising maca, each nutritionally dense bar also helps you reach daily fibre and protein goals whilst being gluten-free.



Boost your brassicas

Whether you're looking to cut carbs or achieve the recommended 30 plants a week, PACK'D Organic Cauliflower Rice (£2.85, Sainsbury's stores) helps to keep your health in check when the frantic pace of modern-day living takes its toll. Stick a bag in the freezer and you'll have ready-to-use, organic cauliflower to use as a base for homemade pizzas, or to serve up with stir-fries and curries. 🌱

6 QUESTIONS ABOUT *protein*

Not sure how much protein you need? Wondering whether you can consume too much? Performance nutritionist **Andrew Shepherd** answers the common concerns



HOW MUCH PROTEIN SHOULD YOU HAVE DAILY?

In the UK, adults are advised to eat 0.75g of protein per kilogram of body mass. For someone that weighs 70kg, this would be 52.5g of protein per day. The exact amount someone should consume a day is individualised, based on their activity level, with most sport nutrition recommendations being between 1.2-2g per kilogram of body mass per day. The activity type and individual's current goals will dictate where in this range someone should target. For example, a long-distance runner would need high carbohydrate intake and be on the lower end of the protein recommendation scale compared to a weightlifter who needs a far higher protein recommendation, as their performance demands and goals are very different. In addition to the total amount, we also talk about protein scheduling, i.e. when you eat protein throughout the day. Based on research, 20-30g of high-quality protein every three-to-four hours is advised. This allows the body to spend the optimal amount of time



For fitness gains, aim for 1.2-2g protein per kg body mass

per day in a state of protein synthesis (building) rather than catabolism (breakdown).

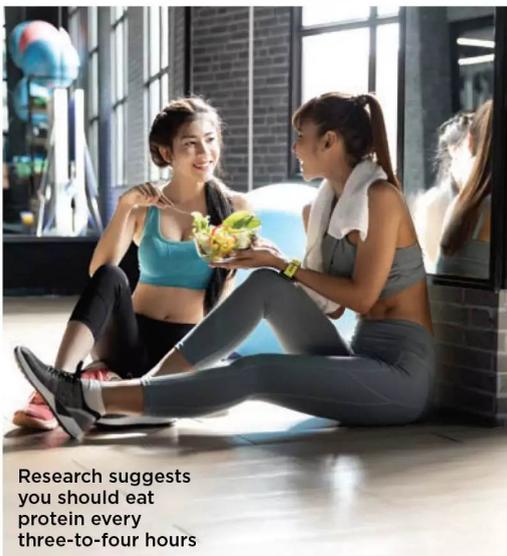
IS TOO MUCH PROTEIN BAD FOR YOU?

Having a high protein intake is generally safe for healthy people and there is no evidence to suggest it is bad for your health. However, it is worth thinking about the source of protein you are consuming, as well as the amount, because eating high amounts of processed meats and red meats has been linked to some diseases and health risks.

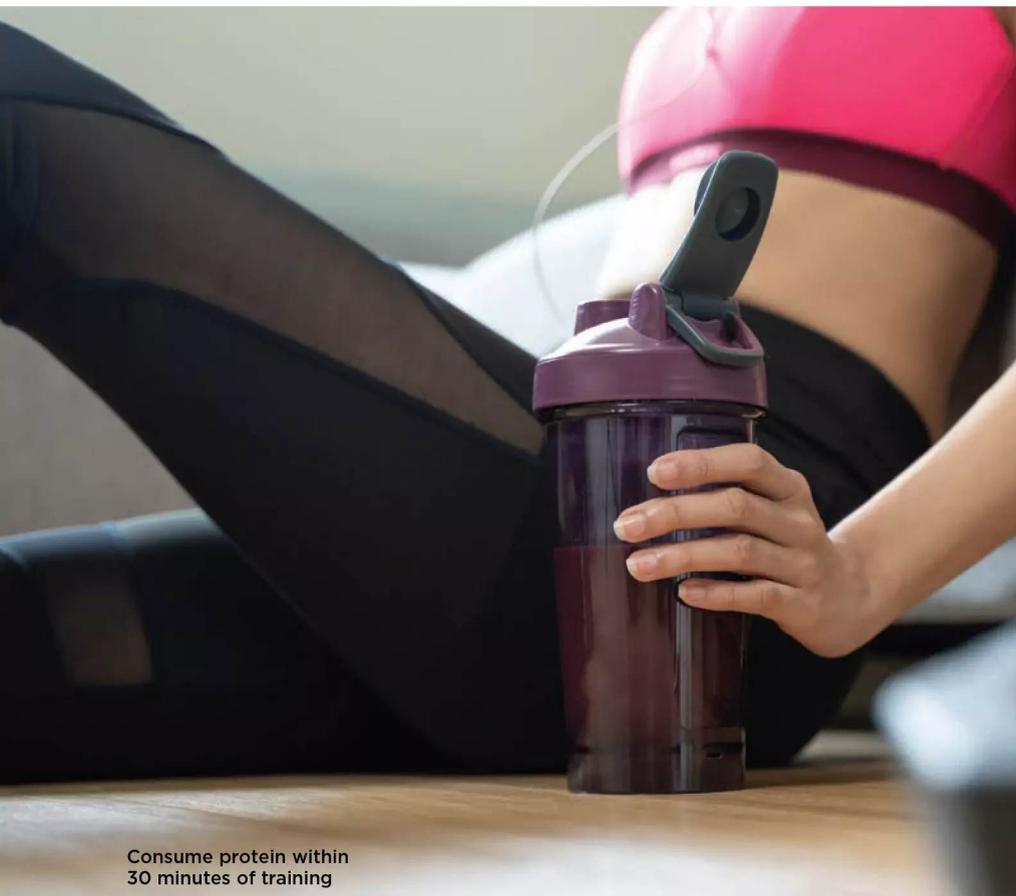
While the recommendation for healthy individuals is 0.75g per kilogram body mass per day, and athletes 1.2-2.0g per kilogram per day, for optimal protein intakes, there has been research using higher intakes, with some studies seeing no

adverse findings with protein intakes as high as 4g per kilogram body mass per day. While these higher intakes may not have seen adverse findings, it would change the composition of the diet (e.g. to attain calorie balance, you'd need to consume a lower amount of fats and carbohydrates, which may be less beneficial for health or performance). In addition, these studies of up to 4g protein per kilogram body mass did not find a significant improvement in recovery or building muscle mass.

As protein provides the blocks to repair and build muscle, if you have too little protein over a period of time you will be in a negative protein balance. This can lead to muscle atrophy, meaning muscle loss, rather than hypertrophy, which refers to muscle gain. This is



Research suggests you should eat protein every three-to-four hours



Consume protein within 30 minutes of training

WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO HAVE PROTEIN?

Timing is key with protein. What the science tells us is that one of the most important moments to consume protein is within 30 minutes of finishing your workout, and this shouldn't be used as a meal replacement. A good post-training habit would be to consume a carbohydrate-rich food, with 20-30g of protein

'Adequate protein intake ensures your body has the necessary building blocks for growth and recovery'

and some fluid, within 30 minutes of finishing exercise. This could be a banana with some chocolate milk, or a favourite at Loughborough is a banana with one of Graham's Family Dairy protein pouches (grahamsfamilydairy.com). They are easy to have on-the-go after training and contain 25g of protein. Then, within three-to-four hours of training, consume a recovery meal consisting of carbohydrates, colour (via fruit and veg) and protein.

CAN PROTEIN FOODS HELP ME LOSE WEIGHT?

Protein plays a crucial role in weight management, but it's essential to understand how it fits into the bigger picture. Protein-rich foods tend to be more satiating than carbohydrates and fats. When you consume protein, you feel fuller for longer, which can help curb overeating and snacking. Feeling satisfied after a meal is essential for weight

likely to negatively impact your performance and decrease your strength. In addition to these performance impacts, over time, overall health and wellbeing would be affected.

HOW DO PROTEIN FOODS HELP BUILD MUSCLE?

Protein-rich foods can be broken down in the body into amino acids, which are often referred to as the building blocks required for muscle growth and repair after exercise. There are 20 amino acids, and nine of these are essential, which means the body can't make them itself so they have to be obtained by the diet. If a food contains all nine of the amino acids, it is called a 'complete protein' and is, therefore, a high-quality source. It's important to consume high-quality protein, not only to

increase muscle size but also to help reduce soreness after a workout, aiding recovery. It is worth noting that although protein is needed to help build muscle, it's not the only factor - protein will support hypertrophy (increased muscle mass) if it is consumed alongside a well-structured resistance training programme.

Chocolate milk is a good post-gym snack



loss because it reduces the likelihood of reaching for unhealthy snacks later. However, weight loss only occurs when your energy expenditure (calories burned) exceeds your energy intake (calories consumed). So while protein itself doesn't directly lead to weight loss, it contributes to the overall equation by promoting satiety and reducing hunger.

Muscle maintenance and repair also play a role. When losing weight, preserving muscle mass is crucial. Protein helps to maintain existing muscle tissue and supports muscle repair. Adequate protein intake ensures your body has the necessary building blocks for growth and recovery.

Protein can replace less nutritious options in your diet. For example, instead of reaching for sugary snacks or highly processed foods, opt for

protein-rich alternatives such as Greek yoghurt, cottage cheese or nuts. Protein-based snacks can help satisfy cravings without derailing your weight-loss efforts.

Timing also matters - distribute protein intake throughout the day. Include it in every meal and snack. Aim for a balanced approach - don't load up on protein at one meal and skip it at others. And be mindful of portions - while protein is beneficial, excess calories from any source can lead to weight gain. So, pay attention to portion sizes and avoid overeating, even with protein-rich foods.

In summary, protein is your ally in weight management, but it's not a magic bullet. Combine it with a balanced diet, regular physical activity and mindful eating for sustainable results. Remember that individual needs vary, so consult with a registered

dietitian or nutritionist for personalised advice.

WHICH FOODS HAVE THE MOST PROTEIN?

Meat and dairy typically contain the highest amount and they also tend to be good sources of complete proteins (they contain all the essential amino acids). You can also get protein from beans, lentils, legumes, eggs, nuts and seeds. If you are following a plant-based diet, include a range of protein sources (variety is key) to ensure you're having all nine essential amino acids required to make new proteins in the body, as one source of plant-based protein is unlikely to have all the amino acids. 🍌



Meet the expert

Andrew Shepherd is the performance nutrition lead at Loughborough University, working with Graham's Family Dairy to share his expert insights.

Aim to eat a range of protein sources



Words: Andrew Shepherd | Photography: Shutterstock

FAST ON FLAVOUR

Perfect for midweek mealtimes or garden-party grazing, these vegan-friendly recipes from Rukmini Iyer's *The Green Cookbook* are big on flavour and packed with plant-based protein

In the high heat of the summer months, who wants to be slaving away over a hot stove for hours on end? Hearty slow-cooked stews may be ideal in winter, but come the warmer weather, colourful, cooling salads and sizzling stir-fries take centre stage. While speed and ease are what many of us look for in summer cooking, you shouldn't have to compromise on flavour or nutritional value.

Queen of fuss-free flavour, Rukmini Iyer, is known for her one-pot wonders and budget-friendly batch cooking. Her latest offering, *The Green Cookbook*, is filled with simple meat-free meals that don't skimp on flavour. Featuring plant-protein staples such as chickpeas and butterbeans, many recipes are also vegan-friendly and gluten-free - or can easily be tweaked to tick your nutritional needs.



CHICKPEA, HALLOUMI & POMEGRANATE TABBOULEH WITH SPICED ALMONDS (VEGAN) —▶

Salty halloumi, pomegranate, spiced almonds, buttery avo and asparagus all come together beautifully in this dish. If you have jarred rather than canned chickpeas, by all means use those instead, but a quick stint in the marinade will work wonders with ordinary canned chickpeas.

Serves: 4 as a side
Prep: 15 minutes
Cook: 15 minutes

Ingredients

- 300g bulgur wheat
- 1 x 700g jar chickpeas (or 2 x 400g cans chickpeas), drained and rinsed
- 600ml boiling vegetable stock
- 125g asparagus, sliced diagonally, woody ends trimmed

For the spiced almonds

- 100g flaked almonds
- ½ tbsp olive oil
- ½ tsp smoked paprika
- 1 tsp brown sugar
- Good pinch sea salt flakes

For the dressing

- 15g fresh mint leaves, finely chopped
- 15g fresh basil or parsley leaves (or a mixture of the two),

- finely chopped
- 200g pomegranate seeds (from 1 pomegranate)
- 60ml extra virgin olive oil
- 1 lemon, zest and juice
- Couple of pinches sea salt flakes

To serve

- 225g halloumi, sliced
- 2-3 avocados, sliced
- Lemon juice

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C/180°C fan/gas 6. Tip the bulgur wheat into a large roasting tin, then scatter over the chickpeas. Pour over the stock, top with the asparagus, then transfer to the oven to bake for 15 minutes.
2. In a small, shallow baking tray, mix together the almonds, oil, smoked paprika, brown sugar and sea salt flakes, then pop the tray alongside or on another shelf of the

oven for the last 10 minutes. While the tins are in the oven, mix the chopped herbs with the pomegranate seeds, olive oil, lemon zest and juice, and sea salt flakes to make the dressing.

3. Heat a griddle pan to medium-high heat and place the halloumi slices on it. Griddle for 1-2 minutes per side until stripey, then remove to a plate. Fluff the bulgur wheat through with a spoon and leave to cool for 5 minutes before stirring through the dressing. Taste and adjust the salt as needed, then serve hot, topped with the avocado, halloumi, spiced almonds and a squeeze of lemon juice.

HOW TO MAKE IT GLUTEN-FREE: Omit the bulgur wheat and stock, roast the asparagus and chickpeas by themselves in olive oil. Cook quinoa in your preferred way before dressing with all the other ingredients.





MISO BARLEY MUSHROOMS WITH CORIANDER PESTO (VEGAN)

A happy melange of inspiration where the pearl barley and mushrooms look after themselves in the oven, leaving you to just blitz the pesto.

Serves: 4
Prep: 15 minutes
Cook: 1 hour

Ingredients

- 300g pearl barley
- 750ml boiling water
- 4 tsp white miso paste
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- Small handful shiitake mushrooms, chopped
- 300g chestnut mushrooms, sliced
- 1 red onion, sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, grated
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 x 400g can haricot beans, drained
- Sea salt flakes

For the pesto

- 40g fresh coriander
- 1 tsp coriander seeds
- 40g pine nuts
- 80ml olive oil
- 1 tsp sea salt flakes, plus extra as needed
- 1½ tbsp lemon juice, plus extra as needed

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C/180°C fan/gas 6. Put the pearl barley, boiling water, miso paste, onion, black pepper and mushrooms in a roasting tin, cover with foil and roast for 1 hour.
2. Put the mushrooms and red onion into another roasting tin with the garlic, olive oil, haricot beans and a pinch of sea salt. Stir, then pop roast for 25-30 minutes until mushrooms are cooked through.
3. Blitz the coriander and coriander seeds, pine nuts, olive oil, sea salt and lemon juice in a high-speed blender until smooth. Taste and adjust the salt and lemon juice, then set aside.
4. Stir 2 tbsp pesto through the pearl barley, then divide between four plates. Top with the mushrooms and remaining pesto and serve hot.

SPICED ROASTED CARROTS & HAZELNUTS, SILKY BUTTERBEAN MASH (VEGAN AND GLUTEN-FREE)

The carrots roast beautifully with coriander seeds under foil, while the rich, silky butterbean mash takes just 10 minutes to put together. A substantial, flavour-packed dish that works amazingly as a side to share with friends.

Serves: 4 as a side
Prep: 15 minutes
Cook: 55 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 tsp coriander seeds
- ½ tsp black peppercorns
- 12 small carrots, halved lengthwise
- 45ml olive oil
- 45ml water
- 2 tsp agave or maple syrup
- 50g blanched hazelnuts, halved
- Sea salt flakes, to taste
- Finely chopped flat-leaf parsley, to serve

For the butterbean mash

- 90ml olive oil
- 1 lemon, zest, plus a squeeze of juice
- 1 tbsp coriander seeds
- 3 spring onions, thinly sliced
- 2 fat cloves garlic, finely grated
- 1 x 700g jar butterbeans (or 2 x 400g cans butterbeans), drained and rinsed

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C/180°C fan/gas 6. Lightly grind the coriander seeds and black peppercorns, then add them to a medium roasting tin along with the carrots, olive oil, water and ½ tsp salt. Cover with foil, then roast in the oven for 40 minutes.
2. When ready, remove the foil, drizzle the carrots with the agave or maple syrup, then return to the oven for a further 15 minutes to reduce the liquid. Put the hazelnuts on a baking tray and pop them into the oven at the same time to toast.
3. Meanwhile, put the olive oil, lemon zest, coriander seeds, spring onions and garlic into a small frying pan and warm through over a low heat for 5 minutes – you're not aiming to get any colour on the garlic, so keep the heat down.
4. Put the butterbean mash ingredients into a high-speed blender and blitz until smooth. Add a little lemon juice, and adjust the salt if needed. Warm the mash and spoon into bowls, top with the roasted carrots and scatter with a little sea salt, hazelnuts and parsley. Serve warm. 🍴

Extracted from
*The Green
Cookbook* by
Rukmini Iyer,
(Square Peg, £25)

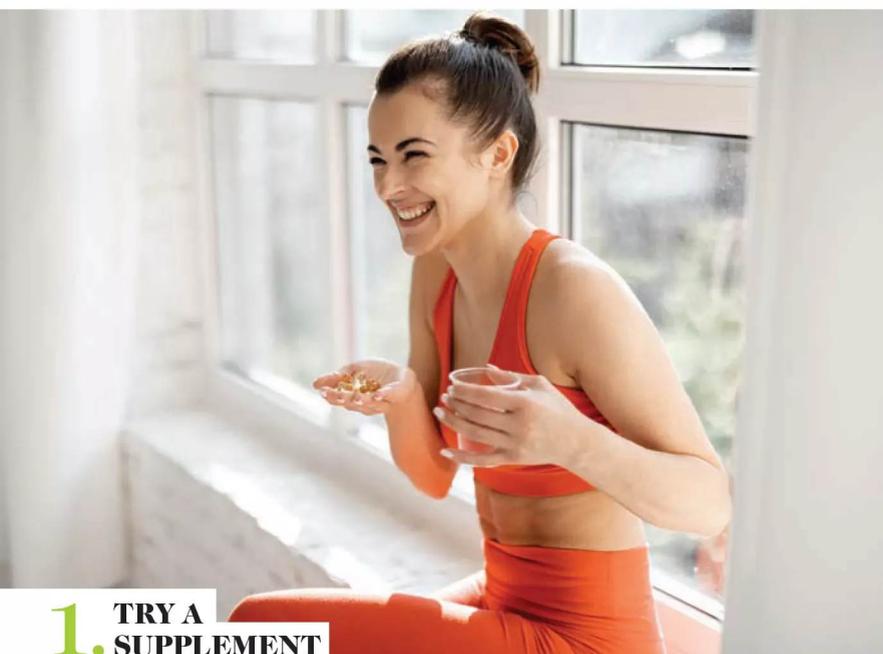


Words: Rukmini Iyer | Photography: David Loftus

5 ways to... INCREASE YOUR FOCUS

Strengthen your mental muscle by eating to boost your workout focus and concentration

Words: Rob Hobson



1. TRY A SUPPLEMENT

Nootropics enhance focus by affecting biochemical pathways and brain mechanisms, with nutritional supplements often containing key ingredients that support cognitive functions, such as attention and concentration.

