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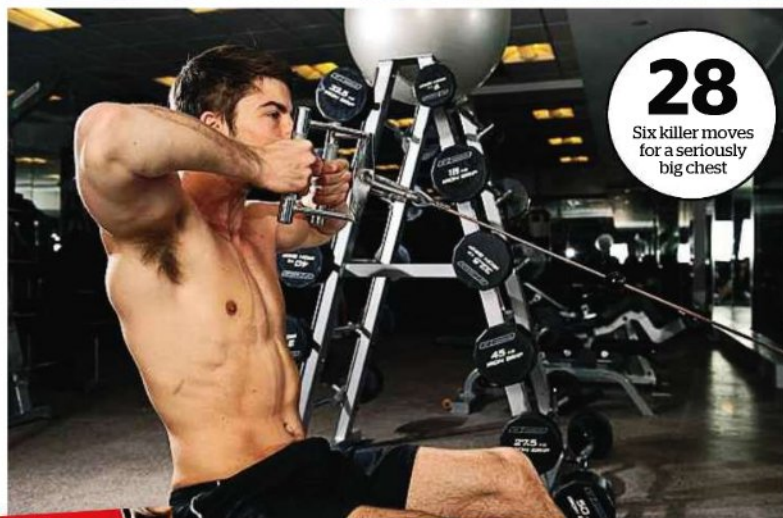
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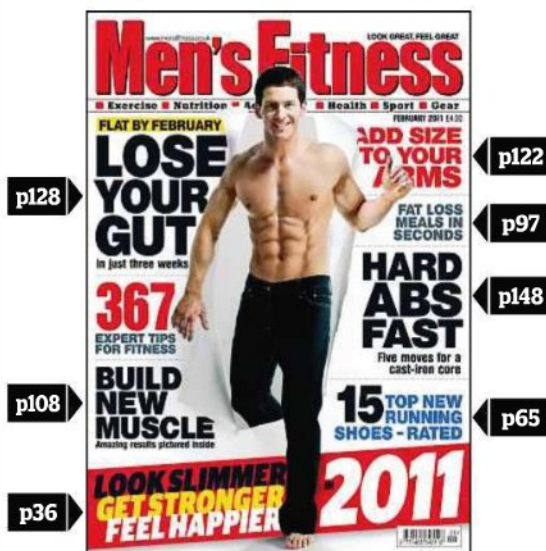


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You don't have to be perfect, but you can be irresistible



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SHIFT the way you move



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The **MF**ers

The staff of *Men's Fitness* aren't happy unless they're working up a sweat. Here's what we've been doing this month



Nick, digital editor

What I've been up to Running my first off-road ten-mile race, the British Heart Foundation's Cornbury Deerstalker, through extremely muddy Wychwood Forest near Oxford.

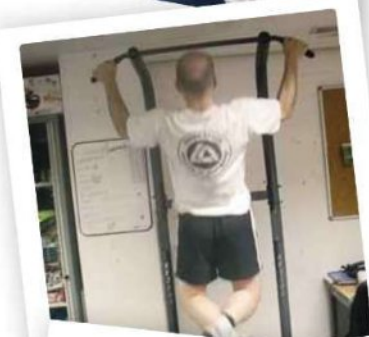
What I've learned When you're running down a steep, slippery forest trail, hold your arms out to your sides as wide as possible to improve your balance. It looks odd, but it kept me upright on the treacherous mud.



Jon, editor

What I've been up to Braving the snow for an outdoor medicine ball circuit.

What I've learned Training in harsh weather encourages you to move quickly and constantly, which keeps your sessions short and productive.



Joel, features editor

What I've been up to Trying to improve my score on the new *MF* pull-up station, a free-standing bar with a whiteboard for everyone to note down personal bests. Fat Gripz are optional.

What I've learned Doing a handful of pull-ups whenever you get the chance through the day really pays dividends. It's well worth setting up a bar if you can.



Ben, junior writer

What I've been up to Getting treatment for a long-term back injury from top osteopath Glenn Sontag at the Reebok Sports Club in Canary Wharf.

What I've learned It's crucial to listen to your body during rehabilitation. Trying to rush it - as tempting as it may seem - will set you back further in the long run.

mensfitness.co.uk

Here's a taste of what you'll find on the site

- > Simple ways to get a six-pack
- > Celebrity workout secrets
- > UFC training regimes
- > Fat-busting nutrition tips
- > Marathon training guides
- > Exhilarating fitness events
- > Expert fitness gear reviews
- > Competitions to win ace prizes



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■ Your countdown to a fitter life

6 ways to make every set easy

Blitz through your workout by ditching bad habits



High pull

The problem You lean forward to pull the bar up, turning the move from a high pull into an upright row.

Why it's bad You're working different muscles and losing the benefit of doing high pulls, which is forcing your body to work as a single unit to build explosive power.

Make it easier 'Start the lift from a hang position, which is when the bar is just above the knee,' says personal trainer Andy McKenzie (mckenziefit.com). 'Push your feet as hard as you can into the floor while "jumping" up and then shrugging hard. This will create the power needed to elevate the bar above your shoulders, leaving you standing tall on the balls of your feet.'

Any move

The problem You give up before your muscles do.

Why it's bad You won't get anywhere near the full benefits from your workout.

Make it easier 'Start every set by saying to yourself, "I am going to do six reps", rather than, "Let's just try for four and see how I get on",' says McKenzie. 'Talking to yourself in a positive way reinforces what you want to achieve and will make a big difference to reaching your training goals.'

Turn over
for more tips
to improve
your workout
»»»

Bench press

The problem You bounce the bar off your chest at the start of each rep.

Why it's bad What part of repeatedly smashing a heavy bar into your ribcage could be good?

Make it easier A common reason you are struggling with the load is not that it's too heavy but that your hands are not in the best position. 'Having a narrow grip places greater emphasis on your triceps, not your chest,' says McKenzie. 'Because this muscle is weaker you won't be able to complete the set without resorting to dangerous cheating. Use a grip wider than shoulder width to keep the weight on your chest throughout the move.'

Squat

The problem You bounce at the bottom of the move to generate the power to get back to the top.

Why it's bad Bouncing back to the start can cause your hips to rise too fast, which makes your upper body lean forward and puts your weight on your toes, not on your heels. This is an unsafe position and places pressure on your lower back. If you can't perform a squat with proper form, the weight is too heavy.

Make it easier 'Imagine you have an orange between your shoulder blades and you need to squeeze the juice out,' says McKenzie. 'Retracting your shoulder blades will keep your chest upright and thereby ensure you keep the perfect natural arch in your back. And make sure you drive back up through your heels.'

Any standing move

The problem Your body is not in the right position to perform standing moves.

Why it's bad Not maintaining a stable base with your feet, or lacking a support base with your back in a natural arch, can lead to injuries, especially when pressing a weight overhead.

● **Make it easier** 'Bang' your feet into the right position, usually hip-width apart, then squeeze your shoulder blades together to maintain an arch in your back,' says McKenzie. 'Keep your weight on your heels and your chest up.'

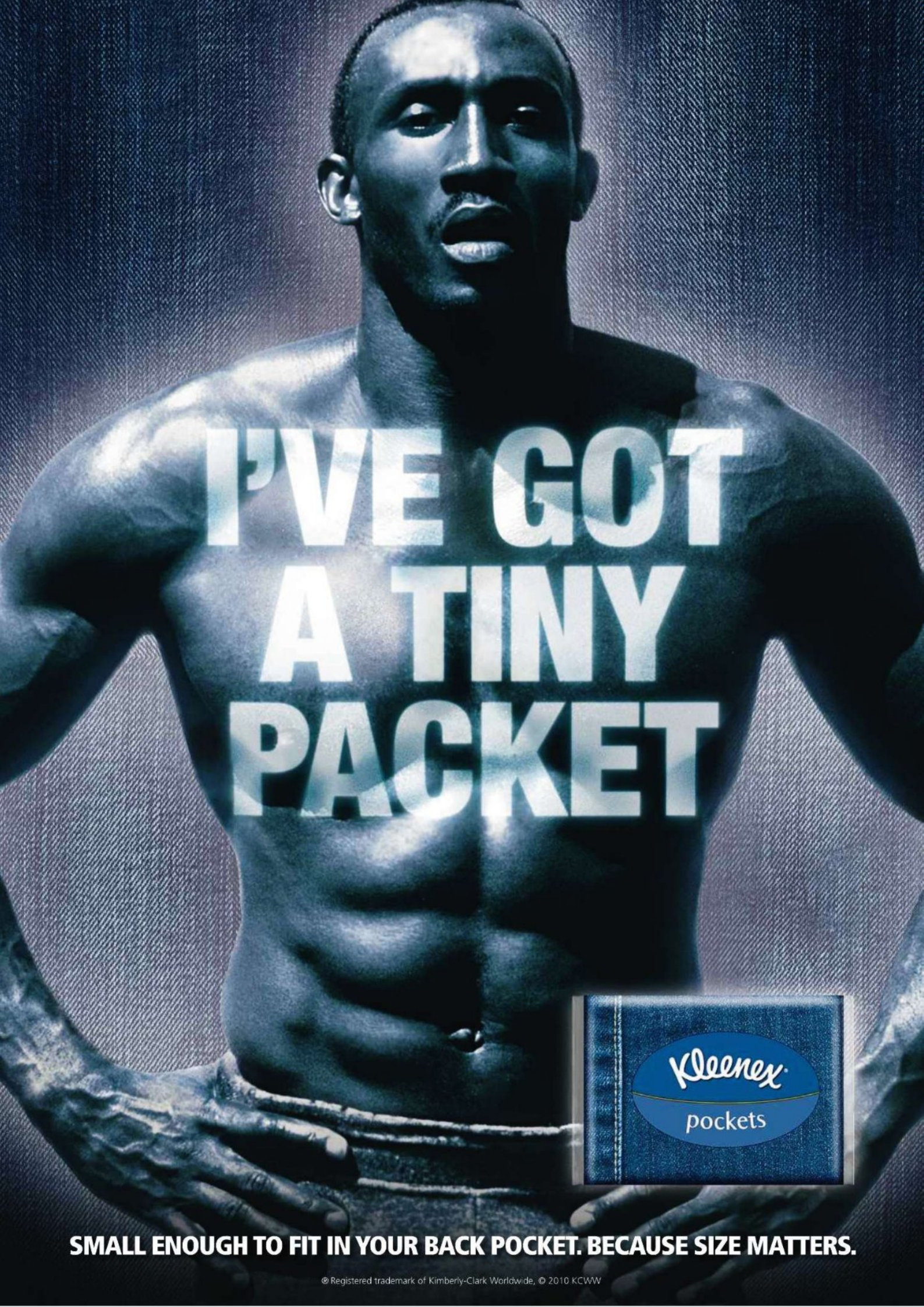
Any move

The problem You walk into the gym without a clear plan of what you want to do and achieve from the session.

Why it's bad Like driving without a map, training without a plan results in going nowhere fast.

Make it easier 'Before you even get to the gym you should have a plan that states how much you're aiming to lift, how many reps you'll do and how much rest you'll take between sets,' says McKenzie. 'If you're prepared for what you need to do, you'll be able to meet your goals sooner.'





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5 daily time savers

No time to get to the gym? Beat the clock and never miss a session again

1 Get organised at home

Is every morning a blurry-eyed chaos of creased shirts and wrong ties?

'Iron a week's worth of shirts on Sunday, hanging a suitable tie on each,' says business efficiency consultant Heather Townsend (theefficiencycoach.co.uk).



Time saved

8

minutes

2 Maximise commuting

Don't waste your journey to work playing on your phone. 'Use your commute to prioritise tasks, deciding which can wait or be delegated,' says

Clare Evans, author of *Time Management For Dummies* (clareevans.co.uk).