Caffeine, a widely recognised nootropic, stimulates the central nervous system by blocking adenosine receptors, which leads to increased alertness and concentration. L-theanine, found in green tea, promotes relaxation and, when combined with caffeine, enhances focus while reducing jitteriness. Omega-3 fatty acids are

crucial for brain cell structure, improving mental clarity. Bacopa monnieri, used in ayurvedic medicine, enhances neurotransmitter function, improving focus and cognitive processing.

Additionally, B vitamins including B6, B12 and folate, are essential for neurotransmitter synthesis and optimal brain function. It's important to use nootropics as part of a balanced lifestyle that includes nutrition, exercise and sufficient sleep. Try Healthspan Memory Support (£16.99 for 60 capsules, healthspan.co.uk).

2. HAVE SOME CAFFEINE

Caffeine enhances focus by stimulating the central nervous system, making you feel more alert and awake. It also helps with the production and release of dopamine, which can help improve mood, motivation and the ability to focus. Caffeine has been shown to boost cognitive performance, which can be useful when you need to focus during extended work hours or projects that require higher levels of concentration. Widely researched as a performance aid, caffeine helps reduce fatigue perception, making it useful in endurance sports during challenging phases. Most healthy adults can consume up to 400mg caffeine daily - about four cups of brewed coffee. Caffeine is also found in tea, energy drinks and supplements, but excessive consumption can lead to restlessness and insomnia, so find a level that works for you.





3. BALANCE YOUR MEALS

Eating regularly and ensuring your meals include a balance of carbohydrates, proteins and fats is essential for maintaining focus throughout the day. This nutritional balance stabilises blood-sugar levels, preventing exaggerated spikes and troughs that can affect your energy and concentration. Carbohydrates offer an immediate energy boost, while proteins and fats moderate the release of glucose into your bloodstream, helping maintain longer periods of focus. Including fibre-rich foods such as legumes, wholegrains and vegetables can enhance satiety. Low levels of magnesium have been linked to brain fog so ensuring a good intake can help you think clearly – fill up on spinach, legumes and nuts.

4. IMPROVE YOUR SLEEP QUALITY

Enhancing sleep quality is essential for optimal daytime focus. Establish a consistent sleep schedule by going to bed and waking up at the same time every day. Develop a bedtime routine, such as taking a warm bath, reading, meditating or doing some gentle stretching, to signal to your body that it's time to wind down. Ensure your bedroom environment supports sleep by keeping it cool, dark and quiet, possibly using blackout curtains and white noise machines. Avoid bright screens and blue-light exposure before bed, as well as caffeine and heavy meals. While regular exercise promotes restorative sleep, avoid vigorous activity too close to bedtime as it can increase body temperature and stimulate the nervous system, making it harder to fall asleep. Consider a sleep tracker such as the Oura ring (from £299, ouraring.com) to monitor and achieve your sleep goals more effectively.



Photography: Shutterstock, Healthspan

5. SET CLEAR GOALS

To focus on your performance outcomes, try setting clear, specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART) goals for training and events. This approach can help direct your focus towards manageable targets, enhancing overall performance. Partner this with an established pre-performance routine to help focus your mind before a tough training session or competition. This routine may include meditation, visualisation, stretching or listening to music to calm your nerves or boost your motivation. Together, these strategies provide a structured approach to maximising focus and performance.



Meet the expert
Rob Hobson is a sports nutritionist and the author of *Unprocess Your Life* (Thorsons, £18.99).

HOW TO ORDER:

Offer code:
WF424

- UK – 6 issues for £26.95, then 1 year (12 issues) for £44.99 via Direct Debit – saving £19 in your first 6 issues*
- UK – 1 year (12 issues) by cheque or debit/credit card at £49.99

For international offers, please visit: shop.kelsey.co.uk/WF424

YOUR DETAILS

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms Forename _____
Surname _____
Address _____

Postcode/Zip code _____
Country _____ Mobile _____
Email _____

IF DELIVERY ADDRESS IS DIFFERENT, COMPLETE BELOW

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms Forename _____
Surname _____
Address _____

Postcode/Zip code _____
Country _____ Mobile _____
Email _____

We may wish to contact you regarding our special offers that we believe would be relevant to you. Please tick the boxes below to tell us all the ways you would prefer to hear from us. Email Post Phone Text message. We will not pass your details on to third party companies.

Direct Debit

I wish to subscribe by a Direct Debit payment of £26.95 for the first 6 months, then continue to pay £44.99 every 12 months. I understand that my subscription will start with the first 6 monthly payment, then continue every 12 months – unless I write to tell you otherwise.

Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit

Name of Bank _____
Address _____

Postcode _____

Account Name _____

Sort code Acc. no

Signature _____ Date _____

Originator's ID number

Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Kelsey Publishing Ltd and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank or Building Society.

Debit/credit card

UK 1 year (12 issues) at £49.99

Please debit my: Visa Visa Debit Mastercard

Card no

Security no Valid from / Expiry date /

Signature _____ Date _____

Cheque

I enclose a cheque for £49.99 made payable to Kelsey Publishing Limited (must be from a UK bank account. Please write your name and address on the back of the cheque).

(UK ONLY) PLEASE SEND COMPLETED FORM TO:

FREEPOST KELSEY MEDIA

Terms & Conditions: UK Direct Debit offer only. You will pay £26.95 for your first 6 issues, then £44.99 every 12 months via Direct Debit. *Savings based on the standard basic rate which includes the cover price of £4.99 plus Kelsey Media's standard postage and packing price per single issue for 6 months. Offer ends 31st August 2024. Your subscription will start with the next available issue, and you will receive 12 issues in a year. Prices correct at time of print and subject to change. For full terms and conditions visit shop.kelsey.co.uk/terms. Data protection: We take great care in handling your personal details and these will only ever be used as set out in our privacy policy which can be viewed at shop.kelsey.co.uk/privacy-policy. You may unsubscribe at any time. If you decide to cancel your subscription, we will put a stop to any further payments being taken and will send the remaining issues that you have already paid for.



Make an investment in your fitness, health and wellness with a subscription to **Women's Fitness**, the magazine that offers a 360-degree approach to staying in shape – both physically and mentally.

Each month you'll get a helping hand with setting and smashing your goals, with inspiring content and motivating features written by the **Women's Fitness** team of industry experts.

Whether you're following a training regime for the first time, or planning yet another year of fitness events, the **Women's Fitness** team is with you every step of the way, providing results-driven workouts, sports nutrition advice, the latest fitness news and gears, plus ways to support your mental fitness.

Guarantee your copy every month with a subscription to **Women's Fitness** and have each issue delivered directly to your door. Not only will you save money on your subscription, but you'll also get the free weekly e-newsletter. Why not treat yourself or a loved one and enjoy a good read?

Sarah Sellens **Editor**

GREAT REASONS TO SUBSCRIBE

- 1 Save **£19** on your first 6 issues*
- 2 Expert advice to build your best body, with scalable workouts and nutrition know-how
- 3 Never miss an issue of your must-have magazine
- 4 Get each issue delivered direct to your door in 100% plastic-free packaging
- 5 Receive the free weekly e-newsletter

SUBSCRIBE TODAY

GET FIT FOR LIFE

AND SAVE UP TO £19*
ON YOUR FIRST 6 ISSUES

In every issue...



**SUBSCRIBE
TODAY**

**VISIT [SHOP.KELSEY.CO.UK/WF424](https://shop.kelsey.co.uk/WF424)
COMPLETE THE FREEPOST POSTAL COUPON
OR CALL 01959 543747 and quote code WF424**

HOTLINE OPEN: MONDAY-FRIDAY, 8.30AM-5.30PM. CALLS ARE CHARGED AT YOUR STANDARD NETWORK RATE

SCAN HERE



DO YOUR SUPPLEMENTS STACK UP?

Finding formulations that work together can help to unlock the power of your fitness performance

Words: Louise Pyne

Supplements are one of the biggest add-ons that many of us use to amplify our workouts. It goes without saying that they can offer fantastic health perks, but just as you probably give careful consideration to your choice of pre- or post-workout meal or snack, ensuring that it contains all the right nutritional components to support your training, supplements also require the same care and attention.

First things first, it's worth noting that supplements can never replace a balanced diet. This is simply because nutrients found in nature are what your body naturally knows and loves. All natural foods contain a spectrum of dynamic nutrients which work intricately with one another to provide balance to your body. Take the humble broccoli as an example - it's laced with vitamins A, C and K, and minerals such as iron and magnesium, providing a spectrum of nutrients that unite to offer a host of wellbeing effects. Isolated nutrients just don't exist in natural ingredients, which is why taking an isolated nutrient supplement won't necessarily provide the results that you are hankering after. The body cannot absorb and utilise isolated supplements in the same way as it can nutrients derived from foods in nature.

The solution? Although a good diet always comes first, taking nutrients in formulations that complement one another is the next best thing to add on to your fitness programme. 'When you "stack" supplement formulations together, they can work in sync to produce specific benefits,' says personal trainer and nutritionist Chloe Bowler (chloebowler.com). So, whether you want to increase lean muscle, keep motivation levels high, supercharge your energy levels, improve immunity or enhance recovery, our supplement checklist is designed to help you co-ordinate your supplements to your fitness goals for awesome results.*





FITNESS GOAL: **IMPROVE IMMUNITY**

Best supplement stack: ***Magnesium with vitamin D***

Keeping your immune system fighting fit is an important consideration whatever the time of year, but if you're training for an endurance challenge, tip-top immunity is extra crucial to ensure that you're on form to follow a rigorous training plan. And when we're talking immune health, vitamin D is always top on the list.

The best way to increase vitamin D stores is through scheduled exposure to sunlight. In summer, UV levels are higher than in

winter which means it's easier for vitamin D to be synthesised in the skin. Having said that, cloudy days lower the rate of vitamin D absorption, and since sunshine-filled days are often unpredictable in the UK, there's usually no harm in taking a vitamin D-based supplement as part of an immunity maintenance plan throughout the year.

For many people, it's beneficial to take vitamin D (the recommended daily allowance is 10mcg per day) with a magnesium supplement, or find a supplement that fuses both

nutrients together, because the body metabolises the fat-soluble vitamin more effectively when it's combined with magnesium.

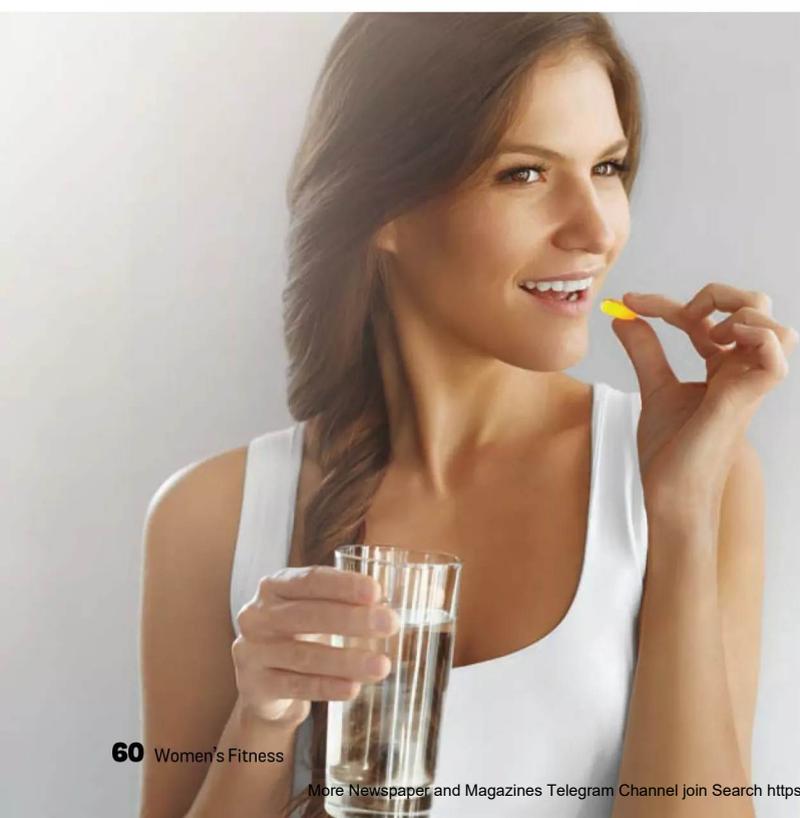
Magnesium is a great all-round mineral that helps with everything from muscle spasms to improving sleep and reducing stress, so you'll obtain extra benefits by pairing both nutrients together. 'It's also worth noting that as vitamin D is fat soluble, it needs to be in the presence of fat to be absorbed, so is best taken during or after a meal with some fat content,' explains Bowler.

FITNESS GOAL:
FASTER RECOVERY

Best supplement stack: *Protein powder with adaptogenic mushrooms*

The benefits of recharging with protein after a workout are well documented, but we're increasingly seeing muscle-repairing protein powder supplements that are infused with other beneficial ingredients to help take recovery to the next level.

Adaptogenic mushroom blends are one of the biggest wellness trends of the moment. Lion's mane, cordyceps and reishi mushroom have been used for centuries to enhance health, but these functional fungi are increasingly being factored into fitness recovery because they are thought to help improve oxygen utilisation and maintain energy levels to help fight post-workout fatigue, so when combined with a protein powder, the duo can be a supplement-stacking match made in heaven.



FITNESS GOAL:
MENTAL CLARITY

Best supplement stack: *Vitamin B12 with B9*

The mental side of fitness is just as important as the physical, so taking care of your mental wellbeing will help you to get the most out of your workouts by regulating your mood and motivational levels so that you're mentally fit.

B vitamins are a group of eight water-soluble nutrients that play a role in mood. These vitamins need constant replenishment as they exert inter-related roles which keep cells healthy. They work in synergy with one another, but vitamins B12 and B9 (also known as folate or folic acid) are two of the most important B vitamins when it comes to cognitive health, as together they produce a compound called s-adenosyl-L-methionine (SAME) which helps to keep mood stable, so it's worth stacking B vitamins together.

FITNESS GOAL:
MORE ENERGY**Best supplement stack: Turmeric and omega-3**

Keeping energy levels high will help you push yourself further, and turmeric and omega-3 can help you go the extra mile by increasing energy levels for extra endurance.

'Turmeric and omega-3 fatty acids can help reduce muscle fatigue, so try

to consume lots in your natural diet - a turmeric prawn stir-fry should do the trick - and you could also try taking a supplement with both nutrients,' shares Bowler.

As an added bonus, both nutrients help to reduce inflammation in cells which could also help reduce post-muscle soreness, so this duo is a win-win on all accounts.

'Turmeric and omega-3 can help you go the extra mile by increasing energy levels for extra endurance'



SUPER SUPPS

We've cherry-picked some supplement blends that will support health and fitness goals



Nutravita Calcium, Magnesium, Zinc & Vitamin D3

£19.99, nutravita.co.uk
 Vitamin D3 is grouped with a trio of minerals including magnesium to help support everything from immunity to bone health.

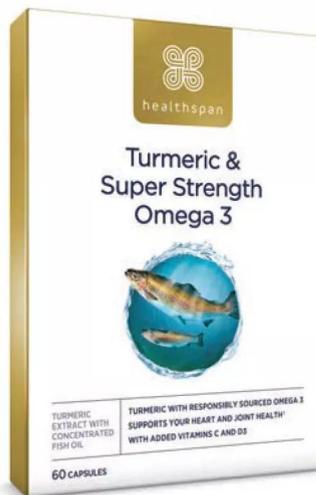


INDI Body

£55, indisupplements.com
 The sachets in this all-in-one health supplement combine gut-boosting fibre, probiotics, vitamins and minerals for peak wellness.

Healthspan Turmeric & Super Strength Omega 3

£21.99, healthspan.co.uk
 Reduce workout inflammation with this high-strength turmeric and omega-3 formula.



BioCare Nutrisorb Methyl FolGuard

£26.99, biocare.co.uk
 These liquid drops are a powerful blend of folate and vitamin B12.



No Ordinary Moments Plant Protein+

£34, noordinarymoments.co
 This combo of functional mushrooms, collagen, nootropics, superfoods and plant protein is a winning fitness formula. 🍄

*Always consult your GP or a qualified nutritionist before starting a supplement routine | Photography: Shutterstock and various brands

FITSHOP

Europe's No. 1 for Home Fitness

TAURUS



**GET READY TO RIDE
LIKE THE PROS AND
GET TOUR DE FIT
THIS SUMMER!**

Transform your home workouts and train like the Tour de France champions with our premium range of exercise bikes. Whether you're a beginner or a seasoned cyclist, we have the perfect bike to match your training needs:

Studio Bikes: Ideal for those who want the ultimate indoor cycling experience.

Upright Exercise Bikes: Perfect for a more traditional cycling feel.

Recumbent Exercise Bikes: Designed for comfort without compromising on performance.

Air Bikes: Delivering a full-body workout with every pedal.

With x20 premium indoor exercise bike brands to choose from, gear up for the Tour de France with our exclusive deals and elevate your training to pro-level heights!

TAURUS

ELITE ERGO-X AIR BIKE

WE LIVE FITNESS

Fitshop stocks over 50 of the biggest fitness brands in various equipment ranges. This includes treadmills, exercise bikes, weights, benches, strength packages, multi-gym's, accessories, and more.

STORES NATIONWIDE

Aberdeen, Camberley, Chessington, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, London, Manchester, Nottingham



Sales: 0141 737 2250

www.fitshop.co.uk

TRY BEFORE YOU BUY

WORK OUT *Like a pro*

Before you start an expensive new Instagram fad, get back to the basics of fitness and find out what really works, with these golden rules from personal trainer **Will Duru**

Every year, a wave of new exercise trends floods the fitness landscape, each promising the ultimate solution for weight loss and building muscle. But, amid the flashy trends and quick fixes, personal trainers have relied on the same principles to get people into shape for years: effective cardio mixed with regular strength training, increased activity and, of course, a healthy diet.

If you're looking to get more from your workouts, leading personal trainer Will Duru explains how to pare down your fitness to what works - minus the fads.

1. ACCEPT THERE ARE NO SHORTCUTS

In the ever-evolving world of fitness, you get fads and you get enduring principles. As a personal trainer, people come to me every year wanting to lose weight and build muscle, and, for that, the principles are the same. There are no real secrets and no shortcuts, only what science and time have shown to work over and over again.

2. IDENTIFY YOUR GOAL...

...then find the right principles and stick to them. The first step on the path to fitness success is identifying your goal.

Understanding your objective allows you to choose the exact training principles that have been proven to work to achieve it. For the purposes of this guide, let's imagine your goal is to lose weight and build muscle.

3. DO ZONE 2 TRAINING FOR WEIGHT LOSS

In order to lose excess weight, for example, you need to do cardio that keeps your heart rate between 120 and 150 beats a minute. This trains your body to utilise fats for energy instead of carbohydrates, making it an ideal zone for weight loss. If you're just starting out,



Identifying your goal is the first step to success

'Understanding your objective allows you to choose the exact training principles that have been proven to work to achieve it'



Bodyweight training will help build muscle

begin with two weekly 30-minute sessions and build up to three-to-four sessions of 45 minutes to an hour every week.

4. GET YOUR STEPS UP In addition to your structured cardio, you will need to get yourself moving more in your everyday life. The best way to do this is to focus on increasing your step count to at least 10,000 steps a day, ideally 15,000.



Add two strength sessions to your weekly regime

5. AVOID JUST FOCUSING ON CARDIO – MIX IT UP FOR SUCCESS While cardio is a crucial component of any fitness routine, you should be including

45 minutes of strength training two-to-three times a week, too. This can be weight lifting, working with resistance bands, or using your own bodyweight, but it's crucial to be building muscle in your body.

After the age of 30, you lose three-to-eight per cent of your muscle mass per decade. Muscle is essential for burning fat, so the more you can build in your body, the more calories you burn at rest. That reaps benefits for your resting metabolism and means your body is burning energy outside the gym, too. This isn't the case with cardio, which only burns calories while you're doing it.

6. DO COMPOUND STRENGTH TRAINING Compound strength training is where you choose weightlifting moves that engage more than one muscle – ideally, as many as possible. Squats, deadlifts, bench presses and bent-over rows are all essential examples of compound moves that any weight-lifting programme should include, as they use multiple muscle groups simultaneously. That means you can get more muscles worked in a shorter amount of time. The

TOP 5 FOODS FOR EXERCISE

It's vital to fuel your fitness regime with the right nutrients. Here, James Pugh, nutrition advisor at Viridian (viridian-nutrition.com), shares his diet checklist for sporting success.

Wholemeal carbohydrates should be incorporated into your diet when doing exercise, particularly pre-exercise to boost glycogen stores and energy levels when exercising. For example, oats for breakfast would be a good option.

Protein consumption, particularly post-exercise, is crucial for muscle repair and growth. This will support injury prevention when participating in regular activity. Eggs and nuts are good options for this, as well as oily fish for fish-eaters, which will also act as an anti-inflammatory to aid recovery.

Fruits provide a wide variety of vitamins and minerals as they are very nutrient dense. Berries and bananas are good choices to eat before your workout to give you fast-release carbohydrates.

Leafy green vegetables, in particular spinach, are an essential part of everyone's diet but especially women's. Being rich in iron, spinach is a popular choice for women to not only support muscle repair and red blood cell production, but also their menstrual cycle.

There is a stigma that all fats are bad for us, however consuming beneficial fats such as avocados, seed oils and nuts provide an alternate energy source for your body and also protect you from injury and aid muscle movement.

Words: Will Duru and James Pugh | Photography: Shutterstock

result is more fat burning and the faster development of a lean, toned physique.

7. KEEP GOING FOR AT LEAST FOUR WEEKS

Consistency is the essential ingredient in any effective fitness regime, as it takes time and repeated efforts to really see results. You will have some days where you don't manage it and others where you do, and it's the sum of what you do the most that will count towards your result.

So, stick to any routine for four-to-eight weeks before considering any modifications. The initial phase will be about building your comfort in lifting weights and perfecting your technique. After this initial foundation is laid, you start progressive training, where you introduce incremental increases in weight and intensity every four weeks. Any effective fitness routine will keep challenging you to lift more weight, do more reps or progress in some way, as your body will quickly adapt until a programme becomes easy. That's the time when you have to step it up.

8. TRACK YOUR PROGRESS WITH PHOTOS

You need to measure your progress, and to do this effectively, you should utilise



Your body will adapt to training

visual cues. Taking regular photos from the front, back and side in underwear, swimwear or tight training gear helps you track changes in your body composition over time. Also, hands-up side photos capture the progress of your obliques (the muscles at the side of your torso), so you get a full view of your fitness progress. Photos beat the scales because your weight may well go up as you gain muscle (muscle weighs twice as much as fat).

9. NOTICE YOUR CONFIDENCE INCREASE

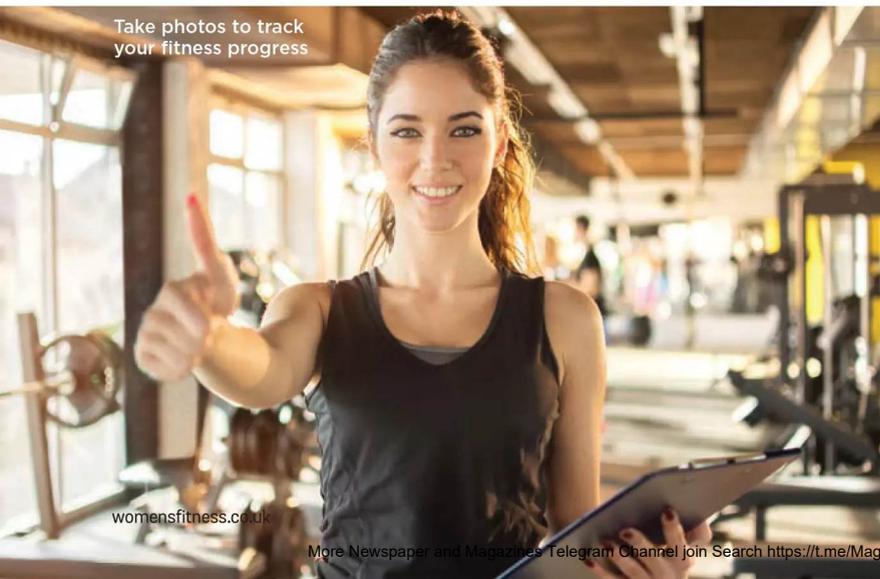
Beyond the physical transformations, you can also get motivated by the psychological impact of consistent training. Your increased confidence will be evident from better posture, more eye contact and a sense of increased overall self-assuredness - these are all

tangible markers of progress that can keep you motivated.

10. IGNORE INSTA FADS AND KEEP GOING

It's easy to get lured in by 10-minute workouts on social media. These don't work. Abs, for example, are not sculpted through isolated ab workouts but through an integrated approach focused on lifestyle and body composition. Achieving significant change requires commitment and consistency to simple principles:

- more everyday movement
- zone two training two-to-four times a week
- strength training two-to-five times a week
- a healthy diet, high in protein and complex carbs and low in sugar and processed foods. 🍷



Take photos to track your fitness progress

Meet the experts



Will Duru is a personal coach with more than 10 years' experience in the health and fitness industry. He is skilled in sports

nutrition, athletic training and exercise physiology, and uses his expertise to help clients achieve their wellness goals and potential. Find out more at ptwill.com



James Pugh is a nutritionist at Viridian Nutrition (viridian-nutrition.com) and graduated from Birmingham City University with a BSc (Hons) Sport & Exercise Nutrition. He regularly

provides nutritional advice on optimising the diet for healthy outcomes, and believes in taking a holistic approach to overall wellness.



THIRSTY Work

Running in the summer is almost guaranteed to make you break a sweat, so what should you be doing to stay hydrated when you train? Read on...

Water is essential for your body to function. You are around 65 per cent water, and water is necessary for everything from blood volume and heat regulation, to the digestion and absorption of the food you eat. You lose fluid all the time – as water vapour in your breath, through your skin as sweat and through excretion. And, as you exercise, especially at high intensities and in warm conditions, fluid losses increase.

Drinking to replace your fluid losses is something you do instinctively throughout your life. But when it comes to sport and exercise, the messages around how much you should drink, and the content and composition of that liquid, can seem pretty complicated. So what, and how much, should you be drinking?

TRAINING TIPS

Until relatively recently, the theory was you should be drinking as much water as possible, and that your sensation of thirst is an unreliable indicator of your hydration status. Drinking a magic eight glasses of water each day would improve your concentration and complexion, 'flush out toxins' and keep you energised. Drinking more when exercising and competing would also prevent a

catastrophic decline in performance. Suddenly, plastic bottles and pee colour charts were everywhere.

Based on claims from sports hydration companies and their sponsored athletes, it's easy to imagine that the moment you start doing any kind of physical activity, you need a personally customised electrolyte- and carbohydrate-balanced drink to avoid the perils of salt, fluid and energy loss. But, in reality, you're finely tuned to know what you need, due to your body's mechanisms for detecting and rectifying imbalances.

What you need to drink on any given run depends on a number of variables, including how far you're going, the intensity of the run, the weather conditions and the food and drink you consumed before you set off. In cool conditions, setting off well hydrated, you probably won't feel particularly thirsty on a two-hour, low- or moderate-intensity run. Hot weather, higher-intensity running, and setting out slightly dehydrated all add to your body's need to take on fluids, so on some days you may find you have a raging thirst after only an hour.

No predetermined hydration plan can take all of these interacting factors into account, and drinking too much or too little can be

detrimental to performance, enjoyment and even your health. So learn to listen to and trust your body's cues and, if you think it might be a thirsty day – because it's hot, you're running hill repeats or it's an early morning run and you haven't had time to fully replace your night-time fluid losses – have some hydration options available, whether that's carrying water with you or running a route with available drinking water.

RACE-DAY HYDRATION

On race day, while it's important to start out optimally hydrated, drinking too much can lead to discomfort from a sloshing stomach, needing to stop to pee

TOP TIP!

If you're keen to avoid needing a pit-stop halfway through a race, a good approach is to drink little and often, up until two hours before the race starts, then stop drinking. Just before you start, drink enough to quench your thirst then top up en route if you need to.

en route and even, potentially, deadly hyponatraemia (low sodium levels). Even over a marathon distance, faster runners, in particular, may not need to drink much along the way, especially in cooler conditions. In fact, studies have found that the best marathon runners are often the most dehydrated at the finish of a race. Most marathons have numerous aid stations along the route, so judge your need to drink by thirst, and sip rather than gulp.

Most of the time, listening to your cues for thirst is the best way to determine how much you need to drink, whether you're on a run or just getting on with your day. A review of the literature found that, when participants drank to thirst rather than to a plan, they lost an average of 2.1 per cent of their starting weight, whereas participants who drank to a hydration plan lost one per cent, but, most importantly, neither group showed any significant difference in performance. The

researchers concluded that this fact, combined with 'individual responses to the heat and the plethora of factors associated with the planning and logistics of training or competition', means there's no reason to pre-plan a hydration strategy so long as there's sufficient fluid available.

While drinking to thirst is a perfectly acceptable and effective approach, there are some situations when it isn't practical. The first is when water supplies are limited, for example if there aren't many aid stations in a race or if you're running a route where you can only refill at certain points. On these occasions, you may need to fit your hydration around what's available and, unless you're carrying it with you, it might be worth a quick drink, even if you're not particularly thirsty, if you know it'll be a while before you have the opportunity to drink again.

The second is during ultramarathons or other very long runs, when your cues for



Words: Jen and Sim Benson | Photography: Shutterstock



**TOP TIP!**

During long races – those of five hours or more – take on sodium in the form of electrolyte drinks or foods (crisps, salty potatoes, sandwiches, etc).

‘After hours of running, the mouth becomes dry from breathing, which can mimic the sensation of thirst’

thirst might get confused. After several hours of running, the mouth becomes dry from breathing, which can mimic the sensation of thirst. This can present a problem in longer challenges, when excessive fluid intake is likely to be far more of a danger than dehydration. Many hours into a run, trying to listen to any kind of thirst cues becomes difficult, and this is where even seasoned ultrarunners can get into trouble. In these cases, keeping food intake up at the same time as drinking, and being aware of discomfort from a bloated or sloshing stomach are important, as these are good indicators that you’re taking on board too much fluid.

SALT SOLUTIONS

There can’t be many runners who haven’t heard of electrolytes – look at any running retailer and electrolyte-containing powders, tablets and drinks are everywhere. But what are they, how do they work and should you be drinking them?

The primary electrolytes you need to worry about during extreme or very prolonged exercise are sodium, potassium and magnesium.

It’s rare for potassium and magnesium to be lacking without underlying health conditions or an extreme diet, however, blood plasma sodium concentrations vary greatly during exercise, depending on diet, sweat rate and concentration, hydration status and climatic conditions.

Drinking fluids with added electrolytes may aid absorption of fluids from the gut into the bloodstream and help slow the onset of hyponatraemia. However, as electrolyte drinks are still more dilute than blood plasma, they will not prevent hyponatraemia if you continue to overconsume fluids. 

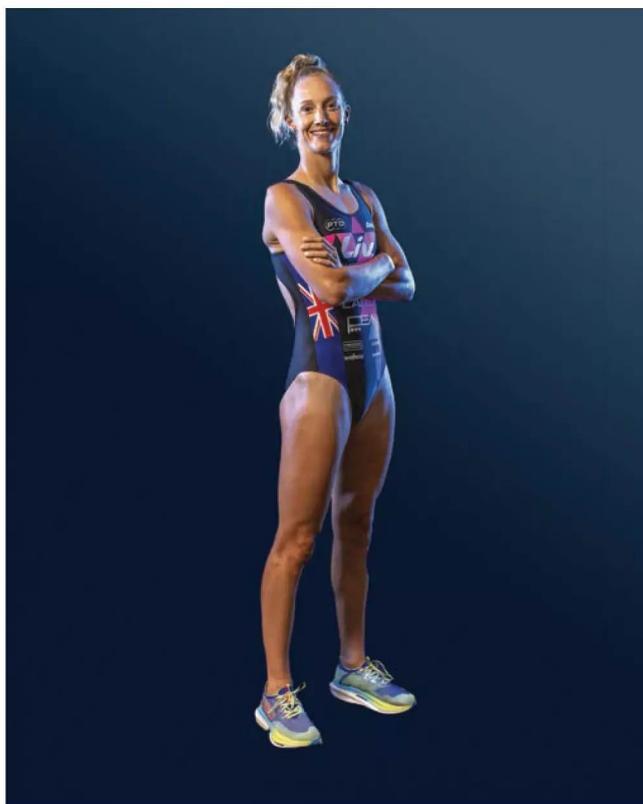


Extract from *Smart Running: The ultimate guide to becoming a fitter, stronger more confident runner* by Jen and Sim Benson (Vertebrate, £25)

GO with the flow

Should you race or rest when you have your period, and will tracking it help you achieve your goals? We asked three athletes to reveal how they train around their cycles

Words: Sarah Sellens



'It's really important I know my symptoms'

Professional triathlete **Emma Pallant-Browne** made headlines last year when a racing photo of her with a small blood stain on her tri suit – originally shared by the Professional Triathletes Organisation and later shared by Pallant-Browne alongside her own comments – sparked a conversation. Here, she reflects on the reality of racing as a woman and says she has learnt to race hard despite menstrual symptoms.

'The Professional Triathletes Organisation put the photo up and then someone's comment on it made me think that we need to change the conversation. I hoped that maybe a couple of people would look at the comment and read it and, if they thought the same, think, "Oh yeah, perhaps we should change how we think about that". I didn't expect it to be such a big topic, but when it got attention, I thought I should back up what I said and, if I'm not ashamed, post it to explain why I'm not ashamed, and why it's actually a great thing for me to have my period.