Time saved

20

minutes

3 Avoid distractions

Employees are interrupted on average once every nine minutes. 'Switch off your mobile and turn on your landline's answerphone if you have a big

job that needs doing - everything else can wait,' says Evans.



Time saved

27

minutes

4 Tame your inbox

Up to 50 per cent of the emails you receive can be deleted instantly, says productivity guru Sally McGhee

(mcgheep productivity.com). Tackle your inbox three times a day, never first thing, and don't spend too much time on emails.



Time saved

36

minutes

5 Finish on time

Your time-saving efforts will be wasted if you leave work late. 'Decide when you're going to finish and stick to it,' says Evans. 'Don't accept

last-minute demands and make sure meetings have an agenda you stick to.'



Time saved

24

minutes



Time saved
1 hour
55 minutes

Enough time for A workout (one hour), warm-down swim (10min), sauna (7min), shower and change (5min), a protein shake (3min), a drink in the pub (30min).



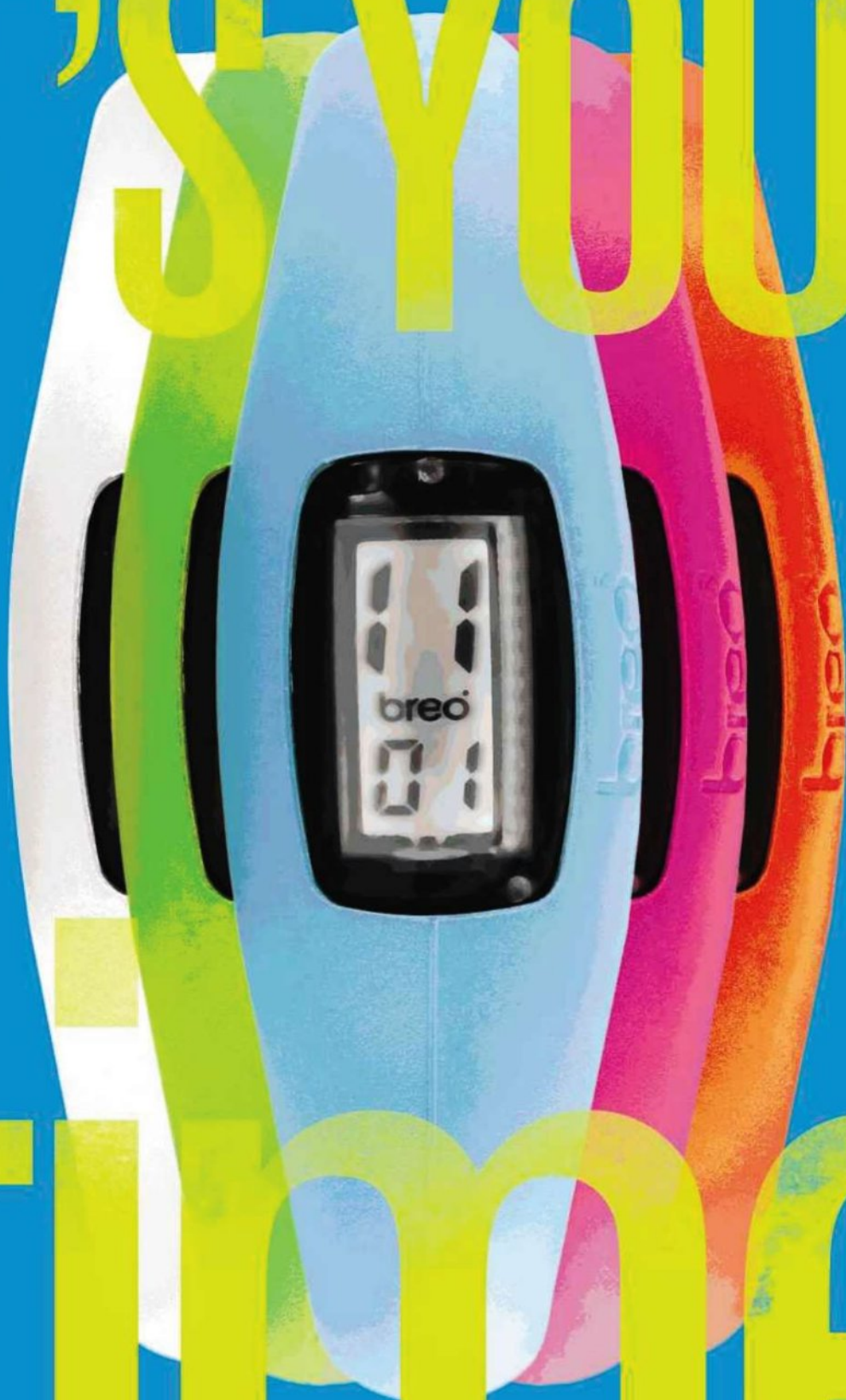
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4 things she can't **RESIST**

Improve your chances of getting the girl with a body to impress her



Broad shoulders

Don't get hung up on carving a solid six-pack - it'll be hidden under layers of clothing 95 per cent of the time. Instead, work on sculpting broad shoulders. A study by Cambridge University of more than 700 women found broad shoulders were the most attractive male asset. Why? Not only do big shoulders make you look strong but the wider you are up top, the thinner you appear at the waist, creating that V-shape that drives her wild. Supersets of overhead presses and pull-ups will get you there.

Stubble

Already the standard choice for rock stars and lazy students, a smattering of stubble is more attractive to the fairer sex than clean-shaven faces or full beards, according to a report by psychologists at Northumbria University. Super-smooth faces ranked last for masculinity and maturity and second to last in attractiveness, so always shave a few days before a night out or first date.

Strong arms

Muscular men are more attractive to women than overweight or skinny guys, according to research by the University of California. That's because, like the fancy feathers on a male peacock, muscles imply virility. Your forearms are the most instantly visible muscles, so target them with reverse barbell curls.

Smile

Did you think women were after a big chest or a muscular arse? Wrong - a study of 4,000 women found they find a man's smile the most irresistible thing about him. To keep your gnashers pearly white, avoid coffee, red wine and cigarettes. Oh, and one last thing - when you smile at her look into her eyes, not at her chest.

3 desk stretches

Keep aches and pains at bay with these workplace stretches from Dr Mike Squirrell

Neck

Ouch! Sitting with bad posture can lead to a tight neck.

Fix it Place your left hand on the back of your head with your right hand behind your back. Push your head forward halfway, then tilt it to the left and turn that way until you feel the stretch. Hold for 30 seconds. Repeat on the other side.



Upper back

Ouch! Hunching over your keyboard can lead to pain.

Fix it When sitting, place both hands on the back of your head and let the weight pull your head down until your neck and upper back are in a curve. Push your head down until you feel a stretch in the neck and upper back. Hold for 30 seconds.



Lower back

Ouch! A chair that lacks support is often the problem.

Fix it Sit up straight in a chair with arm rests. Reach behind you with your right arm and grab the back of the left arm rest. Rotate your torso to the right using your core. Hold for 30 seconds and breathe deeply. Repeat on the other side.



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8 food lies

New research has revealed the truth about these nutrition fallacies

1 Microwaves destroy nutrients

Two factors affect the nutritional quality of vegetables: exposure to heat and exposure to water. That's why - according to the Harvard Medical School - boiling can be the worst way to cook, whereas microwaving exposes them to heat more briefly so they retain more goodness. That's not a universal rule, though - carrots are more nutritious when boiled because it makes their nutrients easier to absorb. The best strategy is to eat as much veg as you can, however it's prepared.

2 Eggs raise cholesterol levels

Although this is true, it's not a reason to avoid them because eggs contain high-density lipoprotein cholesterol - the 'good' kind that is needed for optimal health. A 2007 US study of 10,000 adults found no correlation between moderate egg consumption (one or more a day) and cardiovascular diseases or strokes. Eggs are also high in protein and healthy fats, making them one of nature's top muscle foods.

3 Red meat is bad for you

You should limit your consumption of red meat to no more than 500g per week - the World Cancer Research Fund says sticking to this limit and cutting out processed meat can reduce your risk of bowel cancer - but don't bin it altogether. A diet that includes lean red meat can lower levels of low-density lipoprotein ('bad') cholesterol and increase absorption of omega 3 fatty acids, according to a study published in the *European Journal Of Nutrition*, as well as providing iron, zinc and protein.

4 Red wine is the only booze that's good for your heart

Red wine contains a chemical called resveratrol, which has been shown to have heart-protecting properties by numerous studies. But a Harvard University study published in the journal *Circulation* found that one alcoholic drink per day helped reduce the risk of heart disease, regardless of whether it was beer, wine or spirits. Drinking more than this regularly, though, increases your risk.

5 Low-fat food is good for you

Don't be fooled by the labels. A low-fat food item can contain the same amount of calories as the full-fat version because it replaces fat with the likes of sugar to cover the change in flavour. A study by the *Journal Of Marketing Research* proved that people ate 28 per cent more chocolates if they were labelled as low-fat and this led to an overall increase in calories consumed.

6 Organic food is more nutritious

Just because it's more expensive doesn't mean it's better for you. The London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine's systematic review of more than 50,000 studies over a 50-year period reported that conventionally and organically produced foods were comparable in ten of the 13 nutrient categories analysed, with no significant health benefits attributed to the differences.

7 You shouldn't eat full-fat cheese

It may be higher in calories than the reduced-fat version but one serving of full-fat cheese per day can actually help you lose weight, according to research from Stockholm's Karolinska Institute. This is because its combination of protein and healthy fats keeps you feeling full and prevents snacking. It's also a good source of bone-strengthening calcium.

8 Only fresh fruit really counts

Fresh fruit remains your best source of vitamin C, but dried and canned fruit also count towards your recommended five daily portions of fruit and veg. Dried fruit is low in fat and sodium and high in fibre and potassium. A study by the University of Illinois also showed that canned fruit provides the same fibre and vitamin content as fresh fruit.



'Boiling can be the worst way to cook vegetables, whereas microwaving allows them to retain more goodness'



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5 gym worries solved

New to the gym? Feel at home in no time with these tips from personal trainer Shaun Stafford



What does it mean when someone asks me if I can 'spot' them?

'Spotting simply means helping them out with a set which they may not be able to do safely by themselves. Ask them what they'd like you to do - usually it's to stand behind them on the bench press to make sure they don't get stuck under the bar - and if you feel comfortable, get involved. The favour can always be returned.'

What does it mean when someone asks if they can 'work in' with me?

'During busy times most of the gym equipment is in use so it's helpful to "work in", which simply means allowing someone else to use your machine or bit of kit during your rest between sets. It's common courtesy to allow this, and is a good opportunity to watch them perform the move to make sure you are doing it right.'

Do the dumbbells I've just used need to go back in a specific location?

'All weights have a home in the gym and you should always put them back where they belong - which is hopefully where you found them. If you don't think this is the right place, ask one of the gym employees who will be delighted that someone is taking responsibility for the kit and not leaving it hazarded on the floor.'

Should I wipe down the kit after I've finished with it?

'Always carry a towel to wipe down the kit after use so you can leave it in the condition in which you'd like to find it. Gyms are an ideal breeding ground for germs - hot and humid - so good hygiene by everyone is important in preventing bugs and illness.'

Can I ask someone what they're doing?

'Absolutely - asking questions is a great way to boost your knowledge. Make sure the timing is right (ask during a rest period) and that the question is to the point. There is one exception: never ask the goddess in hot pants how she got her perfect bottom. You don't want to be that guy...'