'I hope it has helped normalise exercising on a period. I think a lot more athletes would talk about exercising on their period and be open about it if they weren't worried it'd come across as an excuse. Especially in triathlon – I don't know what it's like in other sports – there's a lot of camaraderie at the top, and we don't want to take away from someone else's performance by saying at the end, "Oh

yeah, I found it a tough day because I was on my period". I think that's more the reason we don't talk about it, rather than being embarrassed.

'I track my period and I know my hardest days are the day before my period and the first day of my period. I have a really heavy flow just on that first day, and then it's a lot lighter and my period's quite short. I don't track it to change my training around it, because I think it's really important for me to know my symptoms and what I feel like when I'm pushing hard on my toughest days. I've learnt little tricks and things that alleviate some of those symptoms, which I can then be confident putting into practice on race day, and I've only learnt them from training hard on those days.

'When I track my cycle, I always write how I'm feeling and if anything helps, so that I can come back to it if I know my period is going to fall on a race day. I find that my temperature going up is definitely something that happens, so I have a

dark-coloured race suit and a lighter race suit – and the lighter one helps keep my temperature down.

‘There are so many products out there that I didn’t know about. I tried one menstrual cup that wasn’t right for me so I just thought cups didn’t work for me. But then, when I put up that post, I had so many people write to me and recommend different things – there’s even period swimwear out there. Imagine if that information was at the fingertips of every girl and woman. The percentage of females

who don’t want to train on their period is huge, so I feel like it would be awesome if there was some way the resources and products out there could be pulled together with the research and go into a flow questionnaire, to give recommendations that could help women with their barriers. So, for example, if it’s a swimmer and it turns out she’s afraid of leakage, maybe there is swimwear that can help. Every girl and woman is so individual. I think a flow questionnaire could lead them to the most relevant resources for them. It’s so simple and could be so good.’



Photography: T1000

You can see Pallant-Browne race in London on the Professional Triathletes Organisation’s new T100 Triathlon World Tour on July 27-28, which also includes opportunities for amateurs. Sign up at t100triathlon.com/participate

‘I’ve always monitored my cycle’

Team GB rower Heidi Long has always tracked her symptoms, and wants to open up the conversation about how the menstrual cycle can impact elite training.

‘I’ve always monitored my menstrual cycle because I think the most important thing is knowing what’s normal for you – everybody is different and if you don’t know what’s normal, you can’t monitor if something starts to go wrong. I’ve been on a lot of competitive women’s squads and that has been a driver in all of those teams.

‘Period pain does affect training, and so by tracking it, I know when my period is likely to start and can take painkillers 12 hours before to pre-empt it, especially if it’s during a block of intense selection or racing. I find my period also affects my strength a bit. I really notice this with pull-ups – before I bleed, I can do maybe half as many as the other side of bleeding. It’s a very small thing but I’m aware that my strength in the weights room does change throughout my menstrual cycle. It doesn’t

necessarily mean I tweak the training I’m doing, but I’m not suddenly freaking out that I’ve lost X amount of power and everything’s going to go wrong.

‘I’ve also had the privilege of working with Project Minerva (minervaproject.com), ongoing research that aims to help athletes understand the impact of their menstrual cycle. It’s opened up so many conversations about what the menstrual cycle is and how it can impact training. One of the first things we did was gather information about how our training is impacting our bodies – most of that was done through wearing heart-rate monitors for training sessions. Then, we tracked our menstrual cycles and would record symptom changes – weight fluctuations, psychological factors like confidence, changes in appetite or risk taking – and since then, we’ve done hormonal tracking





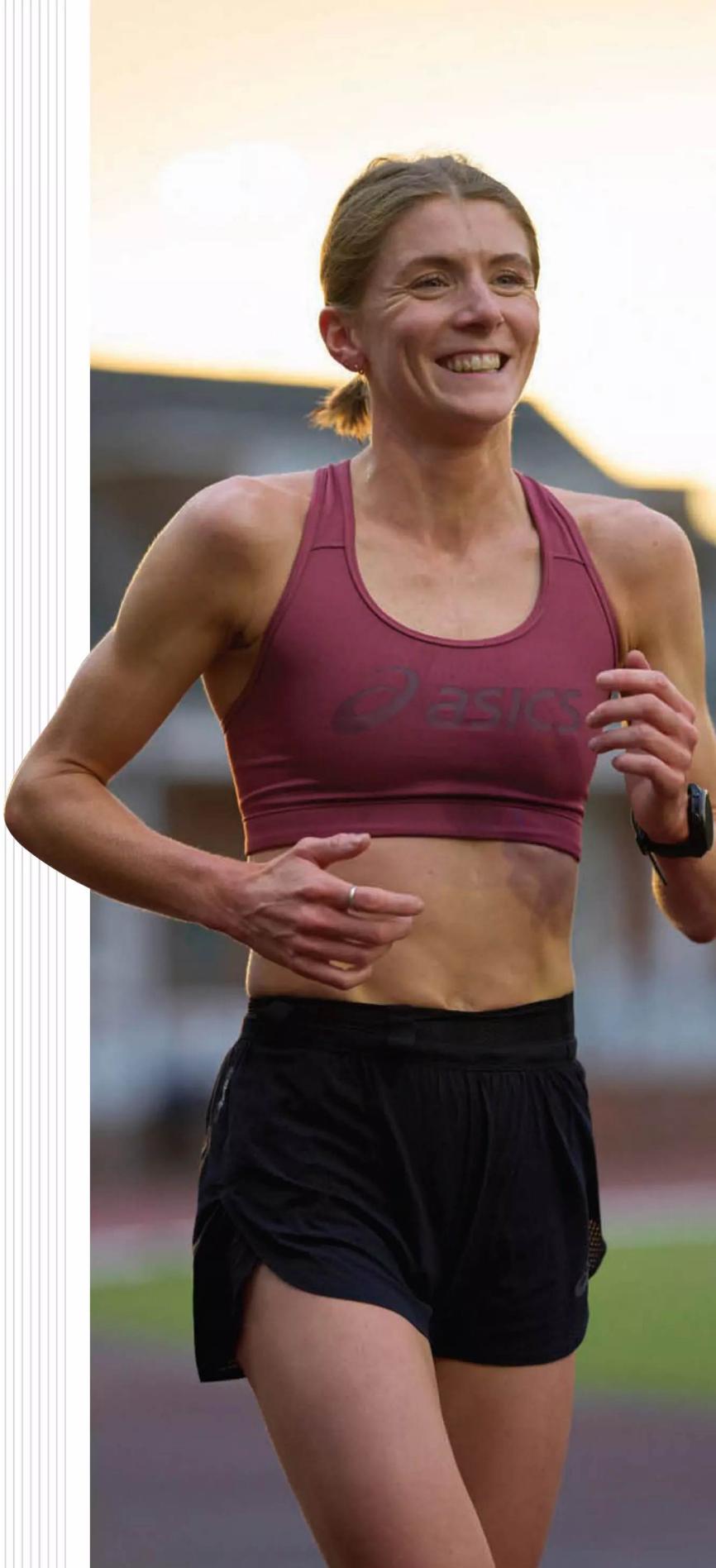
Photography: Benedict Tufnell for British Rowing

Heidi was part of the women's eight and doubled up in a second women's four to win two silver medals at the World Rowing Cup I in Varese, Italy in April 2024. Here she is pictured with the women's eight and their silver medals

with saliva samples. The researchers can then overlay these factors on the training programme, so we can see our training, the impact of our heart rate - if our morning heart rate was higher or lower - and we can also see if that overlays with any changes in hormone levels. It's building up a big picture of what happens during the month and how that impacts everything.

'For some people, it's really helped with injury prevention - they'll know if their hormones are changing, how that can impact their body, and whether they need to put in different measures such as taking collagen or reducing high-impact exercise. It's also enhanced communication between everyone; being able to have these conversations with male coaches or support staff and it not be a taboo subject; it's just very matter of fact: "Actually, I'm at this stage in my cycle, I'm pretty low on motivation and I'm pretty moody". You can acknowledge that your mood does change and you can't really help it, but you can put things in place to help the situation if you're going to be low on motivation, like listening to certain songs. Periods are such a big part of who we are that knowing we need to change the training a bit or improve the communication, and just building up a base to support athletes, is the most important thing.'

Buy tickets to Team GB House (house.teamgb.com) now to celebrate the Olympic Games alongside athletes like Heidi.





'I'm very comfortable talking about my period'

Elite triathlete **Beth Potter** says knowing her body and talking about her period has been key to training consistently all month-long.

'I don't have the most regular cycle, so it's difficult [to monitor it], but I track it on the Garmin Connect app and it's very much affected by stress. I do find that I have dips

throughout the month. I feel quite tired going into the week that I'm about to menstruate and I'm a lot hungrier so have to eat more. Without even discussing it with my coach, it's quite obvious that it's that time of the month. I'm lucky as it doesn't affect me too much in terms of physical symptoms - I don't get the cramps and a lot of the other symptoms that come with being on your period - I just get quite spotty and more tired than usual, but with triathlon, it's so difficult to know whether it's tiredness from menstruation or tiredness from the 30-something hours of training I do a week. So, if I'm on my period and I'm really tired, I'll just back off intensity wise, get more sleep and eat more. Those are the things I find help me the most. I'll also make sure I pack an extra snack on my bike ride and stop to have a proper refuel.

'Sometimes, if I feel like I'm struggling with stuff and I'm worried about what times I'm going to hit, I'll just go and run somewhere else - get away from the track and run on the road. If I get away from the measured distances of the track and just use my watch for pacing on the road or to log the session, I find

it's a lot mentally better for me. I will try not to think about what times I hit that day. That has been something that has definitely come with experience. I don't think me six or seven years ago would've been able to do that. I would've got really worked up about it, but I've learned from mistakes in the past to not get so fixated on time and go with how I feel.

'All my coaches are male, and I'm very lucky that I feel comfortable talking to them about being on my period. I think it's good to talk, and I feel comfortable talking about it with the men I train with. If I'm having a bad day on the bike and it's because of that, I'll just say, "I'm on my period at the moment and I'm just tired" and that's understood [as they'll say] "Oh yeah, we'll just back off a bit". The key thing is being able to communicate it.

'My coaches are the ones who set the training, so if they don't know how I'm feeling, it's difficult for them to adjust things. I've got to be honest with them. I think I'm good at knowing my body and letting them know how I feel, whether it's the time of the month or a niggle that's bothering me.'

MENSTRUAL MANAGEMENT

These handy helpers make it easier to train at that time of the month



Nixi Body Susie Sporty Hip Hugger Knickers
(£16, nixibody.com)

For medium flows, these period pants have seamless, scalloped edging so you can wear them under the tightest of leggings and there'll be no VPL.



Naked by Unicorn Cup Twin Pack
(£23.99, unicorncup.co.uk)

Great for period management during sport, these medical-grade silicone cups boast two sizes, are fully leak proof with the right fit, and hold up to six times that of pads or tampons.



WUKA Period Racerback Swimsuit
(£49.99, wuka.co.uk)

Featuring an ultra absorbent liner, this suit helps control moderate bleeding, light bladder leaks and spotting by absorbing three tampons' worth (15ml). It also boasts UV50+ protection.

wellwoman®

“Wellwoman helps support me for the busy days ahead.”
Tess Daly



Original



50+

No.1 women's vitamins*

From *Boots*, Superdrug, ☆, Holland&Barrett, supermarkets, health stores, pharmacies and wellwoman.com

*Nielsen GB ScanTrack Total Coverage Value & Unit Retail Sales 52 w/e 23/3/24. To verify contact Vitabiotics Ltd, 1 Apsley Way, London, NW2 7HF. UK's No1 women's supplement brand.

Wellwoman supports



QUEEN'S AWARD
4 TIMES WINNER



VITABIOTICS

OUTDOOR SPECIAL

HIT THE GREEN GYM!

Want to escape a stuffy gym? Exercising in nature is a boon to your health, proven to limit stress and depression as well as improve workout adherence. Read our expert advice for getting out there in the mornings, cranking up the intensity of your workout, plus how to support your outdoor efforts when you do go back to the gym. Inspiration? Check.



GET UP, go outdoors!

Exercising outside in nature could put you in a better mood for the rest of the day – so head outside early to reap the rewards!

Words: Lucy Miller

The early bird catches the worm, or so they say, and with the longer days and the weather heating up, now is a good time to take your workouts outside. Not only is it easier to stay consistent with morning workouts – because of the lack of social and work events planned earlier in the day – but US researchers also found adherence is often highest in the morning. Getting a dose of the ‘sunshine’ vitamin D will support healthy bones and a strong immune system, plus exercising in the open air can put you in a great mood for the rest of the day – think reduced symptoms of anxiety, anxiousness and even loneliness, according to a study published in the journal *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics*. Ready for a natural caffeine boost? Here are four outdoor workouts that will supercharge your morning.



Rucking

What is it: Not in the mood for an intense workout, but want more than walking? Try rucking. Originating from military training operations, rucking involves walking briskly while carrying a weighted backpack. What we love is that it's not about flashy equipment or complicated moves, it's about putting one foot in front of the other and just getting yourself out there. It's the kind of workout that feels familiar yet somehow refreshingly different, and it's brilliant for clearing your mind and filling your lungs with fresh air before the day begins.

Why do it: Like walking, rucking is easy on your joints and will also deliver a surprisingly effective cardiovascular workout. The act of walking with added weight elevates your heart rate and stimulates aerobic fitness, all without the extra strain and impact associated with activities such as running. It will also challenge your glutes, legs, core and upper body, as well as your stability, balance and endurance.

How to do it: Whether it's a hike through the woods, a stroll along the beach or a stomp around the block, rucking can be done absolutely anywhere and anyhow you want. All you need is a sturdy backpack, some weights and a route in mind. Why not start with a lighter load and gradually increase the weight as your strength and endurance improve? You can also join local walking or hiking clubs in your area and wear your rucksack for extra intensity - no one needs to know just how heavy it is, all you need to do is keep up!



Try this!

Fill your bag with **Mirafit Cast Iron Ruck Plates** (£24.95, mirafit.co.uk), in 5kg, 10kg, 15kg or 20kg.

You can source a local walking group or find a route at ramblers.org.uk or timeoutdoors.com

Park HIIT



What is it: HIIT (high-intensity interval training) is a well-known way to boost the metabolism and, therefore, burn body fat. This is because it increases EPOC (excess post-exercise

oxygen consumption, or an increased rate of oxygen intake after exercise) more than steady-state exercise, meaning you'll burn more calories for longer after training.

Why do it: The beauty of HIIT is you can do it anywhere, which makes it a great outdoor workout. This type of training is time-efficient, and you don't need any equipment to reap the benefits. It's also a great way to kickstart endorphin release and avoid mid-morning or afternoon slumps. Researchers from Skidmore University found that women who did HIIT experienced a reduction in their

blood pressure, whilst also lowering fat stores, especially around the midsection.

How to do it: The key is to get your heart rate up for short amounts of time, with rests in between. Pick a movement and exercise as hard as you can for a period of time (e.g. 30 seconds), then have 30 seconds of rest, and repeat. Plyometric press-ups, planks, squat jumps, star jumps and high-knees are all easy to perform outdoors and make a great HIIT session. Triceps dips, regular and lateral step-ups, and elevated planks are also great to do on a park bench. Try some hill sprints, too - just make sure you warm up effectively.



Try this!

The Women's **UA Shift Running Shoes** (£100, underarmour.co.uk) will support your sprints, jumps and squats.

Find a park or outdoor bootcamp such as Be Military Fit (bemilitaryfit.com), or ask your gym if it takes classes outdoors. David Lloyd (davidlloyd.co.uk) has an outdoor HIIT class called Battlebox. See The Great Outdoor Gym Company (tgogc.com) for local park gyms.

Sunrise
yoga

What is it: Yoga in a studio is great, but taking your asanas out into nature can add extra benefits. Yoga is already a restorative form of exercise that can make you feel calmer, happier and more flexible, but rolling your mat out onto a sunny garden or beach just helps increase those effects.

Why do it: Yoga means 'to unite', and doing yoga first thing in the morning is a great way to help tune in to what your body needs on that particular day, while improving flexibility, balance, strength and mindfulness. Practising yoga in the morning can also help increase energy levels, improve focus and posture, and set a positive tone for the rest of the day. Australian researchers found that yoga can relieve stress and help combat depression. Plus, having your bare feet in contact with

the earth is very grounding and can help you to feel stable, secure and present.

Get involved: Find a local park, or why not find a local class that takes the flow out onto a rooftop or the grass such as Park Yoga (parkyoga.co)? Search Eventbrite for local outdoor yoga classes, and if a class doesn't suit your morning timetable, apps such glo (glo.com) or Ekhart Yoga (ekhartyoga.com) mean you can virtually take a class where and when it suits you.



Try this!
Embrace chilly summer mornings by wearing **Sweaty Betty's Tides High Open Weave Jumper** (£95, sweatybetty.com).



'Having your bare feet in contact with the earth is very grounding, and can help you to feel stable and secure'



Open-water swimming

What is it: Butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, sidestroke or freestyle, there's nothing quite like immersing yourself in an empty lake or the rolling waves of the sea! It's free, it's liberating and it's a great way to wake up your body and mind first thing — no matter how early it is or how cold the water.

Why do it: Open-water morning swimming can truly take your breath away, plus you can get a real buzz from the open water and the peace and tranquillity it brings. Studies show it can help with depression, weight loss, boosting the

immune system, increasing fitness and muscle strength, and adding to overall happiness. Swimming is also a great form of cardiovascular exercise that won't put unnecessary impact through the joints. Plus, you may even catch the sunrise and some early morning rays as you get your laps in — now there's an incentive!

Get involved: Outdoor swimming pools and open-water venues are the perfect place to dive in. Book a lido session via allthelidos.co.uk or check out The Outdoor Swimming Society's Open Water Lake Directory (outdoorswimmingsociety.com). 🌐



Try this!

The Nike HydraStrong Solid Swimsuit (£49.95, nike.com) has wide straps for support and is made with a durable HydraStrong fabric, so you feel swim-ready no matter how early it is.

Make nature YOUR GYM!

Make the most of the great British summertime by heading outside for some exercise, fresh air and vitamin D

Words: Sarah Sellens

Think back to your last outdoor workout – how did it make you feel? Happy? Energised? De-stressed? The chances are it made you feel all these things and more, according to the latest data, which shows that exercising in the open air is a boon to your health. The powers of green exercise are so impressive that research in the *Journal of Physical Activity & Health* shows women who train outside are 28 per cent less likely to feel depressed than those who train inside. And the same study reports that women who do some of their workouts outdoors log over twice as much exercise as those who stick to an indoor-only workout plan.

But perhaps the biggest contribution outdoor exercise can make to your wellbeing is the overall positive effect it has

on energy levels. One review reveals that, compared to working out indoors, exercising in a natural environment is linked to greater feelings of revitalisation, happiness and vitality; another study shows that being in the outdoors can make you feel more enthusiastic, alive and energised. The benefits are big, and outdoor activity is free to do!

Why working up a sweat in the open air makes us feel so great is thought to be in part down to something called biophilia – a theory that suggests we humans are hard-wired to want contact with the natural environment. The biophilia hypothesis reports that contact with nature is a basic human need, and we respond positively to being outdoors because of it. Many believe that our need for nature goes back to the dark ages,



Why not give outdoor gym equipment a go?

when the natural landscape provided the resources – water, sunlight and food – necessary for survival. Further research suggests that natural scenes and being out among nature can evoke positive memories and happy emotions from days past.

Whatever the reason for the feel-good kick that Mother Nature provides, experts agree that we humans still harbour a desire to be at one with nature – hence exercising outside in the summer will make us feel good.

NO RESTRICTIONS

And there are other perks – outdoor exercise can work to your timetable. The outdoors is always there waiting for you morning, noon, evening or night. It's a place where being active is likely and exercise is easy to carry out, too.

Indeed, when you have a jam-packed daily schedule, your workout hopes can get squeezed by a gym's timetable – perhaps you struggle to make the morning class or fail to clock in before closing time – but you can always fit an outdoor



Make use of what's available in your locality

workout into your day, at any time and in any place. Whether you cycle to work, walk to the station or go for a run in your lunch hour, it's simple to cram an outdoor session into even the busiest day.

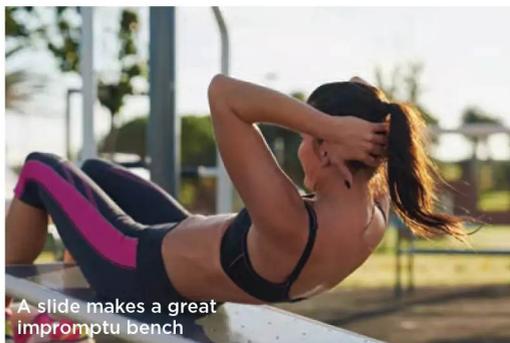
THE GREEN GYM

Clearly, exercising among nature is good news for your body, mind and soul but, for many of us, knowing what to do in the great outdoors is the stumbling block.

Running, walking and cycling are fantastic options, but the green gym has a lot more to offer. If you're wanting to harness strength gains, why not run or cycle to a park for a bodyweight circuit? You could try push-ups, squats or lunges on the ground, tricep dips and step-ups on a bench or low wall. You could even do dead hangs and pull-ups if there are monkey bars nearby.

The trick is to keep it simple. The beauty of outdoor training is that you don't need any kit or a lot of exercise know-how, so don't over-complicate things by trying to do too much, too soon. A simple workout might consist of a circuit of five exercises – it needn't be any more complex than that.

Scared to give it a go? Despite its association with military-style fitness, outdoor training isn't only for workout pros. In fact, it's perfect for fitness newbies who don't want to splash out on a 'get fit' regime. For those who are just starting their fitness journey, going to the gym can be expensive and daunting. Outdoor training enables you to work out on your own terms, without having to commit to a membership or wait around for kit. And for those of you who are already fit, exercising outside is a great way to mix up your routine to keep reaping results. Sign up to one of the many outdoor workout programmes, or try creating your own using our advice on page 84. It's time to get outside!



A slide makes a great impromptu bench

WHAT OUTDOOR TRIBE DO YOU BELONG TO?



Training in nature reduces the risk of depression by 28 per cent

1. WHAT ARE YOUR WORKOUT GOALS?

- A** Performance: I'm training for a race
- B** Shape-up: I'd like to get stronger and slimmer
- C** Enjoyment: I want to have fun off the beaten track
- D** Aimless: I have lots of energy to burn!
- E** Social: I want to beat my buddy in a match

2. WHERE DO YOU LIKE TO WORK OUT?

- A** On a long, flat road where I can gather speed
- B** In an upbeat atmosphere with other exercisers
- C** Somewhere wild, rugged and beautiful
- D** On city roads, parks and streets
- E** On the court or pitch

3. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING IS YOUR TYPE OF SWEAT SESSION?

- A** Timed sprints
- B** A bodyweight HIIT-style workout
- C** Fartlek training
- D** A crazy obstacle course
- E** Drills sessions or skill-based games

4. WHAT MAKES A GOOD WORKOUT?

- A** The competition aspect
- B** The social side
- C** Getting close to nature
- D** Boosting my athleticism
- E** Increasing my skills

5. WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO KEEP FIT?

- A** A place on the podium
- B** Spending time with other people
- C** The sense of freedom
- D** Conquering my fears
- E** My team or club

Results

MOSTLY As

YOU'RE A PERFORMANCE PRO
Keep fit? Stay healthy? Pah! You're in it for the sense of achievement you get when you cross the finish line. Whether going for gold or aiming to beat your own PB (personal best), your workout motivation gets a huge hit of adrenaline when there's a challenge involved.
TRY: Marathons, triathlons, cycling sportsives

MOSTLY Bs

YOU'RE A MULTI-TASKER
You like your training straight up with a hit of high-intensity, body-boosting results, such as improved strength, greater cardio fitness and maximum calorie burn. Not content with being fast or fit, you want to train to be strong, agile and

flexible as well. And you want your friends with you, too!
TRY: Bootcamps, obstacle course racing, mud runs

MOSTLY Cs

YOU'RE A TRAIL BLAZER
Whether running, hiking or biking, you love to head off the beaten track. For you, a good workout involves exploring the wild outdoors and conquering any hurdle that Mother Nature throws at you – rocks, mud, hills. Whether alone or with friends, one thing's for sure – you choose the woods and mountains over roads and parks every time!
TRY: Fell running, mountain biking, mountaineering

MOSTLY Ds

YOU'RE AN URBANITE
Exercise for you is about

self-discovery, growth and development. You don't need wild mountains and untouched trails to hit your goals – you've got everything you need on the streets of your home town. From pacing the pavements, to jumping over walls or sprinting up stairs, the space outside your door has it all.
TRY: Parkour, urban hiking and urban orienteering

MOSTLY Es

YOU'RE A TEAM PLAYER
Sport is your number one motivation. Solo player or part of a team, you love playing games to keep fit. Sports are super-social and give you the chance to hone a bunch of skills – agility, power, speed, strength. Plus, games are fun!
TRY: Tennis, football, Ultimate Frisbee



Create your own workout

Want to craft a personal outdoor workout plan? Here's how to be your own PT!

1. DO AN ASSESSMENT

Whether your chosen outdoor venue is a park, the roads or your garden, start creating your workout by assessing the area. What outdoor tools do you have at your disposal? Perhaps there are hills, paths or circular loops for running intervals. Maybe there are benches or low walls for step-ups, dips and incline/decline push-ups. A high wall is great for squat holds and wall walks. If you're really lucky, you might have access to monkey bars, swings or pull-up bars. Hey, who said that playgrounds are just for kids?

2. CREATE A GOAL

What do you want to get out of your outdoor workouts? Decide on a primary goal – it might be to lose weight, boost endurance or gain strength. If your aim is weight loss, do high-intensity moves for short periods of time with little rest between sets – circuits of squat jumps, sprints and pull-ups are great. If your goal is to build endurance, select moderate-intensity moves

that you can perform for a lot of reps – try circuits of longer running intervals, skipping, rows or lunges. If you want to gain muscle definition, consider isolating body parts and choosing multiple moves that focus on the same muscle group – so, you might do an upper-body workout one day, a lower-body workout another day and a core workout on the final day.

3. CHOOSE YOUR MOVES

Once you've decided on a workout goal, it's time to choose the exercises that you want to do. For full-body workouts, aim to include a push exercise (push-up, decline push-up, incline push-up), pull exercise (body rows, pull-ups, chin-ups), lower-body move (squat, lunge, step-up) and core exercises (v-sits, crunches, scissor legs). Upper-body workouts should always include push and pull moves. Keep it simple by choosing five-to-six moves, and performing three-to-four sets or circuits of all the exercises. It doesn't have to be complicated.

4. PICK A METHOD

Got your moves? Now, how are you going to perform them? Think again about your goal, as this will help you choose a method. Circuit-style sessions are great for all because you can tailor the rest, reps or total time to suit your goal. Super-sets

USEFUL TRAINING METHODS

AMRAP
(As many rounds as possible)
Set a stopwatch to a specific time, such as five minutes, and perform as many circuits of your chosen exercises as possible until the time is up.

TABATA
Do each exercise at maximum intensity for 20 seconds and then rest for 10 seconds between moves. Repeat eight times.

EMOM
(Every minute on the minute)
Do your exercises alternately on the minute for a set number of minutes. For example, 'EMOM for 10 minutes of five box jumps and burpees' means do five box jumps during the first minute, five burpees during the second minute, five box jumps during the third minute, and continue alternating for 10 minutes.

(performing two moves that target the same muscle group back-to-back, such as bench dips and diamond push-ups or wall sits and step-ups) are great for lean muscle gains. You could do three different super-sets, such as three-to-four sets of triceps dips and diamond push-ups, three-to-four sets of incline and decline push-ups, and three-to-four sets of pull-ups and body rows. Want to rev up your heart rate? Try high-intensity methods such as Tabata, AMRAP or EMOM (see box, above).

5. STICK TO PROTOCOL

Warming up and cooling down are always important, and this goes for outdoor sessions, too! Try warming up the muscles you're about to use by doing gentle versions of the set exercises. Follow this with pulse-raising high knees, skipping or jogging. And always stretch after the session, too...

Tyre fun!

Got a spare tyre lying around? Great! Flipping, pulling and pushing tyres burns calories and builds lean muscle. Try this workout



TYRE FLIP

Reps: 20

Face the tyre with feet wider than hip-width. Shift hips back and squat as far as you can, keeping chest lifted and extending your arms between your feet. Slide your hands under the tyre, then push through heels to rise up out of the squat, flipping the tyre up and over as you do so. Shuffle forward, drop down, repeat. Try to do it fast.



POWER SQUAT

Reps: 20

Start with feet hip-width apart inside the tyre and drop into a squat, keeping the weight through your heels and chest lifted. Push down through your heels to explode up into the air. While jumping, widen your stance and land your feet on opposite sides of the tyre rim, with soft knees. Step back down into the tyre and repeat.



INCLINE PUSH-UP

Reps: 12-15

Crouch facing the tyre and place hands on it, shoulder-width apart. Extend both legs behind you, into a high push-up. Engage abs and bend elbows to lower chest towards the tyre. When your elbows are at 90-degrees, squeeze your chest to push back to the start. Keep core muscles engaged throughout, and a straight line between shoulders and ankles.



TYRE PULL

Reps: 20

Wrap a resistance trainer or rope around your tyre, tying a knot to secure it. Hold the other end of the rope, tug-of-war style, and grasp firmly. Walk backwards until your arms are extended and the rope is taut. Drop into a semi squat and drag the tyre towards you by pulling the rope in towards your chest. Walk back again and repeat.



ROTATING PLANK

Reps: 2

Crouch facing the tyre and place hands on it shoulder-width apart. Extend both legs behind into a high-plank position. Engage abs and step right foot and right hand round to the right. Bring the left foot and left hand in to meet them. Repeat until you've travelled around the full rim of the tyre. That's one rep. Repeat the other way in a full circle. 🕒

TURN YOUR WALKS *into a workout*

You don't have to do a long-distance yomp for walking to be effective. Heed these training tips to really boost your fitness levels

We all have our own natural pace and speed of walking. But, by upping the speed and varying the way you walk, you can turn each stride you take into a calorie-burning move. Want to burn fat, tone your thighs or tighten your tum? Read on for tips on all these, plus how to get the best and fastest results from your walking workouts.

Q HOW FAR DO I NEED TO WALK?

The standard recommendation is to aim for 10,000 steps a day to reap health rewards. This may sound a lot, but during a 30-minute walk you can easily take anywhere between 2,000-6,000 steps, and you'll still have the rest of the day to build up to your 10,000-step goal. A good starting point to getting fitter is to establish the

average number of steps you currently take. Do this by wearing a tracker for three days. Record the total number of steps you've walked at the end of each day, add them up and divide by three. Here's what your total indicates:

3,000 steps a day - Sedentary

If you're a beginner to fitness, building up from this point will help you start to improve your fitness.

6,000 steps a day - Somewhat active

This is a level of walking that will help improve your health and prevent you from gaining excess weight.

10,000+ steps a day - Active

You're on target to stay fit and keep super healthy.

Once you've established your baseline number of daily steps, you can build up your total gradually. Try adding 500 steps a week by building a bit more time into your day for walking - choose a further shop for your lunchtime snack, or add some walking into your daily commute - you'll be amazed how quickly the steps add up. If you want to aim for a distance goal, a great walking distance during the week is about two miles (around 5,000 steps). Then, at the weekend, you can head out to tackle longer distances.

Interval walking

Introducing intervals - bursts of faster walking - into your sessions helps boost your fitness and burns more calories. For your faster intervals, walk as fast as you can without breaking into a jog.



*‘Try to walk as fast as you can
without being breathless’*



Q HOW FAST DO I NEED TO WALK?

To walk into shape, you need to aim to be walking at between four and five-and-a-half miles per hour. Here's an easy guide to walking paces:

Stroll pace

This is the pace most of us walk at throughout the day – around the house or office, for instance. On average, we walk at about two miles an hour. So, walking at this pace, it would take you about 30 minutes to walk one mile.

Average pace

This is the speed most of us walk if we are outdoors – walking to the office or out shopping, for example. It's a bit faster than stroll pace, at around three miles an hour. So, walking at this speed, it would take 20 minutes for you to walk one mile.

Walk-slim pace

This faster pace naturally engages your arms. The faster you walk the more you swing your arms, which helps increase your speed. Walk-slim pace is approximately four to five-and-a-half miles an hour. Walking at this pace, you'll complete a mile in about 12 -14 minutes. This difference in intensity and effort pays you a big reward, giving you lots of weight-loss and toning benefits. As you get fitter, you'll find your speed will increase. The harder you work, the better the results! Try to walk as fast as you can without being so breathless you can't hold a conversation – sometimes called the 'talk test'. Walking should be an aerobic exercise to ensure your muscles have sufficient oxygen. If you're gasping for breath, you're doing anaerobic exercise – slow down a little.

Increase your speed

The easiest way to improve your walking pace is to set yourself a time trial. Find a small circular walk route and, once a month, challenge yourself to walk it as fast as you can. Record your time and track your progress.

Cross-country

Mix up the terrains you walk on – grass, tarmac or even sand. You'll work different muscles at varying intensities.



Q HOW OFTEN SHOULD I WALK?

You should be aiming to walk whenever you can. As well as your walking workouts, try to incorporate as much walking into your life as possible. Walk to the shops, walk the kids to school or take a break from your desk and go for a walk at lunchtime – just increase your normal speed to help burn calories. You can log your walks into a training plan. But as walking is a safe, low-impact exercise, it's great to walk on other days too, if you feel the urge to get outside.

Q WHERE SHOULD I WALK?

Every environment offers a different benefit. Hilly terrain is great as it ups the intensity and gives your legs and bottom a great workout. Cross-country is another good challenge, as the mixture of terrains means you engage more muscles. Climbing over stiles and gates gives you that extra calorie boost. Beach walking has an additional challenge – you have to make more effort moving forwards as the sand doesn't supply you with a solid foundation to propel your heel forwards from. In fact, walking on a sandy beach burns approximately 100 calories per mile. So even while you're on your summer holiday you can stick to your walking plan and keep your mind and body healthy. Closer to home, pavements are a good surface for picking up your speed. Ideally, try to incorporate a range of terrains into your regular walks. 📌

'Even while you're on your summer holiday you can stick to your walking plan'





Strong FOR RUNNING

Getting strong for the outdoors sometimes starts by doing the leg work indoors – so boost your runs with this strength-training workout

The only way to run faster and harder is to run more, right? Well, not exactly. You also need leg strength. Running will build cardiovascular ability as well as endurance in the legs, but the more developed your leg muscles are, the more efficiently they'll be able to use oxygen.

This means that they'll carry you further for longer, and help you to tackle those hills and inclines with greater ease. The muscles and ligaments surrounding the delicate knees and ankles will also be stronger, helping you to stay free from injury as well as be more aligned.

Add this workout to your normal run-training plan once a week to power up your striding strength, reinforce your joints and keep your legs lasting longer.