3 instant health checks

Give yourself a quick once-over



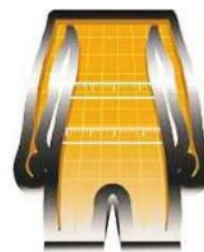
Body mass index

Why should I take it? Body mass index (BMI) is the most common way to identify whether an individual is a healthy weight. **Take the test** Divide your weight in kilograms by your height in metres squared. If you're 75kg and 1.74m tall, your BMI is 24.77. **What does it mean?** A BMI between 18.5 and 25 indicates that you're the right weight for your height. A result between 25 and 30 is classed as overweight. Above 30 is classified as clinically obese.



Heart rate

Why should I take it? A resting rate of 60-80 beats per minute indicates good health. **Take the test** Place two fingers on the side of your neck or your inner wrist and count the number of beats in 15 seconds. Multiply this by four to calculate beats per minute. **What does it mean?** A low resting heart rate signifies greater fitness because your heart is shifting more blood per beat. A high heart rate can ultimately cause heart disease or stroke, so if it's over 100 see your doctor.



Waist to hip ratio

Why should I take it? It's an indicator of general health and long-term medical risks. **Take the test** Measure the distance around your waist at the navel and divide it by the distance around the widest part of your hips. **What does it mean?** A ratio of 0.9 for men has been shown to correlate strongly with good health. A higher ratio means more fat is being stored around the waist. This is linked to serious long-term health risks such as diabetes and coronary disease.



For solutions to more gym worries go to mensfitness.co.uk/links/gymworries

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Build strength in neglected muscles without leaving the bedroom

Glute bridge

What it targets

Lower back, glutes, hamstrings, core.

Why do it? 'Being strong in these areas will translate to being faster on the pitch and more stable in the gym,' says Six Physio's Rebecca van Klinken (sixphysio.com).

How to do it Lie on your back with your knees bent at 90°. With your core braced, lift your hips off the bed, so your body is in a straight line from head to knees. Then straighten one leg and hold before returning to the start.

How many? Three sets of ten reps each side.

Plyometric squat

What it targets

Core, glutes, quads, hamstrings.

Why do it? 'The soft surface of your bed will make it harder to do and consequently really engage your core,' says personal trainer Simon Lovell (themaediet.com).

How to do it With your feet shoulder-width apart and your toes pointing slightly outwards, squat down until your knees are bent at 90° before jumping up explosively.

How many? Five sets of ten reps.

Side lying leg rotation

What it targets

Gluteus medius.

Why do it? 'This works the small stabilising muscles of your pelvis, so you'll be stronger when running on uneven surfaces,' says Van Klinken.

How to do it Lie on your side with the leg that's on the bed straight and your top one bent. Slightly tilt your body forward and lift the foot of your bent leg off the floor. Slowly rotate the bent leg from the hip and let the top knee rise up towards the ceiling. Lower slowly.

How many? Three sets of 20 reps each side.

Single-leg squat

What it targets

Quads, hamstrings, glutes, calves.

Why do it? 'This will build the strength of your legs and will help with sports that require power and quick sideways movements,' says Lovell.

How to do it Rest one foot behind you on the edge of the bed and plant your other foot on the floor. Keeping your back straight, shoulders back and heel firmly placed on the ground, lower your body until your thigh is parallel to the floor and return to the start.

How many? Three sets of 15 reps each side.



4 GLOBAL CHALLENGES FOR THE GYM

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Swim across the English Channel

Distance 34km

Use 25m indoor pool

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Cycle the Tour de France

Distance 3,471km

Use Stationary bike

How to do it Pedal through a 22.25km ride twice a week for 18 months to conquer the course.



Row the Atlantic

Distance 4,700km

Use Indoor rower

How to do it You must perform six 5,000m rows every week for just over three years.



Climb Everest

Distance 3,487m

Use Stair climber

How to do it With an average 25cm step up, take 1,000 steps twice a week for seven weeks and you'll cover the climb from Nepal Base Camp to the summit of Everest.



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OFFER CODE: P1102

The best advice from the biggest names in fitness

Edited by Joe Warner

the Experts

A-list Trainer

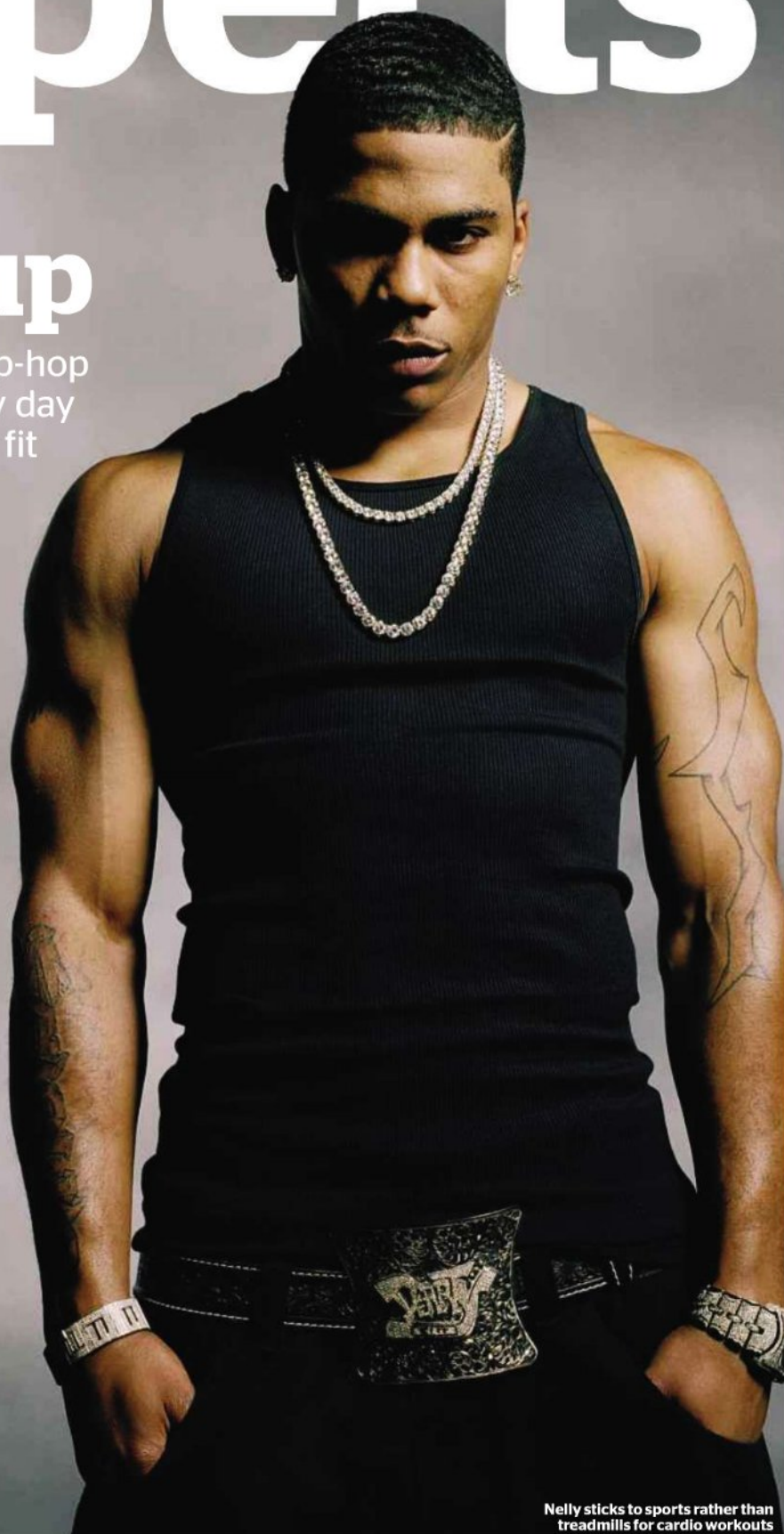
Muscle up

Grammy award-winning hip-hop star Nelly works hard every day to stay on top - and to stay fit

Hip-hop star Nelly has been a successful rapper for nearly 20 years, first with his group St Lunatics and as a solo artist with huge hits including 'Dilemma' and the global smash 'Hot In Herre'. But the three-time Grammy winner's achievements aren't restricted to music - since his breakthrough in 2000 with *Country Grammar* Nelly has also started his own clothing line, launched a charity that raises awareness of leukaemia, bought a minority stake in the NBA's Charlotte Bobcats, and put on nearly 14kg of hard muscle.

The past few months have seen the release of both his latest album, *5.0*, and the DVD *Celebrity Sweat*, which reveals Nelly's training secrets. 'In the gym, I try to do everything I can,' he says. 'I isolate, I do cables, I use the Smith machine, I bench.' >

'Basketball gives me everything. I get the agility, the stretching, the stop and go'



Nelly sticks to sports rather than treadmills for cardio workouts

When his hectic schedule allows, Nelly - born Cornell Haynes in 1974 - lifts five days a week. 'If I'm busy, I get in two or three days just to maintain.' Timing is never an issue. 'If I'm recording, I'm in the studio until six or seven in the morning,' he says. 'Then you go home, get some sleep, get to the gym anywhere from 9pm to midnight. Sometimes later.'

For cardio, Nelly focuses on his love of sports. 'I don't do treadmills,' he says. 'I did try a cycling class but a 55-year-old lady kicked my ass and I was done.' Mostly he plays basketball. 'It gives me everything,' he says. 'I get the agility, the stretching, the stop and go, the jumping. If you play full court, you're getting the sprinting in, too.'

Meat feast

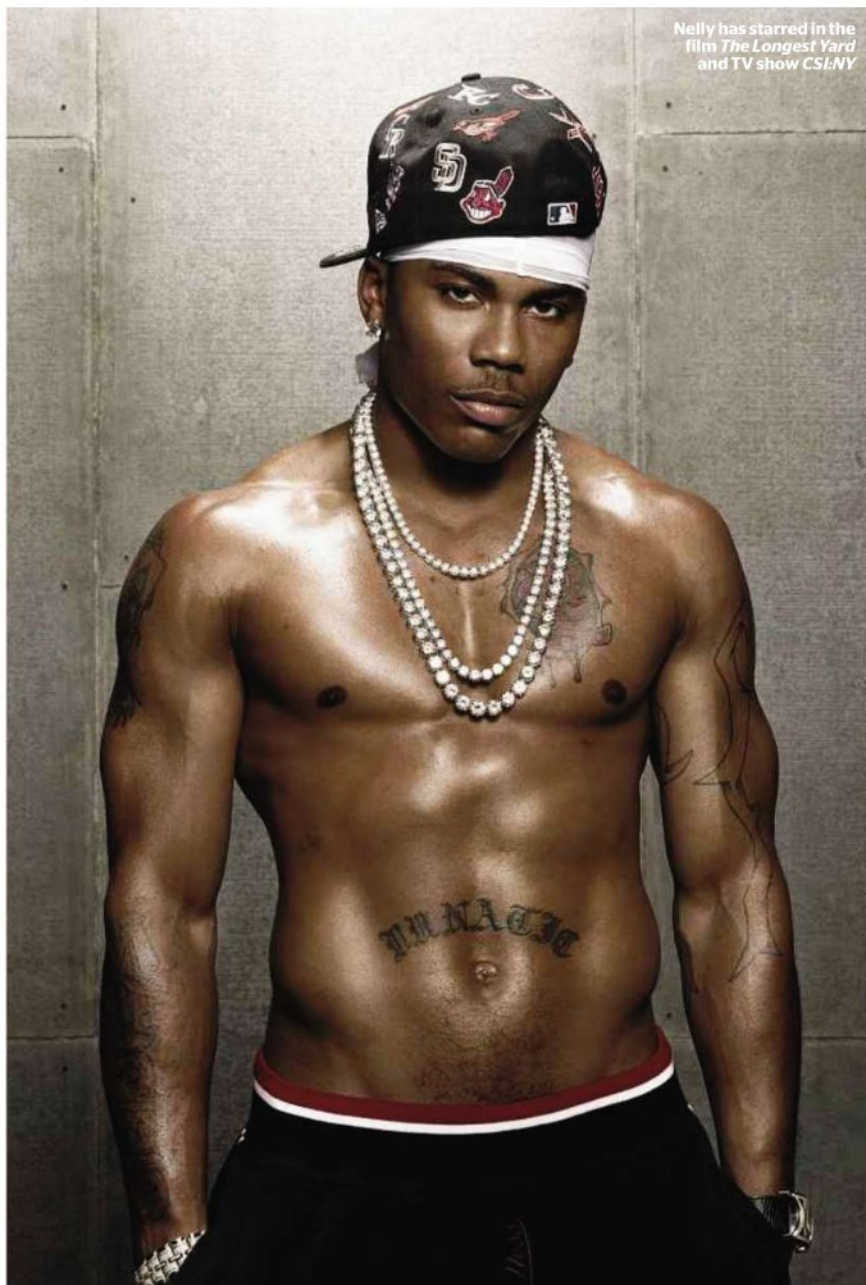
Nelly's eating plan is just as straightforward. 'I used to be a vegetarian but now I eat chicken and I eat turkey. I'm not a great cook, but I do it well enough not to starve.'

His favourite muscle-building meal? 'My speciality is probably turkey burgers. They're the best - Swiss and American cheese, lettuce, Thousand Island dressing.' Thanks to good genetics and all that dedication, the only time he had to change his meal plan was after landing a role in the 2005 movie *The*

'I used to be a vegetarian but now I eat chicken and I eat turkey'

Longest Yard, for which he needed to bulk up to convince as an American footballer. 'They wanted me to play a running back and I looked like the water boy,' he says with a smile. 'I thought it was best to look the part.'

Nelly's workout DVD, *Celebrity Sweat*, is available to buy from his website, celebritysweatnelly.com, priced \$19.95 (around £13).



Nelly has starred in the film *The Longest Yard* and TV show *CSI:NY*

The Nelly workout

Nelly works his chest hard with pyramid training, lowering reps and adding weight to keep his body guessing

1 Incline dumb-bell press

Sets 4 Reps 15/12/8/6



2 Flat Smith machine bench press

Sets 4 Reps 15/12/8/6



3 Dumb-bell pullover

Sets 3 Reps 15/12/8/6



4 Cable crossover

Sets 3 Reps 10 high/10 middle/10 low (no rest)





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Muscle expert **Charles Poliquin**

Let's face it - every guy wants a big and strong chest, but hardly any know how best to achieve it.

You want a big chest, so every workout you make a beeline for the bench press. Right? Wrong. One reason guys don't develop the chest they want is that they focus too much on one exercise, and that's usually the bench. Chest-obsessed lifters failing to work on the shoulders and back can suffer muscular imbalances. The pecs should be trained with a range of exercises that hit the muscles from a variety of angles. This ensures the maximum number of muscle fibres are worked, meaning they'll grow back bigger and stronger.

Charles Poliquin is the world's leading authority on strength and conditioning, and has trained Olympic medallists in 18 different sports.

BUILD A BIG CHEST

Poliquin's six killer moves

'For the most effective chest and back workout, you need to start with exercises that offer the most bang for your buck - they recruit the most motor units and also produce the greatest hormonal response. We're going to do a variety of moves and rep ranges to really keep your muscles out of their comfort zone. This workout uses supersets, which are two exercises performed back to back. Doing supersets can increase the work capacity by as much as 40 per cent for a given workout compared with the old standard-sets approach, because there is less cumulative fatigue due to having more rest time between exercises. In effect, you get the strength training benefits of station training and the time-saving benefits of circuit training.'

Q+A

Ask Poliquin

Got a question for our muscle expert?
Email mfexperts@dennis.co.uk

Q What's the best way to warm up for a big weights session?

A You should warm up the muscles with lighter sets of the exercise you will be performing. However, if a previous exercise used the same muscles, you don't need as many warm-up sets. For example, after five sets of bench presses, you may only need one warm-up set of incline dumb-bell presses before using maximal weights. Avoid static stretching before any weight training workout because it will interfere with the nervous system's ability to recruit the higher-threshold

motor units of the muscle. Apart from that, clinically speaking, pectoral tears are often associated with pre-workout static stretching.

Q How often should I be eating to add muscle?

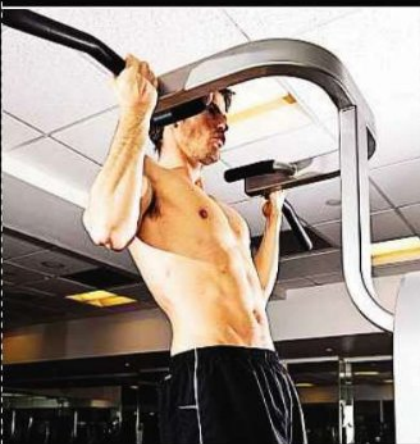
A Every 2½ hours. Making a conscious decision to take the time to eat is one of the keys to gaining mass. Sounds simple but if you're like me and run a business, have a family and have a lot of other interests and obligations, it becomes easy to skip meals. A



Superset 1



1a Bench press



1b Chin-up

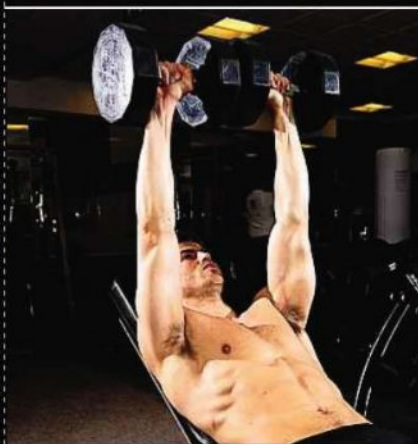
Coach's notes

'These are the real bang-for-your-buck moves. Do five sets of six to eight reps for each move, resting two minutes after every set. Tempo is crucial here, so take five seconds on the eccentric (lowering) part but perform the concentric (lifting) part explosively.'

Superset 2



2a 60° incline dumb-bell press

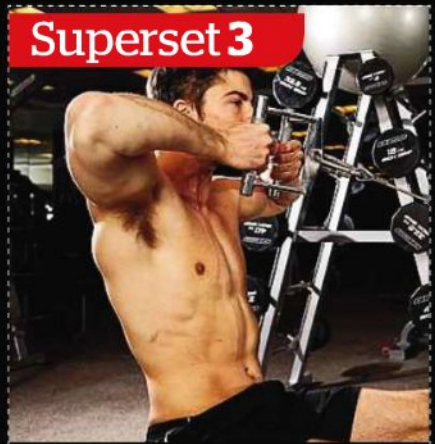


2b 45° incline dumb-bell press

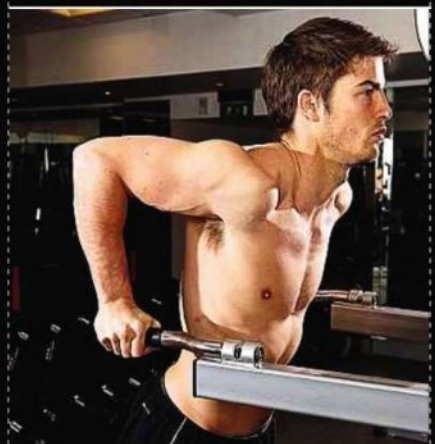
Coach's notes

'Now we focus on the upper and mid chest. Do three sets of eight to ten reps. Rest for ten seconds after exercise one, then two minutes after exercise two. Lower the dumb-bells in three seconds before pausing for one second at the bottom of the move and then lift powerfully.'

Superset 3



3a Seated cable face pull



3b V-bar dip

Coach's notes

'The final superset targets the powerhouse muscles of the lower back and the lower chest and shoulders, ensuring the whole workout hits all the big muscles. Perform two sets of 12 to 15 reps, taking two seconds during the lowering part of the move. Rest for two minutes between exercises.'

smart solution is to wear a watch with an alarm. Once you have had a meal, set the watch so that it rings 2½ hours later, indicating when it's time for your next meal.

Q How much water do I need per day to be at my strongest?

A This is a smart question because hydration is the greatest determinant of strength. A drop of 1.5 per cent in your water levels translates to a drop of ten per cent in your maximal strength.



The leaner you are, the worse it'll be, so make sure you weigh the same or slightly more at the end of your training session. If you're training regularly you need 39ml of water per kilogram of bodyweight, so an 80kg man needs around 3.1 litres, while a 95kg man needs 3.7 litres. An easy way to ensure that you are drinking your proper daily quota is to measure your prescribed amount into containers for the day, every morning. By bedtime, all the containers should be empty.

'Don't make me mad!'



Next month Poliquin reveals the gym antics that drive him crazy

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Cardio expert **Tim Don**

There's nothing worse than trying to get through a session that feels like it's been going on forever.

Motivation and enthusiasm for training can be hard at this time of year because it's cold and wet outside, and your gym is packed with hundreds of new members. So distract your mind by avoiding monotonous sessions. The main cause of workouts that feel as if they're never going to end is starting without a clear objective of what you want to achieve and how to hit that goal. Knowing this will allow you to focus and should prevent you from quitting before you reach your goal.

Tim Don is an Olympic triathlete and was the 2006 ITU triathlon world champion

CARDIO

RUNNING

'Running can be the hardest session to start, because it can take a while to establish a comfortable rhythm.'

'One of the best ways to keep my mind occupied during training runs is to do Fartlek (Swedish for 'speed play') sessions. This session is tough but it builds muscular strength and endurance - vital for speed. It's great to do on a treadmill but works as well on the pavement.'

CYCLING

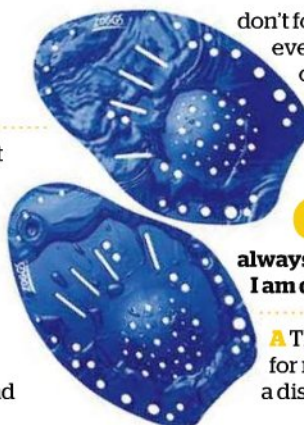
'A great way to stay upbeat during a winter ride is to do a power-building session. The knowledge that training hard now will make next year's sessions a bit easier is a great motivating force. Overgear drills are great for building power in your legs because the major muscle groups in your legs must work hard to keep the pedals turning.'

SWIMMING

'The hardest part of any swim session is getting into the water. I find that once my shoulders are under I'm focused on what I'm there to do. This is why having a structured session is so important. Try this speed session based on high-intensity effort with short recovery breaks to beat boredom, and it's one of the best ways to get faster in the pool.'

Q Swimming aids, such as fins, hand paddles and pull buoys, look ridiculous. Are they worth the embarrassment?

A Hell yes! They are an integral part of my training and should be a key part for anyone who wants to get faster through the water. I use paddles for strength, a pull buoy during recovery sessions to rest my legs and to work on my arms, and fins for kicking drills. Every top swimmer has them in their kit bag, as do us triathletes. And



don't forget your drag shorts to make everything that bit harder. Who cares what you look like, so long as you're getting faster? Make sure you start packing them in your kit bag too.

Q I start races really well but my performance always tails off quickly. What I am doing wrong?