All levels
3 x 10 reps
each move

► LUNGE

- Rest a barbell across your shoulders (A).
- Take a big step forward, bending both knees to 90 degrees (B).
- Push through your front heel back to the start and repeat, stepping forward with the opposite leg.
- Alternate legs with each rep.

Top tip: Keep your chest facing forward and your shoulders back.



◀ SINGLE-LEG SQUAT

- Stand on one leg and extend the other in front of you (A).
- Bend the hips and supporting knee, push your bottom out behind you and squat as low as is comfortable (B).
- Push up to the start and repeat.
- Complete a full set on each leg.

▶ SKATERS

- Stand on your right leg with your left leg crossed behind it, a few inches off the floor (A).
- Leap as far to the left as possible (B), landing on your left leg with your right leg crossed behind it, a few inches off the floor (C).
- This is one rep. Repeat fluidly.



▶ SQUAT

- Rest a barbell across your shoulders (A).
- Bend your knees and hips, pushing your bottom back to squat as low as you find comfortable (B).
- Push back up to the start and repeat.



◀ SPLIT SQUAT

- Hold a dumbbell in each hand and place one foot on a bench behind you and the other about a foot in front of your body (A).
- Bend your front leg to lower your body as far as you find comfortable (B), then push back up to the start. Repeat.
- Complete a full set on each leg.



◀ STIFF-LEG DEADLIFT

- Lay a barbell in front of you.
- Keeping your knees soft but straight, lean over and take hold of the barbell (A).
- Stand up (B). Slowly lower the weights back down until your hands are level with the middle of your shins. Repeat.

Top tip: Keep your chest up and shoulders back.

▶ HAMSTRING CURL

- Lie on the floor with your feet resting on a stability ball.
- Lift your back off the floor so your body forms a straight line (A), then roll the ball towards your bottom (B).
- Reverse the movement and repeat.



▶ SINGLE-LEG DEADLIFT

- Hold a dumbbell in your right hand and stand with your weight on your right leg (A).
- Keeping your right leg and back straight, bend forward at the hip to lower the dumbbell toward your foot, raising your left leg behind you to balance (B).
- Lift back up to the start and repeat. Complete a full set on each leg.

Top tip: Don't arch your upper back as you lower the dumbbell. Ⓜ



Your outdoor WORKOUT WARDROBE

Be ready for all your sporty summer adventures wearing the latest kit to run, bike and hike

Running



COOL RUNNINGS (£63, asics.com)

From tanks and tees to shorts and shoes, the new range of summer running kit from Asics has everything to keep you feeling cool and dry when the temperature rises, including these light, flexible and breathable Road High Waist Tights.



SUUNTO Sonic Bone Conduction Headphones (£129, suunto.com)

Sweatproof and water-resistant, these open-ear headphones let you listen to your favourite music while allowing you to be aware of traffic or the sounds of nature. Incredibly lightweight, a full 60-minute charge delivers 10 hours of battery life.



Compressport Visor Ultralight

(£22, compressport.com)

Made from a ventilated and fast-drying mesh fabric that quickly wicks away sweat and moisture, this visor boasts an articulated peak that can be lowered for increased sun protection or raised to widen your field of vision.

HOKA Skyward X Road Running Shoe

(£185, hoka.com)

Pushing soft and smooth to the extreme, these resilient trainers promise your easiest miles yet with a convex carbon fibre plate that allows the revolutionary suspension system to compress and spring back with each step.



Montane Featherlite Windproof Jacket

(£90, montane.com)

Weighing in at a mere 90g, this windproof yet highly breathable jacket stows away in any pack or pocket. Perfect for whipping out on mountain trails to beat chilly gusts and gales, it also has several handy zip pockets.





**Adidas Terrex Agravic Speed
Ultra Trail Running Shoe**
(£200, [adidas.co.uk](https://www.adidas.co.uk))

Designed for ultra races, these shoes boast a breathable, foot-hugging upper and abrasion-resistant overlays for durability over any terrain. Made with recycled materials, they'll help you leave a footprint that's both stylish and eco-conscious.



**Smartwool
Active Mesh
High Neck Tank**
(£44.99, [smartwool.co.uk](https://www.smartwool.co.uk))

Combining three performance fabrics in one, this vest blends the natural anti-sweat and anti-odour benefits of merino wool with the quick drying time of recycled polyester and the softness and cooling properties of Tencel Lyocell.

HUAWEI Watch Fit 3
(£139.99, [huawei.com](https://www.huawei.com))

Ultra-slim and super-light, this fashion-forward sports watch has a 1.82in extra-large high-definition AMOLED display for viewing all your fitness and recovery stats and promises 30 per cent more stable heart rate monitoring.



**Haglofs L.I.M Intense Trail
Running Vest**
(£130, [haglofs.com](https://www.haglofs.com))

Serving as a super lightweight and breathable running gilet, this highly adjustable vest keeps all your essentials secure as you tackle long distances with a total of five pockets, plus two spots for hydration flasks.

**Sweaty Betty Tempo
Run Shorts**
(£65, [sweatybetty.com](https://www.sweatybetty.com))

These two-in-one running shorts are made from a quick-drying, sweat-wicking fabric and feature mesh inserts and high hemlines for total freedom of movement, with a zip pocket at the back for essentials.



**Compressport Pro Racing
Socks v4.0 Run Low**
(£16, [compressport.com](https://www.compressport.com))

Lightweight and highly ventilated, these ergonomically shaped socks prevent blisters by wicking away sweat quickly to keep feet fresh and dry. Different dot thickness also adds targeted protection and extra grip.



New Balance RC Short 3"
(£60, [newbalance.co.uk](https://www.newbalance.co.uk))

When the sun is shining, only short shorts will do! These ones wick sweat away from your body, feature an external back zippered pocket and two internal drop-in pockets, and include a seamlessly constructed internal brief for distraction-free runs.



**Brooks Crossback 2.0
Sports Bra**
(£50, [brooksrunning.com](https://www.brooksrunning.com))

Sleek and streamlined, this best-selling bra has smooth, built-in cups that lift and shape each breast to comfortably limit movement. The nearly seamless design also reduces chafing and digging.



Cycling

PEDAL POWER

Rapha's new 'This is how we ride' collection features cycling apparel to help female riders feel empowered, comfortable and confident. It includes this Padded Skort (£100, rapha.cc) with an integrated chamois pad to protect your posterior.



**Oakley Encoder Strike
Giro D'Italia**

(£248, oakley.com)
Created with insight from Team Oakley athletes, these cycling sunglasses feature functional ventilated frames for greater airflow and Prizm lenses with an extended shape for optimised coverage and a wider field of view.



**Giro Agilis MIPS Road
Helmet**

(£99.99, wiggles.com)
Combining an airy design with slightly deeper coverage, this helmet is at home on the road and during multi-surface riding activities. Adjustable for a secure fit, it also has anti-microbial padding for added comfort and hygiene.



**Thule Vital 8L Hydration
Pack**

(£124.99, thule.com)
Specifically constructed to improve bike handling and reduce muscle strain, this women-specific backpack has a low centre of gravity for optimal weight distribution, along with expandable cargo space for your gear and a 2.5L Hydrapak reservoir.



**Le Col Lightweight
Socks**

(£17, lecol.cc)
Engineered to maximise breathability without compromising comfort on the hottest summer rides, these socks use a lightweight mesh construction for optimised breathability and moisture management.



Vango F10 Hydrogen Air (£580, vango.co.uk)

As the world's lightest twin-skin tent with AirBeam technology, this award-winning, highly-compressible structure is easy to inflate, takes just six minutes to pitch and packs away into small rucksacks and bike-packing bags.



Stolen Goat Wenders Ibex Everyday Jersey (£75, stolengoat.com)

Easy to wear all day, every day, this short-sleeve jersey is designed to cope with the warmest of weather. Breathable, quick-wicking and fast-drying, it also features four-way stretch fabric for a close yet comfy fit.

H&M DryMove Cycling Bib Shorts (£74.99, hm.com)

Lightweight and stretchy, these breathable bib shorts wick away moisture from your skin and have a mesh panel at the back to increase ventilation. A concealed silicone trim also helps to keep the legs in place.



Rab Cinder Crank Pants (£135, rab.equipment/uk)

Ultra-lightweight and breathable, these technical biking pants have an articulated on-bike fit and high-wear reinforcements for added durability to withstand your most challenging adventures on mountain trails.



Rab Cinder Downpour Light Waterproof Jacket (£160, rab.equipment/uk)

Built with a lightweight Proflex fabric which is supple and soft next to skin, this highly compressible and packable shell is packed with bike-specific features and perfect for throwing over your jersey in summer showers.

Le Col Pro Air Jersey (£140, lecol.cc)

Made to help you survive the hottest conditions, this exceptionally breathable jersey is Le Col's lightest, with an airy mesh construction designed to increase airflow and minimise moisture build-up.



Maaree Empower Sports Bra (£49, maaree.com)

Perfect for cycling, this breathable medium-support compression sports bra incorporates pre-tensioned Overband Technology to keep your breasts securely in place. Even better, it includes a rear pocket for phones and valuables.



Canyon Ultimate CF SL 7 Di2 (£3,849, canyon.com)

As Canyon's entry level all-round road bike, this high-performance design strikes a perfect balance between lightness, comfort, robustness and aerodynamics, and excels at racing and climbing.





Hiking



PEAK PERFORMANCE

(£50, columbiasportswear.co.uk)

Columbia's Boundless Explorer collection features advanced tech, including sun protection and rain-and-stain repellency. These breathable Boundless Trek Leggings will keep you feeling fresh all day.



Montane Dart Vest

(£32, montane.com)

Made from 100 per cent recycled Apex Eco fabric for the ultimate in breathability, this lightweight, moisture-managing vest dries almost as fast as it gets wet to keep you cool and comfy outdoors.

Rab Muon ND40L Hiking Pack

(£200, rab.equipment/uk)

Built for fast-moving hikers, this strong and streamlined pack boasts a women-specific fit, wraparound harness, shaped lumbar pad and supportive hipbelt for reliable comfort as you clock up the miles.



Merrell Moab Speed 2 Mid GORE-TEX

(£155, merrell.com/uk)

Perfectly blending flexibility and rigidity for amazing stability, this new and improved best-selling hiking boot now has a 30 per cent increase of foam underfoot for greater comfort, and Vibram traction lugs to improve grip.



Polar Grit X2 Pro

(£649, polar.com/uk)

With its brilliant Amoled touchscreen display, dual-frequency GPS, and ultra-durable design, this outdoor sports watch has all the training, recovery and sleep-tracking features you need, plus navigation tools and offline maps to help you explore more.



Finisterre Wander Short
(£75, finisterre.com)

Made from a recycled ripstop fabric, these hard-wearing and quick-drying adventure shorts look stylish in any setting. Relaxed at the thigh for an optimal range of movement, they also have a water-repellent coating for protection in light rain.



Keen Hyperport H2 Sandal
(£95, keenfootwear.com)

Hybrid versatility meets hyper comfort with this lightweight part-sandal, part-hiker. Ideal for all your summer wanderings, it offers a shock-absorbing insole, extra-thick cushioning, and Aquagrip rubber for better traction on wet surfaces.



Jack Wolfskin Kammweg FZ Fleece Jacket
(£150, jack-wolfskin.co.uk)

Created specifically for ambitious, multi-day hiking trips, this lightweight merino wool-blend jacket soaks up sweat and dries quickly. The reinforced shoulders are also ideal for wearing with a rucksack.



BAM Twist Walking Socks
(£18, bambooclothing.co.uk)

Treat your feet to the very best in temperature control and comfort wearing these soft and breathable socks. Just the right thickness to wear with walking boots, they feature ribbing at the arch and ankle to prevent slipping.

The North Face x Icebreaker Merino 200 Dress
(£135, thenorthface.co.uk)

Made from a soft and breathable 100 per cent merino waffle fabric, this stylish-yet-practical dress features a waist adjuster, side splits and dropped shoulders for excellent freedom of movement.



YETI Yonder 25oz Water Bottle
(£25, uk.yeti.com)

Strategically engineered to be both incredibly lightweight and shatter-resistant, this bottle features a 100 per cent leakproof Yonder Cap with a two-part system for easier sipping and refilling on-the-go.



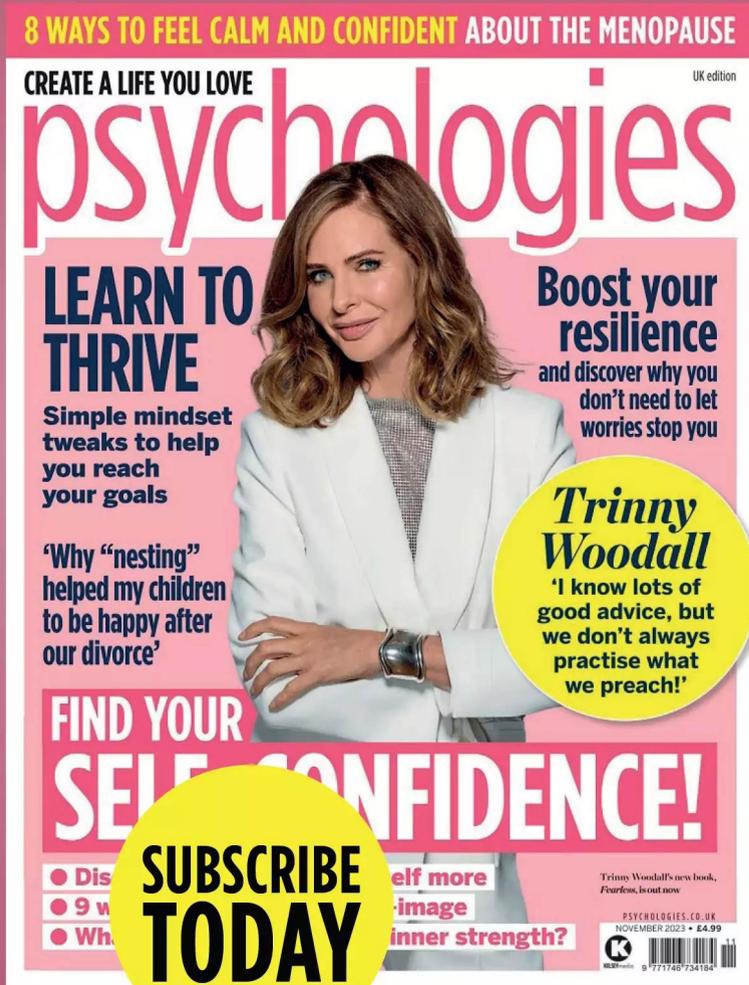
Smartwool Intraknit Racerback Bra
(£59.99, smartwool.co.uk)

For next-to-skin comfort, choose this seamless bra knitted from a moisture-managing merino wool blend. The racerback style offers even weight distribution across the shoulders while an outer layer supports, shapes and lifts. 🍷

Words: Joanna Ebsworth | Photography: Various brands

SUBSCRIBE AND SAVE UP TO £48*!

Create a life you love



Psychologies is the biggest mental and emotional wellbeing magazine in the UK. Our aim is to make each day better by providing you with inspiration and advice from experts in the field, to lower stress and anxiety, and boost happiness.



GREAT REASONS TO SUBSCRIBE

- ♥ Save up to £48*
- ♥ Delivery directly to your door in 100% plastic-free packaging
- ♥ Never miss an issue
- ♥ Complete control - manage your account online
- ♥ Free weekly e-newsletters

VISIT [SHOP.KELSEY.CO.UK/PYHA](https://shop.kelsey.co.uk/pyha)
 OR CALL 01959 543747 and quote code PYHA
 Scan our QR code – the easiest & quickest way!



HOTLINE OPEN: MONDAY-FRIDAY, 8.30AM-5.30PM. CALLS ARE CHARGED AT YOUR STANDARD NETWORK RATE

Terms & Conditions: UK Direct Debit offer only. You will pay £51.90 every 12 months. *Savings based on the standard basic annual rate of £100.62 which includes the cover price of £4.99 plus Kelsey Media's standard postage and packing price per single issue for one full year (13 issues). Offer ends 31st December 2024. Your subscription will start with the next available issue, and you will receive 13 issues in a year. Prices correct at time of print and subject to change. For full terms and conditions visit shop.kelsey.co.uk/terms. Data protection: We take great care in handling your personal details and these will only ever be used as set out in our privacy policy which can be viewed at shop.kelsey.co.uk/privacy-policy. You may unsubscribe at any time. If you decide to cancel your subscription we will put a stop to any further payments being taken and will send the remaining issues that you have already paid for.

More Newspaper and Magazines Telegram Channel join Search https://t.me/Magazines_8890050582 (@Magazines_8890050582)

Sporty bikinis * Beauty buys * Kit reviews

FIT KIT

p102

We test two-piece swimsuits fit for your favourite water sports

p106

Beauty kit to stash away in your gym bag

Sporty swimwear

Embrace the sun, sea and
sand this summer, with these
tried-and-tested bikinis



Whether you're lounging around the pool or love to hit the waves, there's no denying the perfect bikini can make you feel a million dollars. It's not just about the looks, though: if you're planning on putting in the lengths or ducking and diving in open water, you need swimwear that stays perfectly in place, too.

So, what do you need to consider when looking for your ultimate two-piece? First, think about what you need your bikini for and the environment in which you'll be swimming: do you need something that will stay secure when riding the waves in the sea, or would you prefer something that will support your efforts when doing lengths in the pool?

There are different options to consider when it comes to material, with some offering UV protection or resistance to chlorine and sea water. You'll even find a selection of planet-friendly options, made using recycled materials such as ocean plastic and fishing nets. Whatever your needs, we've tried and tested the latest sporty two-pieces to help you find your perfect swimwear match this summer.