A This is a very common problem for racers and can easily lead to a disappointing performance. It's

Q+A

Ask Don

Got a question for our cardio expert?
Email mfexperts@dennis.co.uk



You don't need a running coach if you follow Tim Don's DIY coaching tips. Go to mensfitness.co.uk/links/thedon

BOREDOM BUSTERS

Speed session

10min easy jog to warm up

- 90sec fast, 90sec easy
- 60sec fast, 60sec easy
- 45sec fast, 45sec easy
- 30sec fast, 30sec easy
- 15sec fast, 15sec easy
- 10sec fast, 10sec easy
- 3min easy jog

then repeat the whole session before a 10min easy jog to warm down.



Tim Don's quick fat-loss session

'After a warm-up, jog along the pavement using lampposts as markers. Sprint to the nearest one, then jog the distance of the next two posts before repeating the drill. The session doesn't need to be long – just do a few laps around your block – and you'll burn a lot more calories than you would if you did a steady pace run.'



Power session

In the gym

- 5min warm-up
- 15sec high-cadence sprint – stay in the saddle to readily push your legs
- 2min average cadence
- Repeat ten times before
- 5min warm-down

Outside

- 10min warm-up
- 6min overgear (two gears below a comfortable level)
- 6min normal gear
- Repeat this sequence three times
- 10min warm-down

Tim Don's quick fat-loss session

'A spinning class is great for burning fat because the intensity varies dramatically, which burns more calories, and it's almost impossible to duck out before it's over because you'll have to walk past the rest of the class with your head hanging in shame. There are not many things more motivating than that.'

Speed session

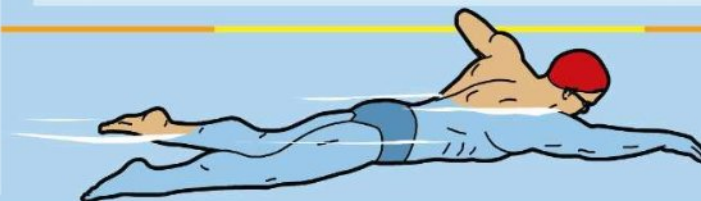
It's important you swim the same speed for the 50m rep as you do for the 200m. The 50m should feel relatively easy and the 200m should feel relatively hard.

- 10min warm-up
- 50m, 5sec rest
- 100m, 10sec rest
- 200m, 15sec rest
- 50m, 5sec rest
- 100m, 10sec rest
- 200m, 15sec rest
- 60sec rest

Repeat. Use a pull buoy to make the second time tougher.

Tim Don's quick fat-loss session

- Do a 5min warm-up
- Do a 25m length as fast as you can, before recovering on the return lap.
- Repeat six to eight times for a fast, effective calorie-burning session.



easy on the start line to feel confident, especially when your preparations have gone well and you've trained really hard, but race-day adrenaline can result in you setting off too fast. You'll feel great for a while and continue to push it, only for the wheels to fall off suddenly when you run out of energy. Pacing yourself is really important and getting it right in training means you'll get it right in races. Always start every session slowly and gradually increase the intensity. Remember: no-one has ever got a medal for winning the first half of a race.'

Q I always get cramp on the run stage after the cycle and it's costing me time. How can I avoid it?

A One of the best ways to avoid cramp is in your preparation. Make sure you are well hydrated by taking on a lot of fluids in the three days leading up to your race. The most common causes of cramp are muscle fatigue and sodium imbalances, so when I'm on the bike I have one bottle of water and one bottle of energy drink to give my muscles the fuel they need with the right concentration of electrolytes.



Q How many calories do you burn over the course of an Olympic-distance triathlon?

A Around **1,750**

Nutrition expert **Dr Kevin Currell**

It can be really frustrating when you're training hard but failing to shift the fat around your stomach. What you eat is vital. Even if you think you're eating sensibly you may be surprised to find many common foods and drinks that appear on the surface to be smart choices actually contain startling amounts of calories from sugar and fat. I worked with one athlete who couldn't work out why he was overweight, regardless of how hard he trained. When he revealed he drank three litres of juice a day - about 1,200 calories - I realised what was wrong. So if you want to blitz that belly fat, start by avoiding these high-calorie criminals.'

Dr Kevin Currell is a senior performance nutritionist who works with Olympic athletes at the English Institute of Sport. For more see eis2win.co.uk

HIGH-

7

6

5

4



CRIME LOADS OF SUGAR

Fruit juices are high in calories because they contain a lot of natural sugar - a single 200ml serving contains about 20g of sugar and packs 90 calories. That's more than most types of cola. A small glass of juice is fine, and great to get a shot of vitamin C, but consume too many calories and your body will store the excess as fat.

Q Does eating late at night mean more calories are stored as fat?

A I get asked this one a lot. It seems to be a common belief that eating late at night results in more of the calories being stored as fat because your body doesn't have the opportunity to burn them off - but there is no scientific evidence. You may lose more weight by not eating late at night but only because it is an effective way to cut out excess calories.

It's also generally true that people tend to eat biscuits rather than celery in the evening, so cutting out late-night snacks can mean cutting out high-fat high-sugar food that inhibits fat loss.

Q Is it bad to skip breakfast when trying to lose weight?

A It might seem as if you're reducing your calorie intake but research shows that eating breakfast can help you lose fat in the long run. A good low-GI breakfast (think porridge oats or wholegrain carbs) means you'll remain fuller for longer, so it



Q+A
Ask Dr Currell
Got a question for our nutrition expert?
Email mfexperts@dennis.co.uk

Photography Danny Bird, Shutterstock



Go to mensfitness.co.uk/links/caloriecount to find out how many calories there are in some popular fast foods

CALORIE CRIMINALS

Cut out these sugar-packed foods and drinks to beat the bulge

7

SHOP-BOUGHT SAUCES

CRIME HIDDEN FAT

Jars of shop-bought cooking sauces can contain high levels of salt, sugar and fat, making them a no-go option if you're trying to lose weight. Cream-based sauces can be the worst offenders with some topping 650 calories and more than 50g fat. Stick to home-made sauces - they are quick and easy to make and far tastier.

TAKE-AWAY COFFEE

CRIME PACKED WITH FAT

A large latte from a coffee chain contains so many calories that it's better to think of one as a meal. They're made with full-fat milk and cream, unless you request otherwise, and the amount of liquid in them is equivalent to a bowl of soup. Get your caffeine hit by ordering skinny milk, or have a regular coffee or espresso.

KETCHUP

CRIME HIDDEN SALT

A 15g serving of tomato ketchup contains 15 calories, so adding sauce to every meal soon adds up. A big problem is the high levels of salt, which have numerous health risks. Most condiments are high in sugar and salt, so stick to the 'no added' varieties if you can't live without them. Alternatively try making your own.

BREAKFAST CEREALS

CRIME HIGH IN SUGAR

Many breakfast cereals are not the best way to start your day. Most manufacturers detail nutritional data for a 30g serving, which is really small. A bowl could contain 100g of cereal, which can mean more than 50g sugar. Stick to wholegrain cereals in which sugar makes up less than 50 per cent of the total carbs.

encourages less snacking and enables your body to cope with future meals much more effectively. Basically if you skip breakfast you're more likely to snack more in the day, ultimately leading to a struggle to lose weight.



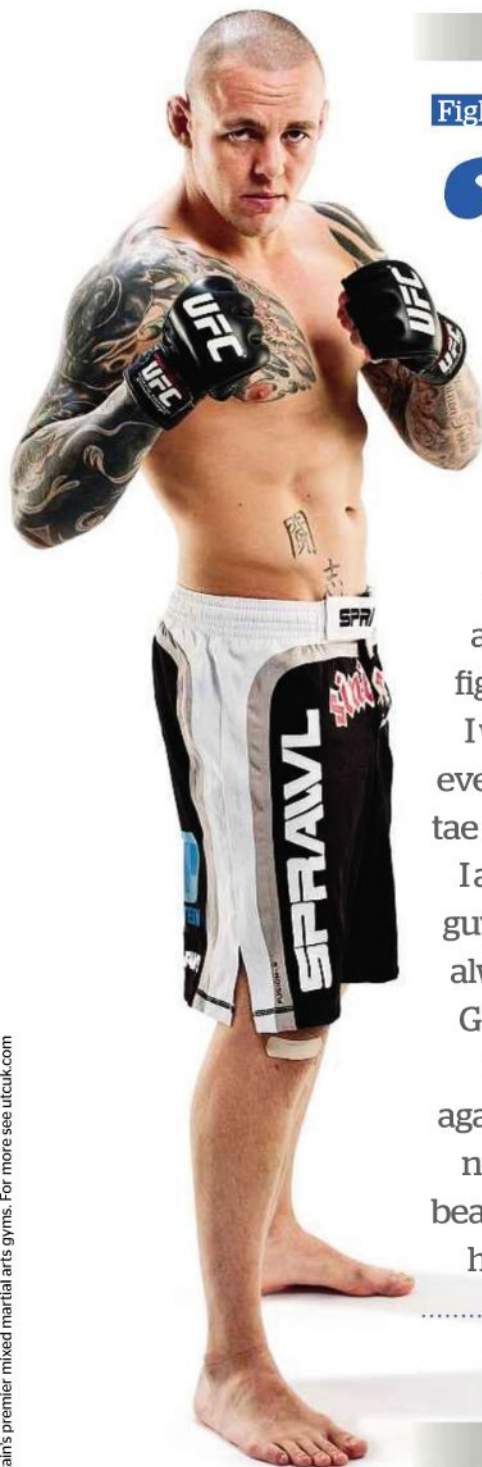
Q I work out quite a lot. Does this deplete my body's vitamins or minerals? Should I take a daily multivitamin?

A If you get your diet right you should be able to get all the vitamins and minerals you need to maintain your health and keep your body functioning effectively. The best thing is to eat a balanced diet, including plenty of fruit and vegetables, a range of meats (including red meat), good fats, such as those in olive oil and nuts, and wholegrain carbohydrates in each meal.

Which has more caffeine - a cup of tea or coffee?



Coffee. The average cup of coffee has 80 to 100mg of caffeine, while tea has between 10 and 50mg.



Fight expert **Ross Pearson**

I go into every fight like it's the most important fight of my life.

I love training anyway and I'd really throw myself into this second strength phase, but the fight's what helps me stay focused. I've always wanted to be the best fighter I can. When I was a kid, I wanted to get a black belt in every martial art and I got one in tae kwon do and a brown in judo.

I always want to fight the best guys. If I could fight anyone, I've always said that I'd like to fight Georges St-Pierre, because I'd like to see what I could do against the best in the world. I'm not saying that I think I could beat him - I'd just like to fight him for the experience.

Ross Pearson was the Ultimate Fighter season nine winner, and has a professional record of 11 wins and 4 losses.

GET EVEN STRONGER

Pearson's strength and conditioning coach Barry Gibson takes us through month two of fight camp

'This is the second part of your strength phase. You're still not getting too sport-specific here, just training all-round strength that'll help with any sort of move. We're using low reps because they'll make you stronger without making you bigger, which is essential if you're in any sport with weight categories - or even sports where a good strength-weight ratio's important. Focus on two of these lifts a session. If you're doing fight training, two weight sessions a week is about as much as you should take on.'



Q+A Ask Pearson

Got a question for our fight expert?
Email mfexperts@dennis.co.uk

Q How do you stay calm on the walk to the ring?

A I love fighting, so it's not that difficult to stay focused. When I'm walking out I'm thinking about the training I've done, the work I've done in the gym. I know there's no way the other guy's worked harder than me, and there's no way he's going to be in better shape than me - he might be able to match my pace but he won't be able to go any harder than I can. If you've done everything you can do in the gym to prepare, you should be confident going into a fight.

Q With so many different aspects of MMA to work on, how do you avoid overtraining?

A You have to make sure that you balance everything out. I'll train two or three times a day with only a day or two off a week. That means I have to recover just as hard as I train, so I make sure I'm getting eight hours of sleep a night, make sure I'm getting enough calories in so I can recover properly, and make it a priority to either stretch or do mobility stuff, so I'm not getting too banged up from training.



To watch Pearson do these strength moves go to mensfitness.co.uk/links/fearsomepearson

1 Rack pull Sets 3 Reps 5



'You should be able to get more weight on the bar in this than you would in the deadlift. It lets you work on similar muscles without risking your lower back as much.'

- Start with a bar loaded on the pins in a power cage. You should be aiming for a similar weight to your max in the deadlift.
- Drive your hips forward as you lift the weight.

2 Bulgarian split squat Sets 3 Reps 5 each leg



'Unilateral moves are important. In fighting or any sport, you're unlikely to be pushing off both legs at the same time, so training to push off one leg explosively is vital.'

- Start with your instep on a bench or step behind you, holding a pair of weight plates or dumb-bells in your hands or a bar across your back.
- Bend your lead knee until your back knee brushes the ground, then straighten up again. Finish your reps on one side before you do the other side.

3 Weighted pull-up Sets 3 Reps 5



'A huge amount of grappling is about pulling, and once you've got to ten straight pull-ups it's time to start adding weight. Having a strong back also helps retract your punches faster.'

- Start from a dead hang wearing a weighted belt, backpack or vest or holding a dumb-bell between your feet.
- Pull up strongly, aiming to bring your elbows back and get your head above the bar. Lower under control so you don't jolt your shoulders.

4 Shoulder press Sets 3 Reps 5



'You need a vertical push in your routine; this or a push press is fine. It'll counterbalance all the pulling you do in the gym and in grappling, and the strength you develop will transfer across to the bench press.'

- Start with a barbell at shoulder height. You should be able to clean it from this position, but if you can't then take it out of a squat rack.
- Press the bar directly upwards. If it moves away from your body, you won't be able to handle as much weight. At the top of the move your shoulders should be in line with your ears.

Fight move Clinch to knee

A strong Thai clinch can leave your opponent helpless. Here is Pearson's guide to the killer move

- Fold one hand over the top of the other without interlocking the fingers - that makes it weaker - and aim to push down on the crown of your opponent's head.
- Pinch your elbows together to get more control over them.
- Pull your opponent down as you drive a knee into him, aiming for the body or head.



IS **2011** GOING TO BE YOUR FITTEST YEAR EVER?

Words Joel Snape, Mark Bailey
Photography Glen Burrows

YES

NO

Wrong answer

That's the spirit. This is the time of year when you're likely to be making changes, forming plans and attacking your fitness with fresh resolve.

Unfortunately, it's also the time when you're assailed on all sides by 'miracle' diet plans, fitness fix-alls and scientific-sounding articles that claim they can make you superhuman in six weeks.

Some of the advice is good and some isn't, but there's one important thing to remember: focusing on the details is pointless unless the big picture's sorted. That's why we've assembled this easy-to-follow plan, which will take you from the basics of fitness to the tweaks you need, picking up any mistakes you might be making on the way. Here's how you're going to do it.



EAT RIGHT

If fixing your diet was all you did, you'd end up looking, feeling and performing better, but combined with the right gym programme it'll help your fitness skyrocket. You won't diet or obsessively count calories - just make sure you eat the right food in the right ratios. And yes, you have to cut down on booze - but not as much as you might think.

TRAIN SMART

You don't need a five-day-a-week gym programme with 20 different exercises per session: you need to focus on a few key moves and give yourself properly defined goals. Even if you've been training for a while there's a chance you've got weak spots - it's time to eliminate them.

RECOVER FAST

Preventing injury and recovering properly from your workouts will pay dividends - just a few minutes either side of your workout will cover it. And a commitment to improvement means recovery days and proper sleep are just as important as hard work. That's right: we'll be telling you to rest more.

Now
turn over
to **EAT RIGHT**
and discover the
importance of
nutrition when
improving your
body



Start now

It's the easiest, cheapest and most effective change you can make to your daily habits. A recent study published in the *European Journal Of Sports Science* showed that a loss of as little as two per cent bodyweight from dehydration has an adverse effect on sports performance, and water aids everything from proper digestion to an efficient metabolism. Water from the tap is fine.



EAT RIGHT

Good nutrition is the foundation of your fitness programme. Get it right, and everything else will come easier

START HERE

Do you drink at least two litres of water a day?

NO

YES

Do you eat eight pieces of fruit and veg a day?

NO

YES

Do you eat at least 1.2g of protein per kilo of bodyweight every day?

NO

YES

Do you avoid fat whenever you can?

YES

NO

Are you eating all three macronutrients - protein, fat and carbs - at every meal?

NO

YES

YES

How many units of alcohol do you drink in a typical week?

28+

14-28

UNDER 14

Time to cut down

Alcohol is loaded with calories and suppresses fat metabolism, making it harder to lose weight. Too much can diminish the results you make from your gym workouts.

This could still hurt your fitness

At least cut back on the beer and switch to dry white wine, which has less sugar. Or try nutritionist Robb Wolf's NorCal margarita (bit.ly/dNhAP3).

You're doing fine.

Now turn over to **TRAIN SMART** and focus on reaching your workout goals, which will improve motivation

Five isn't enough

Still sticking with the government-mandated five? Or not even getting that? It's time to make a change. 'When you eat carbs, you should aim for nutritionally dense ones with slow sugar release,' says author Dr John Briffa. 'That describes pretty much every vegetable except the potato, which is why veg should be the foundation of your diet.' Aim for eight portions, with more veg because fruit is high in sugar.

Protein is a must

Recommendations on how much protein you need vary. The International Olympic Committee Consensus on Sports Nutrition recommends 1.2-1.4g per kilo of bodyweight for endurance athletes and 1.2-1.7g/kg for strength and speed athletes - but you're unlikely to get fat by eating more. 'Overfeeding protein, within reason, won't make you fat,' says nutrition expert Dr Lonnie Lowery. 'Excess protein calories aren't as likely to be stored as body fat as carbs, and they won't send your insulin sky-high.'

You need all three

'Protein is a building block and triggers satiety enzymes,' says registered nutritionist Jamie Richards. 'Get carbs from fruit and veg with a high fibre content. If you're hungry two hours after eating it means you've eaten too many carbs.'

Do you know your metabolic rate?

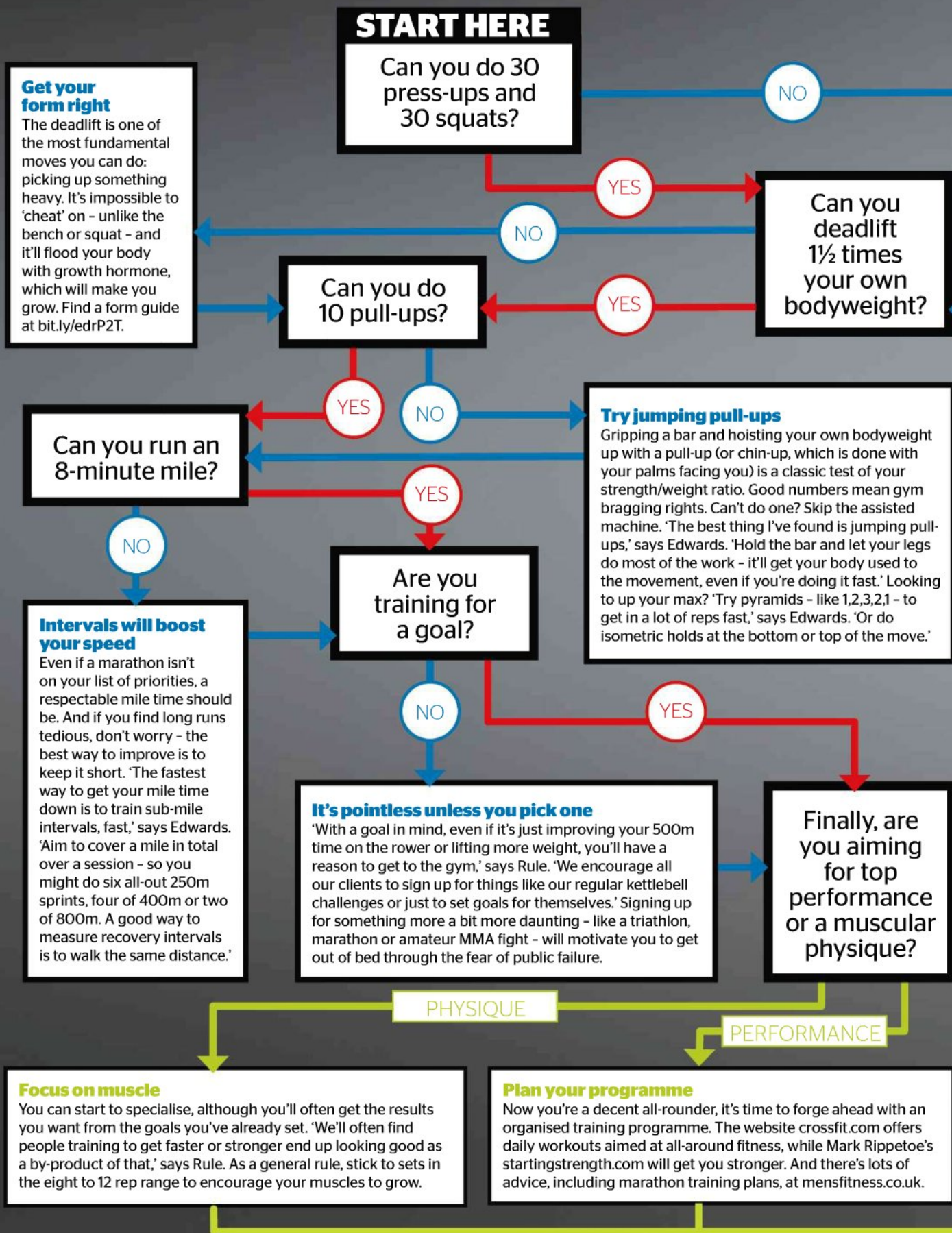
NO

Work it out

Without becoming a calorie-counter, you need to know what your energy requirements are. The Harris-Benedict equation uses your height, weight, age and level of activity to estimate how many calories you need: find a simple version at bit.ly/1gmgsi. 'Spend a week keeping a food log,' says Richards. 'That'll highlight any foods that have more or fewer calories than you'd expect.'

TRAIN SMART

Whether you're a beginner or a gym veteran, the fastest improvement will come from focusing on your goals



Models: Jana Perez@MandP, Stephen Bracken@MOT Stylist Sian Lewis
Makeup: Emma White Turle using Dermalogica and Paul Mitchell

This is your starting point

'You can't make progress on weighted moves if you're fundamentally weak,' says personal trainer Darryl Edwards (thefitnessexplorer.com). 'Bodyweight moves will strengthen your weak spots and allow you to make faster progress than load-bearing moves. Also, they'll work your stabiliser muscles and it's difficult to overextend or injure yourself with them.' Proper motion in the press-up is from straight arms down to a fist-distance from the floor; in the squat, it's thighs below parallel at the bottom.

Now
turn over to
RECOVER FAST
by taking enough
time to rest,
warming up
properly and not
overdoing it

RECOVER FAST

Proper prehab will stop you getting injured and recovering right is the final piece of the puzzle

START HERE

Do you get around eight hours of sleep per night?

NO

Lack of sleep kills your energy

A report by the University of Chicago Medical School found sleep deprivation can slow the metabolism of glucose (your body's energy source) by 30 to 40 per cent and raise levels of cortisol, a hormone which has been linked to impaired recovery. Keep your energy levels high and recovery times low by getting the recommended eight hours of sleep per night. To help you doze, the London Sleep Centre advises you to keep to regular sleeping hours, avoid stimulants such as caffeine and alcohol before bedtime and follow a relaxing pre-sleep routine. And keep your bedroom as dark as possible - that means getting some thicker curtains and switching off those blinking standby lights, or keeping electrics out of the room entirely.