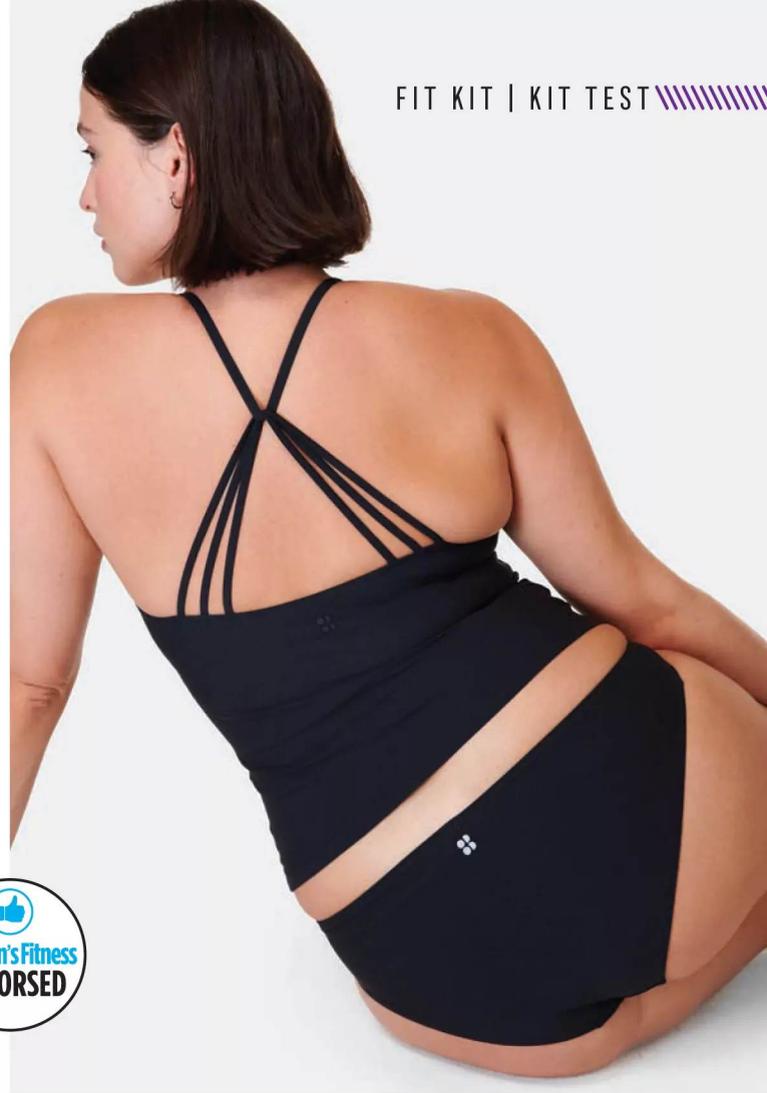
← **Animal Atlantic Printed Tie-Back Bikini Top and Iona Women's Recycled Tie-Side Bikini Bottoms** (Top £25, Bottoms £19, animal.co.uk)

Extremely pretty yet super sporty, popular beach brand Animal has not only made this bikini with recycled fabric, but it is also stretchy, comfortable and perfect for swimming and surfing.

The tie-cross back helps to keep everything in place, meaning you can securely tie it up at the beginning of your swim and not need to constantly readjust it throughout. The removable pads provide a nice shape around the chest area, too. We also love that the REPREVE fabric is made from recycled plastic bottles and is chlorine- and saltwater-resistant, meaning it'll stay looking immaculate for years to come, without losing its colour or shape.

As well as being sustainable, we like the balance this two-piece strikes between comfort, coverage and performance. Plus, the print is gorgeously vibrant and attracts plenty of compliments. The bottoms are super-flattering, too, offering a nice shape and staying securely in place. The entire bikini is also adjustable, with drawstrings on the bikini top and the sides of the bottoms, too. Our tester is 5ft 2in and petite, and the size 8 fits perfectly.

Comfort: ★★★★★ Functionality: ★★★★★ Style: ★★★★★



Sweaty Betty Bali Xtra Life Tankini Top and Peninsula Xtra Life Bikini Briefs (Top £65, Briefs £45, sweatybetty.com)

With its longline fit, supportive in-built bra and twisted criss-cross design at the back - which provides extra security when swimming - popular sportswear brand Sweaty Betty has got the classic two-piece vibes down to a tee with this flattering tankini.

The material is smooth and offers full coverage while still looking sporty. We love that it's made with UV50+ UV-protective fabric, as well as part-recycled Xtra Life Lycra, which is five times more durable than elastane and built to withstand sunscreen, the heat, excess body oils and any chemicals found in the water.

The fit of the tankini top was pretty tight, especially around the upper chest area. However, the lower half stayed in place and didn't restrict our movement as we glided through the water. Overall, the top sat well with the medium-leg-cut bikini bottoms, which rested nicely on our hips and, equally, didn't budge. This is a great option for those who like to be well covered, but don't want to go for a full swimsuit.

Comfort: ★★★★★ Functionality: ★★★★★ Style: ★★★★★





NAIA Maia Snake Bikini Top and Maia Snake Bikini Briefs
(Top £85, Briefs £65, naiabeach.com)

The beautiful cut of these bikini bottoms - combined with the turquoise snake print - really makes for a statement bikini that offers a delicate yet feminine vibe.

The bikini briefs sat perfectly on our hips thanks to the gathered waistband, while the subtle ruching detail on the back enhanced our curves and stayed in place during pool time. We also found the double layering and adjustable straps on the bikini top to be beneficial for extra chest support. Plus, we love that both items are sustainably made from recycled fishing nets and plastic.

For those days when you're doing some gentle lengths, this is a perfect option. That's not to say you can't easily do water sports in it - it just feels too glam for that. This brand is all about helping women feel comfortable in their own skin, and this flattering two-piece is definitely one for showing off the curves you work (out) so hard for.



Comfort: ★★★★★ Functionality: ★★★★★
 Style: ★★★★★



Finisterre Women's Anella Reversible Crop Bikini Top and Anella Reversible Mid Rise Pant
(Top £55, Pant £45, finisterre.com)

Although this option from Finisterre is designed for both swimming and surfing, we also found it comfortable and supportive for beach games with the family - all while looking nice and sporty. The bikini uses Econyl-regenerated nylon, which is made from 100 per cent recycled materials, such as fishing nets and carpet flooring.

We felt incredibly supported and well-covered in the racer-back top, which offers medium support and smooth flat-locked seams. The bottoms, although a square-ish fit on a pear-shaped body, also stayed put



Words: Lucy Miller | Photography: Various brands

without any slipping and allowed for maximum movement. The soft-touch finish also felt great against skin.

The reversible design is a real bonus, allowing you to enjoy two looks in one - adding versatility as well as being a great space saver when you're trying to pack light for holidays! Our favourite look is the gorse print pattern (the bikini bottom, pictured above,), which is particularly eye-catching. As well as being suitable for spring and early summer, we could also envisage making use of this two-piece in our local pool or under a wetsuit in the cooler months - which is probably where we'd go for the more classic Kingfisher Green colourway (the bikini top, pictured above).

Comfort: ★★★★★ **Functionality:** ★★★★★ **Style:** ★★★★★



Shein Ladies' Solid Colour Halter Neck Two-Piece Swimsuit

(£10,99, shein.co.uk)



If you thought chic bikinis were off-limits during workouts, think again. This pool side-to-swimming pool bikini stayed put during even the fastest of laps - and looked stylishly eye-catching when doing so. The large key-hole back was great for feeling the sun on our skin, and the clip closure felt super secure - so secure, in fact, that we often needed an extra pair of hands to get it undone.

The two-piece is also fully lined, and the supportive cups provide the right amount of comfort while giving even the smallest of chests some extra shape. The stretchy, high-waisted bottoms offer great coverage, too. They also feature a well-placed mesh window at each side of the upper leg, which gave the illusion of elongating our shorter-than-average legs. Overall, this is a great bikini for any fitness holiday - whether you're swimming, jumping the waves or enjoying a spot of poolside reading. 🏊

Comfort: ★★★★★ **Functionality:** ★★★★★ **Style:** ★★★★★



BEAUTY KIT

Beauty editor **Lauren Maybank** curates the essentials that'll be a HIIT in your summer beauty bag - from eco-friendly SPF and multi-tasking make-up, to hydrating hair heroes. Find her at [instagram.com/laurenpatriciamaybank](https://www.instagram.com/laurenpatriciamaybank)



Inkey List Tripeptide Plumping Lip Balm

(£11, uk.theinkeylist.com)

Plump your lips while you pump: these new tinted balms work hard to visibly increase lip volume, without giving any nasty tingle on application, thanks to six per cent tripeptide complex, plus six per cent Ultra Filling Spheres, which deliver hyaluronic acid to boost moisture and fill fine lines on the lips. The proof is in the plump!

IT Cosmetics Glow with Confidence Sun Blush

(£32, cultbeauty.co.uk)

A 24-hour hydrating bronzer and blush hybrid? Do tell us more. Work out with confidence and add a soft healthy glow to your skin with five summer-loving sun-kissed shades, suitable for every skin tone. Formulated with hyaluronic acid, skin-plumping peptides and antioxidant-rich vitamin E, these multi-taskers nourish your skin while adding dimension and a pop of colour.



got2b GLUED 4 Brows & Edges Waterproof Gel

(£7, boots.com)

Hard core fans of the original got2b eyebrow gel will be delighted to know there's a new waterproof and sweatproof version in town - designed to make sure your brows and edges stay put whatever sweaty sessions you're participating in. With its two-sided fibre brush for easy and precise application, you can seamlessly style brows and tame fly-aways with incredible hold.



JVN Nurture Intense Hydration Mask (£29, [spacenk.com](https://www.spacenk.com))

Don't let the sun frazzle your hair during outdoor workouts: give it some love and a shot of intense hydration with this nourishing hair hero. Formulated with hemisqualene, a natural alternative to silicone, this lightweight luxe mask will restore locks, nourish split ends and make hair more manageable.

TREATMENT OF
THE MONTH



**Organic Pharmacy
Health Assessment
with Quantum/EIS,**
£160,
theorganicpharmacy.com

This comprehensive health assessment uses a bioenergetic device to scan the body in three

minutes, before providing instant profiles on vitamin and mineral deficiencies, organ function, hormone balance, viruses, bacteria, fungus, parasites, digestive issues, stress and food intolerances. A must to improve overall health, plan a pregnancy or learn food triggers.



COSMOSS Incense Sticks (£32, [cosmosbykatemoss.com](https://www.cosmosbykatemoss.com))

If you need a wind down post-gym, or you enjoy a daily meditation session, try these new calming incense sticks from COSMOSS (Kate Moss and homeopath and alchemist Victoria Young). Based on the brand's award-winning scent, Sacred Mist, these natural bamboo incense sticks give a sensory experience like no other, emanating a soft, mood-boosting smoke and creating a calming atmosphere for transformative soul-soothing.

CELf Sensitive Skin Dermal Head at Home Beauty Tool (£39.99, [celf.beauty](https://www.celf.beauty))

This innovative collagen regeneration tool easily snaps on to your toothbrush to provide gentle skin exfoliation and promote epidermal cellular turnover. Paving the way for brighter and more radiant skin, it triggers the lymphatic system to reduce puffiness and improve blood flow, while facilitating the deeper penetration of your favourite serums and creams. The sensitive version has the addition of an elastomer for more flexibility and is compatible with Oral-B iO toothbrushes – over the next 18 months, CELf aims to be compatible with 75-80 per cent of all electric toothbrushes.



MISSED AN ISSUE? COMPLETE YOUR COLLECTION



JUNE 2024

COVER STORY Dame Kelly Holmes
INSIDE Sculpt your body, learn to love yourself, get stronger, sleep better, run faster & more!



MAY 2024

COVER STORY Aimee Cringle
INSIDE Train outdoors, swim for mental health, work out to boost your gut, smart fuelling & more!



APRIL 2024

COVER STORY Zoe Hague
INSIDE Tone your lower body, get ready to race, find inner strength, healthy batch cooking & more!



MARCH 2024

COVER STORY The Gladiators
INSIDE Strengthen your upper body, WF Nutrition Awards, hot yoga, running warm-ups & more!



FEBRUARY 2024

COVER STORY Kate Ferdinand
INSIDE Get lifting, speed up your metabolism, new-mum workouts, trail-running tips, recipes & more!



JANUARY 2024

COVER STORY Davina McCall
INSIDE Gyms of the future, top fitness trends for 2024, how to stay positive, plant protein & more!



DECEMBER 2023

COVER STORY Kelsey Wells
INSIDE The feel-good workout, stress-busting yoga, festive vegan meals, gym beauty & more!



NOVEMBER 2023

COVER STORY Kelly Hoppen
INSIDE The first-ever Run Strong Awards, joint-friendly workout, tone your abs, nourishing soups & more!



OCTOBER 2023

COVER STORY Mel B
INSIDE Get fit in 10 minutes, 6 yoga poses for strong arms, boost mental muscle, try barefoot running & more!



SEPTEMBER 2023

COVER STORY Davinia Taylor
INSIDE Get back in shape, 6 simple moves to beat anxiety, new-mum nutrition, eat well for energy & more!



AUGUST 2023

COVER STORY Myleene Klass
INSIDE 7 weights-based moves to do at home, improve your running, restore your pelvic floor & more!



JULY 2023

COVER STORY Lucie Donlan
INSIDE Exercise in summer despite hayfever, lift weights to get strong and burn fat, plus walk yourself healthy.

Visit shop.kelsey.co.uk/WFMAG
Call the hotline 01959 543 747*

*Hotline open Mon - Fri 8.30am to 5.30pm. Calls charged at your standard network rate

More Newspaper and Magazines Telegram Channel join Search [@Magazines_8890050582](https://t.me/Magazines_8890050582)

or scan me!





Photography: Shutterstock

COMING UP IN THE AUGUST ISSUE...

- ➔ Exercise to balance your hormones
- ➔ The workouts to do while on holiday
- ➔ Plan to increase your step count this summer
- ➔ How to create your own forest bathing sanctuary
- ➔ Eat to get leaner in just 14 days
- ➔ Your ultimate outdoor workout session - sorted!

...plus lots more!

DON'T MISS!
The August issue is on sale July 26.



**ORDER ONLINE AT: [SHOP.KELSEY.CO.UK/WFMAG](https://shop.kelsey.co.uk/wfmag)
CALL NOW ON: 01959 543747***

Terms & Conditions: For full terms and conditions, visit shop.kelsey.co.uk/terms. Data protection: We take great care in handling your personal details and these will only ever be used as set out in our privacy policy which can be viewed at shop.kelsey.co.uk/privacy-policy. *Lines open Mon-Fri 8:30am-5:30pm. Calls charged at your standard network rate.

SUBSCRIBE AND SAVE UP TO £44*!

THE UK'S LONGEST ESTABLISHED HILLWALKING MAGAZINE



Britain's original outdoor magazine is packed full of stunning photography, top class writing and brilliant walking and backpacking routes, along with authoritative gear reviews from the country's most experienced team of testers and essential skills advice from highly qualified outdoor instructors.

Great reasons to subscribe

- › Save up to £44*
- › Delivery directly to your door before they hit the shelves
- › Never miss an issue
- › Complete control - manage your account online
- › Free weekly e-newsletters

VISIT [SHOP.KELSEY.CO.UK/TGOHA](https://shop.kelsey.co.uk/tgoha)
OR CALL 01959 543747 and quote code TGOHA
Scan our QR code - the easiest & quickest way!

HOTLINE OPEN: MONDAY-FRIDAY, 8.30AM-5.30PM. CALLS ARE CHARGED AT YOUR STANDARD NETWORK RATE

SCAN HERE



Terms & Conditions - UK Direct Debit offer only. You will pay £47.04 every 12 months. *Savings based on the standard basic annual rate of £91.80 which includes the cover price of £4.90 plus Kelsey Media's standard postage and packing price per single issue for one full year (12 issues). Offer ends 31st December 2024. Your subscription will start with the next available issue, and you will receive 12 issues in a year. Prices correct at time of print and subject to change. For full terms and conditions visit shop.kelsey.co.uk/terms. Data protection: We take great care in handling your personal details and these will only ever be used as set out in our privacy policy which can be viewed at shop.kelsey.co.uk/privacy-policy. You may unsubscribe at any time. If you decide to cancel your subscription, we will put a stop to any further payments being taken and will send the remaining issues that you have already paid for. More Newspaper and Magazines Telegram Channel join Search https://t.me/Magazines_8890050582 (@Magazines_8890050582)

Freediving * Restorative yoga * Success story

FIT MIND

p112

We speak to record-breaking freediver, Salma Ahmed Shaker

p116

Try our restorative yoga sequence to drift off better at night

p122

Jockey Lilly Pinchen shares the story of her rise to the top



Want more wellness advice? Head to [womensfitness.co.uk](https://www.womensfitness.co.uk) and also follow us at [instagram.com/womensfitnessuk](https://www.instagram.com/womensfitnessuk)



Into the deep

Saudi Arabian freediver **Salma Ahmed Shaker** has got closer to the seabed than any other woman in the GCC. Here the nine-times national record holder talks to Eve Boggenpoel about the joys and challenges of exploring the depths of the ocean

Growing up in Jeddah, I've always been drawn to the sea. My parents were both lovers of the ocean – my father not only studied marine geology, he was also an accomplished scuba diver, captain and fisherman.

'I first tried scuba diving when I was 10 years old and absolutely loved it. Fast forward to the age of 19, and I discovered freediving, finding it both challenging and immensely liberating – so much so that I entered my first competition just one week after finishing my first deep-sea diving course (the addiction started after that!).