YES

It's a self-applied sports massage

Using a foam roller, a soft cylinder that helps to massage your muscles, can give you the recovery benefits of a sports massage without the serious expense. A foam roller (£21.98 for a 15x90cm roller, physiosupplies.com) will release muscle tension and increase circulation to soft tissues. 'They are great for releasing tight and sore muscles after exercise,' says physio James Walker (sixphysio.com). 'Using a foam roller will keep you moving freely and help you to recover.'

NO

Nutrition is vital to workout recovery

Consuming carbohydrates and protein immediately after your workout will speed up your body's recovery, according to a study by the University of Texas. There is a brief 'window' after exercise in which glycogen recovery (replenishing your energy levels) and protein synthesis (rebuilding your muscles) are more efficient. Nutritionist Anita Bean (anitabean.co.uk) recommends a sandwich filled with lean protein such as tuna, chicken or egg.

NO

YES

Do you ever use a foam roller?

YES

Do you perform stretching or mobility work?

NO

It will get you fitter and prevent injury

Introducing stretching (to improve the flexibility of your muscles) and mobility work (to develop the range of motion of your joints) into your weekly routine will boost your performance and help to minimise injuries. A report in the *Clinical Journal Of Sport Medicine* proved that regular stretching improved force, jump height and speed. Do mobility work before your workout, and stretching afterwards.

Do your muscles ache after workouts?

YES

There's nothing wrong

Post-workout pain is completely normal. According to Graeme Marsh, author of *The Complete Guide To Training With Free Weights*, delayed onset muscle soreness (DOMS) can last for three days after training. A report from the University of Auckland in the journal *Sports Medicine* suggests 'exercise is the most effective means of alleviating pain'. Try a 'recovery' workout with light weights to get blood to the affected areas.

NO

Do you schedule recovery days?

NO

What next?

You've got the basics sorted: it's up to you what to do next. Now you've got the fundamentals of nutrition sorted, you might look at adding supplements such as fish oil or multivitamins or buying more organic, free-range food. As your training advances, you can include more exercises that work on specific weaknesses. And now you've got your recovery sorted, you might want to investigate ice baths and sports massages. The foundations have been laid, and you're stronger, fitter and healthier. 

YES

For even more New Year fitness tips go to mensfitness.co.uk/links/newyear

Do you warm up before your workouts?

NO

That's a recipe for injury

Skipping your warm-up will increase your risk of injury, according to research published in the *American Journal Of Sports Medicine*. A warm-up boosts the blood flow to your muscles and raises their temperature so they're primed for action. Before cardio, begin with lighter versions of your chosen exercise. For resistance training, complete a general warm-up to increase your heart rate and muscle temperature, before targeting the specific muscles you will work on.

YES

Do you always refuel properly after a training session?

Lack of recovery can scupper your fitness

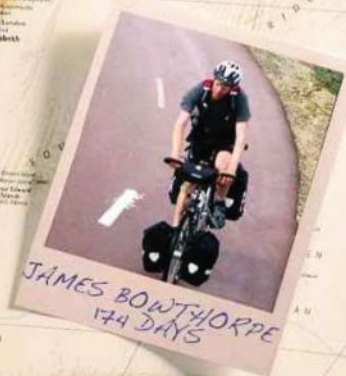
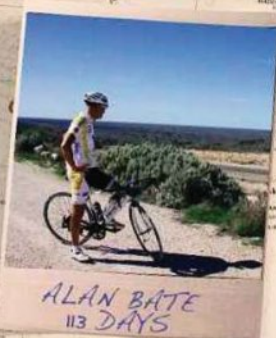
Rest days are essential. Overtraining can lead to a decrease in performance, injury, depression, fatigue and illness according to a report published in the *Journal Of Sports Medicine*. Using rest days enables you to maximise your gains, stay healthy and recover quickly. 'They don't have to be completely inactive,' says Edwards. 'A slow-paced cardio workout or a technique workout will get your blood flowing and aid recovery.'



Riding into a storm

Only a handful of men have ever circled the globe by bike - so why can't they all just get along? *MF* investigates a very British disagreement

Words Nathan Ditum Photography Danny Bird



THE
WORLD

On 4th December 2009, 23-year-old London bike courier Julian Sayerer had just completed a physically unparalleled, record-breaking ride around the globe. He had covered 29,046km in just 169 days and he'd beaten the record belonging to Scotland's Mark Beaumont by more than three weeks.

But Sayerer's reaction to his own success was a strange one. Rather than thanking friends or sponsors, he wrote an entry on his blog, at thisisnotforcharity.com. 'What I want to say concerns Mark Beaumont,' he typed, hours after his triumphant return. 'Completing that all-but meaningless record was motivated, more than anything, by earning my licence, having done exactly as he did, to say exactly what I thought of him.'

In a tirade of articulate fury, Sayerer did just that. 'I have no respect for him,' he wrote. 'I regard him as a life form some way inferior to the dead skin that accumulates in the seat of my crotch after three weeks of cycling a desert without washing.' What was it about the journey made by these two apparently similar men – both politics graduates, both cyclists united by an extraordinary achievement – that had led not just to a lack of respect, but to hatred?

Global conflict

Circumnavigating the globe by bike is a peculiarly British pursuit. In August 2001 Alastair Humphreys set off from his front door in Yorkshire, before arriving home four years and 80,000km later. Humphreys's journey was one of adventure and exploration rather than speed – he always planned to take several years and, he remembers casually, when the US and UK-led invasion of Afghanistan blocked his original route he 'got to Turkey and turned right for Africa', admitting that from this point he was making up the rest as he went along.

Earlier, the first Guinness World Record holder for cycling circumnavigation was Nick Sanders, who in 1984 covered 20,920km in just 78 days. Then, in 2005, Devon-based Steve Strange set a new record under an updated set of regulations, hitting a starting target of 276 days.

Mark Beaumont became interested in the record while at university. He had two focuses, he says – completing major expeditions and becoming a film-maker by making documentaries about them. The world cycle struck him as an interesting possibility. 'I was amazed how few people had gone for the record,' he says. 'Almost nobody knew of it.'

Beaumont had been doing smaller rides through his teens and was confident his body was up to the task. He drew up a rough programme of 160km per day, which would become the gold



standard for future attempts. 'I really looked at it in terms of a race,' he insists. 'It wasn't my chance to see the world - I was trying to go as fast as possible.'

No logos

While he felt physically prepared, Beaumont found it hard to organise sponsorship for the trip. 'It wasn't fantastic,' he admits. 'It took six months before anyone would back me.' His sponsors - including Orange and Lloyds TSB - would later play a part in Sayarer's views, although whether Beaumont was in a position to be selective is doubtful. His final route was based almost entirely on a series of practical considerations - 'prevailing wind directions, road conditions, border crossings, danger zones' - with one personal touch.

'I looked at what had been done before and nobody had drawn an unbroken line from the west coast of Europe to the east coast of Asia,' he says. 'You can miss sections and make up the miles so long as you never go back on yourself - that's absolutely fine. But I wanted to be able to stand back at the end of it and look like I'd pedalled all the way around the world.'

It was a spark of adventurous ambition in an expedition Beaumont readily admits was otherwise carefully designed to kick-start a career, and it led to some of his greatest difficulties. 'It's why I ended up doing one of the hardest parts for me - through Pakistan,' he says. 'I knew it was going to be tough. Then when I was on the road in Iran, the British Embassy said that based on the 20

'I was driven at a pace I could barely sustain, and locked in a cell every night for security'

kidnappings there'd been in the previous month, they couldn't back me to go through.'

The BBC, who had given Beaumont several cameras for his proposed documentary on the trip, fell in line with the Foreign Office but, as he wasn't being paid to make the journey, he decided to go ahead anyway. 'I picked up an armed guard on the Pakistani border.' Not that it was plain sailing from there. 'I was driven through at a pace which I could barely sustain, locked in a police cell every night for my own security,' Beaumont explains. 'And the guards kept trying to put my bike in the back of the jeep. It was really hard to stay on the bike and get enough food to sustain myself.'

There were other ups and downs. Beaumont picks his lowest point as riding into an unrelenting headwind in the Australian Outback, crawling 5,600km in a month of ten-hour days. 'It was the only time in the ride where I ended up on the side of the road, cracking up slightly,'



Cox wanted to enjoy his ride, and the Australian sunset must have helped

he says. But Beaumont also remembers some amazing highs. 'New Zealand was spectacular, California was spectacular. And the one that really sticks out for me is Iran, because I didn't know what it would be like. When I got there it was very, very friendly, with one of the best roads I've cycled on, and the people were so different to what I'd imagined. I was really charmed by Iran.'

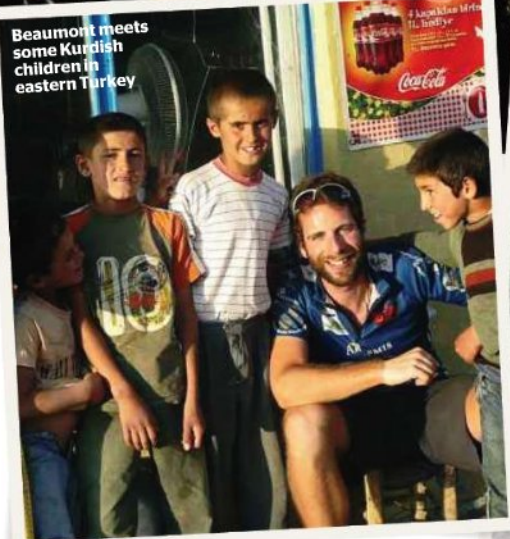
Beaumont finished his ride in Paris on 15th February 2008, logging a time of 194 days. He was officially recognised as the world record holder and a four-part documentary about his experiences aired on BBC One.

Feud for thought

It was this documentary, along with Beaumont's appearance in Orange's 'I Am Everyone' campaign, that led to a rush of new world-record contenders. Julian Sayarer was one of them, and unique among the group in his motives. He regarded Beaumont, he says now, as a 'negative inspiration'.