'I'm lucky enough to have access to some of the most beautiful dive locations in the Red Sea, where I not only get to practise but also to explore its beauty. In fact, it was only when I visited other diving locations that I really came to appreciate what makes it so special. What truly captivates me are the mesmerising coral formations. Saudi's Red Sea is surrounded by the world's fourth-largest barrier reef and spans more than 28,000 sq km, with an archipelago of more than 90 untouched islands. The marine life is spectacular, too. Once, when I visited the Georgios G shipwreck off the coastal city of Tabuk, I spotted a huge silhouette to my left and realised it was an

enormous whale shark, which I swam with for nearly 45 minutes!

'When I first started freediving, I didn't realise how much of a mental sport it is. I used to feel frustrated because I would feel like my body was ready to do a specific dive but my mind wasn't. I realised I didn't just need to train physically but, more importantly, I had to train mentally, too, so I could deal with the pressure of the challenge and constant battle with my mind as I pushed the limits of my abilities.

'Maintaining my mental clarity is essential for peak performance,

to keep me focused. Developing techniques such as mindfulness and visualisation helps me cultivate a strong mental game and keeps me grounded during competitions. I also have to navigate my way around the anxiety I feel around the pressure to succeed. The fear of failure is high, especially when competing against top athletes and striving to meet personal expectations. Winning brings its own range of emotions, from euphoria, relief and a profound sense of accomplishment, but freediving transcends mere record-setting; it's a real journey into the depths of human capability.

Ahmed Shakers' love of the ocean beams through



'A big part of freediving training is meditation, specifically imagery meditation. It was a challenge at the beginning, but now freediving helps me understand my mind and body much more and what it needs. Managing the fear of the unknown is a profound aspect of freediving. Descending into the ocean can awaken feelings of vulnerability and apprehension, and overcoming this fear demands trust in my training, equipment and, most crucially, in myself. But the positives definitely outweigh the negatives. It's precisely these challenges that make freediving so rewarding.'

'There's an overwhelming sense of freedom and exhilaration as I glide through the water, exploring the underwater world with each stroke'

'There's a mixture of excitement and nervousness as I approach each dive, knowing I'm about to test my limits in an environment where every second counts. Once in the water, there's a heightened awareness of my surroundings and of my body - every movement is deliberate, every breath carefully regulated. There's a profound sense of mindfulness as I navigate through the underwater landscape, taking in the beauty and serenity that surrounds me.'

'As I descend further into the depths, there's a sense of peace and tranquillity that envelops me - it's really a profound experience. Trying to block out the feeling of immense pressure that is surrounding me, I find the weightlessness and freedom



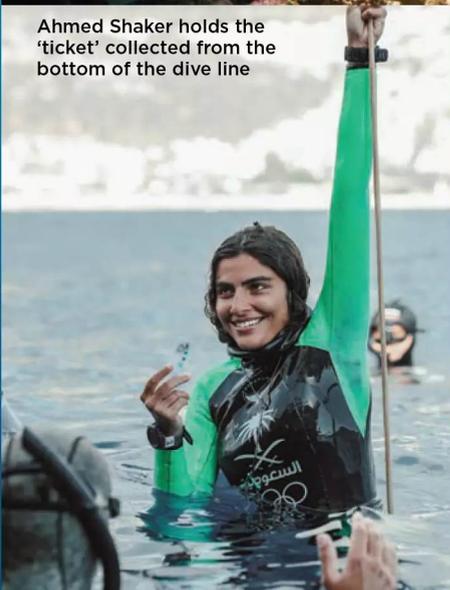
The support team welcomes Ahmed Shaker as she reaches the surface

Photography: Courtesy of Salma Ahmed Shaker

Exploring the depths of the ocean is a deeply tranquil experience



Ahmed Shaker holds the 'ticket' collected from the bottom of the dive line



makes me disconnect from those pressures. It's as if I'm suspended in another world, disconnected from life outside the ocean.

'Perhaps most importantly, there's a deep connection to the ocean

itself. A reminder of our place in the vastness of the natural world, and of the importance of respecting and preserving the delicate balance of marine ecosystems. In those moments, I feel a sense of awe and reverence for the ocean and all its wonders.

'This is one reason why I'm so honoured to have taken part in the ground-breaking documentary *Beneath the Surface: The Fight for Corals*, about the reefs along Saudi's Red Sea coastline. The film sheds light on the urgent threat of extinction facing these underwater ecosystems, explores ways to save reefs and discusses how advancements in coral research can contribute to broader efforts to combat climate change. It was an incredible opportunity to contribute to and raise awareness about the importance of protecting our oceans and marine biodiversity.

'Looking forward, as well as competing in two 17SIXTY depth comps in Jeddah this year (one in August and another in September), plus the CMAS world comp in Kalamata, Greece (in November), I hope to inspire more females to take up sport. There are a lot of misconceptions about Saudi, yet I've had so much encouragement and support to pursue my passion. Since the implementation of Saudi Vision 2030, Saudi's vibrant society is transforming, and the Saudi people are being empowered to achieve their aspirations. The support we see for women in Saudi - from women's football teams to female musicians, filmmakers, diplomats and racing drivers, women are driving the country's transformation - shows there's a new era of opportunities for us. I hope my story will inspire others to experience amazing places in Saudi, such as the Red Sea.'

YOUR SLEEP *Survival Kit*

Struggle to drift off in the evening or wake in the night and can't get back to sleep? Try this restorative yoga sequence from **Gemma Sprack**

Have you ever reached the end of a yoga class and drifted off in savasana? The reason you're feeling so chilled is because yoga is a really effective way to down-regulate stress hormones in the body. It also shifts your central nervous system into 'rest and digest' mode, enabling you to focus on the here and now rather than worry about what might happen in the future.

If a busy mind is keeping you awake at night, these restorative yoga moves will give you the

chance to press pause. Take your time to really settle into each pose and make it as comfortable as you can – use as many pillows as you need and deal with any little niggles at the start. If your mind is overactive, direct your focus to your breathing and find a steady rhythm. Notice where you feel the breath and how it sounds – if there are any pauses when your thoughts kick in, simply acknowledge them then bring your focus back to your breath. When you're settled, try to stay as still as possible in the poses.

Your yoga sleep plan is divided into three sections. Sleep Secrets has two postures to help you let go of a busy day and calm your body in readiness for bed. Night Moves offers two options to help you get back to sleep if you wake up in the night, and Morning Refresh has two poses and a gentle flow to help rejuvenate you if you've had a bad night's sleep.

I've given suggestions for timing, but your body will tell you when it's ready to leave the pose. Trust your instincts and listen to those cues.



SLEEP SECRETS

Use these poses before bed to help relax your body



◀ LEGS UP THE WALL

Time: 2-20 minutes

Why it helps: This pose reverses the effects of gravity on your feet and legs, helping your circulation and creating a feeling of calm throughout the body.

Getting there: Find a surface to rest your legs against, whether a wall, the back of the door or edge of the bed. Come to rest on your back with your bottom as close to that surface as possible. Extend your legs straight up and allow them to relax. Your arms can rest wherever feels most comfortable – by your side, on your tummy or above your head. Place a pillow/folded blanket underneath the hips if it feels good.

Being there: Once you've settled, begin to focus on your breathing. Take three big, deep breaths – in through the nose, sighing out through the mouth. Then, allow your breathing to settle into a natural pattern and begin to gently scan your body from head to feet, noticing areas of tension and encouraging them to soften. Use your exhalations to create a sensation of 'deflating' and allow yourself to feel as though you are gently melting into the floor.

▶ FORWARD FOLD (yin variation) ▶

Time: 2-5 minutes (at least 10 rounds of breath)

Why it helps: This pose is perfect for switching off the outside chatter and bringing your focus inwards.

Getting there: Find somewhere comfortable to sit (try placing a cushion under your bottom, if needed). Then, either extend the legs in front of you or rest the soles of the feet together and allow the knees to drop to the sides (pictured). Grab another pillow, place it under your knees and let the upper body gently round. Focus on the sensation of dropping your head down towards your lap, rounding the spine and allowing gravity to draw you deeper into the pose.

Being there: Once comfortable, focus on your breath and allow each exhale to unwind a little of the effort that keeps you upright. Think about melting into the pose – as though you're switching off the chatter of the outside world and quietly sinking into your own world. When you're ready to leave the pose, use an exhalation to slowly stack the spine back upright and take a deep breath or two.



NIGHT MOVES

If you wake in the night, these moves should help you drift back off

SUPPORTED SAVASANA WITH BODY SCAN ▼

Time: As long as needed to drift off

Why it helps: Give an overactive mind something else to focus on with a body scan. Finding all the areas where you are holding onto tension, and encouraging them to relax, helps you fall asleep again.

Getting there: If you like to rest on your back, try popping a pillow underneath your knees to help make the lower back more comfortable. If you prefer to lay on your side, put a pillow between your knees to support the top leg. Focus on your next five breaths – make them deep and even, sighing the exhale out through the mouth.

Being there: When you're ready, begin to mentally scan your body and encourage it to relax. Start at the crown of the head, work down through the muscles of the face and jaw, drop the tongue from the roof of your mouth and then move systematically down through the body – shoulders, arms, hands, chest, belly, hips, legs... right the way down to the tips of the toes. When you have finished, bring your attention back up through those same points to the crown of the head, and repeat as many times as you need until you fall asleep.



EXTENDING THE OUT-BREATH ▲

Time: At least 15 rounds

Why it helps: Extending the exhalation triggers your parasympathetic nervous system, stimulates the vagus nerve and helps to reduce cortisol and adrenaline in the body, calming the body and mind.

Getting there: You can be fully reclined or sit upright, it's up to you. If sitting, try leaning against a wall so it takes less effort to remain upright.

Being there: Once you're settled, take three deep breaths, in and out through the mouth, before allowing your breath to settle back into a natural rhythm. Begin to count the length of your inhalation and then count the length of the exhalation. Gradually begin to focus on lengthening the out-breath on each round, aiming to stretch it out to double the length of the in-breath (if you inhale for 4, exhale for 8). You might find it helpful to build in a little pause before and after each breath if it feels comfortable. Repeat these longer exhalations as long as feels natural, ideally for at least 15 rounds.

MORNING REFRESH

If you've slept poorly, these gentle stretches will help set you up for a positive day ahead

RECLINED GODDESS OVER A PILLOW ▼

Time: At least 10 breaths

Why it helps: This pose calms the system and gently stretches your body, while the deeper breath helps to wake you up.

Getting there: Lie over a pillow that supports the back of the ribcage and creates a gentle stretch through the front chest. You can keep the legs outstretched, or bring the soles of the feet together and let the knees drop open to either side (pictured), whichever feels best. If your legs are to the sides, try placing a yoga block or cushion beneath each knee to avoid overstretching the groin. Bring the arms to rest out at shoulder height or above the head (pictured).

Being there: Rest for a minimum of 10 breaths, focusing on deep, nourishing inhalations. Gradually become aware of your surroundings and notice how your body feels. Taking time to nourish after a poor night's rest is the perfect way to start the day.



CAT/COW ▶

Time: Until you feel your spine is fully mobilised

Why it helps:

Gently flexing and extending your spine wakes up the body and provides you with some much-needed movement in the morning.

Getting there:

Kneel on all-fours and gently lengthen from your crown to your tailbone. Notice how your back feels.

Being there:

As you inhale, drop the belly to the floor, roll the shoulders back and gently lift the gaze, lengthening the front body (1). As you exhale, push the floor away with your hands, tuck your tailbone under and round into the upper back, flexing the spine and stretching through the back of the shoulders (2). Gently switch between these two positions in rhythm with your breath.



Words and yoga instruction: Gemma Sprack | Photography: Peter from Prismo (prismo.co.uk) | Clothing: BAM Air Tie Back Yoga Vest in Basking Blue, £29; BAM Enduro 7/8 Deep Waistband Leggings in Watercolour, £55 (bambooclothing.co.uk)



◀ MORNING FLOW

Time: At least 3-5 rounds

Why it helps: This flow helps to build your energy before you start the day.

Getting there: Come to standing, feet shoulder-width apart, and take a couple of breaths to check in.

Being there: When you're ready, use an inhalation to stretch the arms overhead (1) – lengthen up as much as you can before exhaling into chair pose (2). This doesn't need to be deep or challenging, it's just about encouraging the larger muscle groups to work and to pump the blood around your body.

Pause for an inhale and then on your next exhalation, gently cascade the upper body down into a forward fold (3), where you can dangle and relax the spine as much as is comfortable – don't forget to bend your knees to keep the hamstrings comfortable. When you're ready, use an inhalation to sweep back up to standing and begin the flow again.

When you've finished, pause in the standing position and take a few breaths, then set an intention for your day ahead. Think about finding a positive statement you can keep referring back to through your day, to help you focus forward rather than dwell on the restless night you've just had. 🧘

Meet the expert

Gemma Sprack is a yoga teacher, yoga therapist and founder of The Feel Good Collective. Find out more at rapidlyogi.com/classes





Words: Lilly Pinchin | Photography: Great British Racing

'I left education to pursue elite sport'

After quitting school and turning to horse-riding, **Lilly Pinchin**, 26, is now the sport's most talked about young talent. Here, Lilly shares how her strong mindset and commitment helped her overcome injury and achieve top title wins

'My journey to become a professional jockey began at the Pony Club, where I did show jumping and eventing as a child. I got my first pony, Magical Toffee, at the age of nine and took him pony racing at my local racecourse, Cheltenham, where we won. I loved the speed and the thrill of racing, and I just wanted to go fast – I caught the bug from then on.

'I have no background in horse-racing. My parents never pushed me to become a jockey – I was just very determined, and from a young age knew it was something I wanted to do. I took myself out of school without my parents' permission. I knew I loved racing, so I wanted to focus all my attention on that.

'In 2015, Point to Point, or amateur horse-racing, was the natural progression after pony

racing and I learnt a lot from it, achieving my first win a year later. It was an amazing feeling and gave me a real taste of what a career as a jockey could be like.

'I turned fully professional in November 2023, achieved by riding 75 winners. The adrenaline I feel when I ride a winner, and the special partnerships I have with racehorses, is what keeps me going, even when it's challenging. When riding and exercising the horses, you get to know them inside out. No horse is the same, which is what makes them so unique and individually talented.

'I really enjoy the fitness aspect of the sport. I did lots of different sports at school and have always had an active lifestyle. If I am not racing, I am running or in the gym. Staying active is important for keeping my cardiovascular fitness up – during the peak season, I will be racing up to seven days a week, so it's crucial to keep my body at peak fitness!

'When you're a jockey, much like with other professional sports,

there is always a sense of the unknown. You have to be reactive to what your body needs and make time for rest and recovery. I had a bad injury a few years ago, where I broke my back and two ribs following a fall, which left me sidelined. You never know when that might happen again, so this is often on my mind. Losing races can also take a toll on you mentally, so I know all too well the importance of keeping a strong mindset and not letting adversities get me down.

'I have achieved what I wanted in both my personal life and my racing career. I am really proud of what I have accomplished. However, I would love to keep riding winners. Racing is a unique sport, as men and women compete against each other on a level playing field. In recent years, there have been more success stories about women riders, which I hope to add to.' 🗨️

To find out more about Lilly Pinchin and jockey fitness, visit greatbritishracing.com. Find Lilly at instagram.com/pinch1234

SUBSCRIBE AND SAVE UP TO £46*!

BECAUSE LIFE IS BETTER BY THE SEA!

THE BEST GUIDE ON WHERE TO GO & WHAT TO DO BY THE SEA!

coast

FEBRUARY 2024

BECAUSE LIFE IS BETTER BY THE SEA

BUMPER
164-PAGE
ISSUE

ULTIMATE GUIDE TO THE BEST OF THE COAST

15 SUPERB STAYCATION
IDEAS BY THE SEA

FAB WALKS TO TRY...
IN COUNTY DURHAM,
DORSET, LINCOLNSHIRE
& WALES

**MOVE TO THE
COAST GUIDES**
6 SUPER SEASIDE
SPOTS TO LIVE IN

**SUBSCRIBE
TODAY**

Discover secret beaches and hidden coves, the best restaurants with a sea view, fresh ideas for fantastic staycations and learn more about the fascinating culture and history that surrounds us. From stunning seascapes to foodie trails and wildlife encounters – Coast provides an immersive travel experience.

GREAT REASONS TO SUBSCRIBE

- + Save up to £46*
- + Delivery directly to your door in 100% plastic-free packaging
- + Never miss an issue
- + Complete control – manage your account online
- + Free weekly e-newsletters
- + Receive the Coast calendar for FREE every year**

VISIT [SHOP.KELSEY.CO.UK/COAHA](https://shop.kelsey.co.uk/coaha)
OR CALL 01959 543747 and quote code **COAHA**
Scan our QR code – the easiest & quickest way!

SCAN HERE



HOTLINE OPEN: MONDAY-FRIDAY, 8.30AM-5.30PM. CALLS ARE CHARGED AT YOUR STANDARD NETWORK RATE

Terms & Conditions: UK Direct Debit offer only. You will pay £52.80 every 12 months. *Savings based on the standard basic annual rate of £99 which includes the cover price of £5.50 plus Kelsey Media's standard postage and packing price per single issue for one full year (12 issues). Offer ends 31st December 2024. Your subscription will start with the next available issue, and you will receive 12 issues in a year. Prices correct at time of print and subject to change. For full terms and conditions visit shop.kelsey.co.uk/terms. Data protection: We take great care in handling your personal details and these will only ever be used as set out in our privacy policy which can be viewed at shop.kelsey.co.uk/privacy-policy. You may unsubscribe at any time. If you decide to cancel your subscription we will put a stop to any further payments being taken and will send the remaining issues that you have already paid for. **The Coast calendar will usually arrive in the

More Newspaper and Magazines Telegram Channel join Search https://t.me/Magazines_8890050582 (@Magazines_8890050582)

DELICIOUS IS FINISHING WITH STYLE



Available at Asda, Co-op, Ocado, Sainsbury's, Tesco, Waitrose.
Subject to availability. Serving suggestion.

YEO GOT THIS!