'I thought, "Well, it's something I'd like to do, and I don't like the way that he's done it", Sayarer says. His problems with Beaumont stemmed from the Scotsman's sponsors - from their character, rather than their presence. Sayarer has strong political views. He is, broadly, a radical liberal, wary of large corporations and their relationships with government, and with well-informed and pessimistic views

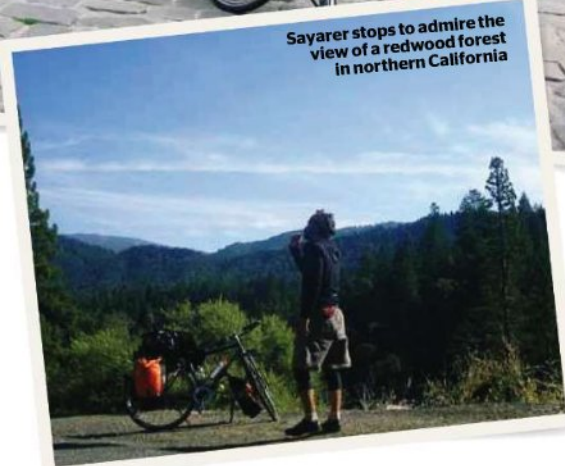
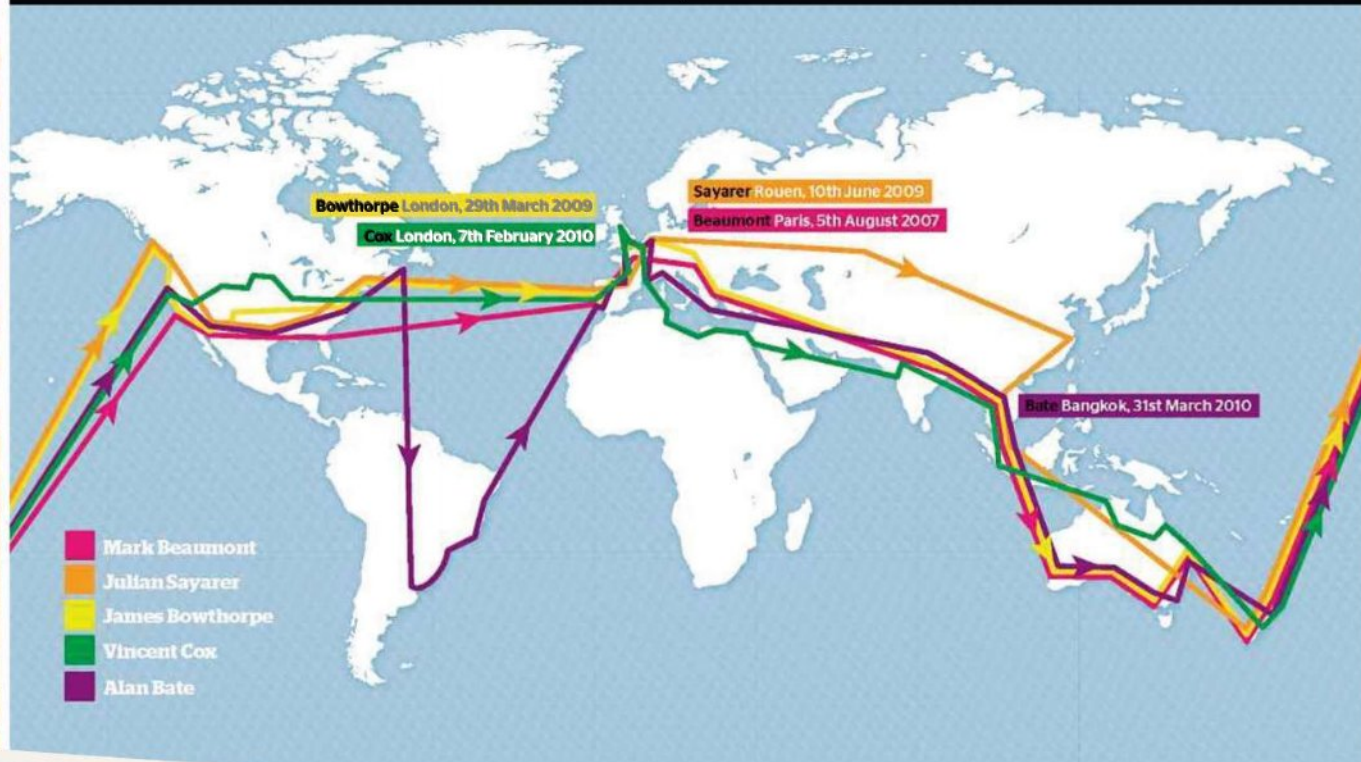
Beaumont meets some Kurdish children in eastern Turkey



Beaumont rides with an impromptu escort from the Iranian Cycling Federation



Grand Tour The different routes chosen by the riders



The Guinness regulations set for Steve Strange's attempt and followed by every cyclist since state that to be recognised as a record, the journey must: start and finish in the same location; cover 28,790km by bike and at least 40,075km in total (the length of the equator); follow a continuous course either east to west or west to east; and pass through at least one set of antipodal points - ie points that are on directly opposite sides of the globe. Since these rules leave a lot of room for interpretation, no two riders have taken the same route.

about where society is heading. In person, he is charming and articulate, far removed from the anger that sometimes surfaces on his blog. Online, Sayerer picked one episode Beaumont recalled from the Australian outback in particular. 'It really made me sick to think that some chap gave him water, something presumably quite precious out there, to a stranger in need, and that that stranger then went on to sell the sanctity of that act to a bloody telephone company.'

Sayerer pursued a few like-minded pursuers for equipment but was almost entirely self-funded, and selected his route based on places he wanted to see. 'I went through Kazakhstan and China, countries I'd always had an interest in visiting,' he says.

Even so, Sayerer's journey was marked with similar moments of crisis and triumph. Perhaps surprisingly, one of his favourite places was the United States. 'There's a great humanity to America and we often just see the obnoxious patriotic side to it,' he says. 'At one point a guy told me he could fix my broken wheel, and when we rode back to his house he gave me \$100. There's this really migratory spirit in America, and this idea of pursuing a

dream. This heroic challenge - as they saw it - really appealed to them.'

Leader of the pack

By now, though, he wasn't the only one taking on the challenge. When Sayerer set off in June 2009, his fellow Londoner James Bowthorpe had already been on the road for three months. Bowthorpe's motivation was different again - he aimed to set a new world record of 150 days, at 190km per day, in order to raise funds for the charity What's Driving Parkinson's? 'It was something I've always wanted to do, since I was touring at 18,' he says.

Concerned that a glut of others who would be setting out, he gave himself just seven months to prepare. The ride wasn't without problems. Bowthorpe suffered from severe food poisoning in India, and had to slog through the pain to escape what his medical team called the 'infection zone'. 'I was basically doing 200km a day just on breakfast, because I couldn't eat any more than that. I was sick all the time, and I lost about 15 kilos in two weeks.' Even with a five-day recovery stop in Bangkok, Bowthorpe's time of 174 days - which would have been closer to 160 once deductions for transit had been made - was comfortably low enough to topple Beaumont's record. Except, astonishingly, Bowthorpe didn't apply.

'I never actually finished doing that,' he says quietly. 'It was partly because

Australia's arid expanses were among the hardest tests for all the cyclists. Beaumont stops for a photo



- well, because of all the background stuff that was going on between Julian and Mark. I just didn't really want to get involved in any of that, really.'

Bowthorpe makes it clear that he's still very proud of his achievement, a pride not dependent on holding the record. 'I still could do it, and I'd be there in retrospect, but it's not really hugely important to me. There's a bit of a bitter taste after all that rigmarole.'

Happy trails

Two more attempts followed in 2010. First there was Vincent Cox, an experienced cyclo-cross rider based in Cornwall. He'd switched from mountain riding to touring and first came across the idea of cycling the world in Beaumont's documentary. 'I thought it was a great thing to do,' he says. 'The only thought I had about it, probably because of the way the film was edited, was it looked like he had a miserable time. I've spoken to Mark and I know that he didn't. But I set out to try to do something like he'd done, a bit faster, and to enjoy myself.'

Cox, 35, had no intention of selecting the fastest route. 'I looked at Mark's route, and I followed Julian and James on theirs, and simply wanted to do things as differently as I could,' he says. 'I tried to string together beautiful places to see. And it might sound a bit arrogant but I knew that I'd done tours through the Highlands of Scotland knocking out 100 miles [160km] a day no problem. If you can manage that in hilly terrain, I didn't see a reason why I wouldn't be able to maintain that pace.' He was right. Having set off in February 2010, Cox returned in August in a record 163 days.

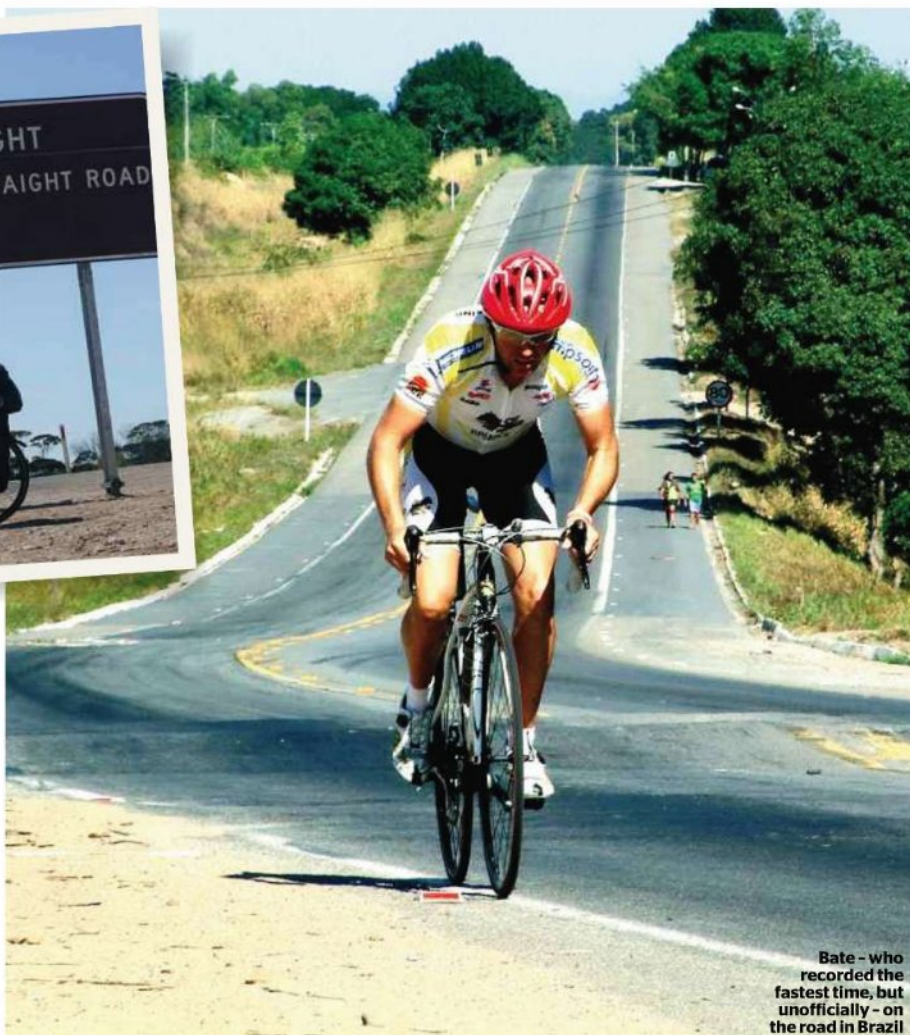
The second rider in that year was Alan Bate, who stands apart from the other cyclists for several reasons. He is British, but he now lives in Thailand, and is a good deal older at 45. As Cox reached Thailand in March, Bate was just setting off, and the pair exchanged emails. But Bates' record attempt was to be very different to Cox's. 'I am from a racing background,' he says, 'which made me believe I could undertake

the event from a different angle. No other rider had utilised the rules to make a truly competitive attempt to go as fast as possible. I wasn't interested in visiting anywhere, just getting round quickly and safely, then returning to a normal life.'

Bate's ride was controversial. He baffled onlookers by dedicating the record to the king of Thailand, and had the benefit of a support vehicle for large sections of the ride. He was going much faster than Cox, ploughing through one long day after another, and not everybody was happy about it. 'He provoked some bad feeling from some people who were supporting me,' says Cox. 'But in a way Alan helped me focus on the fact that I didn't want to do what he was doing. It wouldn't have interested me.'

All's fair

Bate finished his ride just three days after Cox, with a provisional time of 113 days. But if Cox's well-wishers weren't happy with Bate's use of a support vehicle, then strangely, neither was Bate himself. He comes across as open, earnest and, above all, respectful of the other cyclists' efforts.



Bate - who recorded the fastest time, but unofficially - on the road in Brazil

'I set out to try to do what Mark had done, a bit faster, and enjoy myself'

'I am mostly proud to have ridden my last event successfully,' he says, aware that his competitive days are numbered. 'The record became insignificant to me.' He has asked Guinness to recognise his attempt in a separate, semi-supported category, and won't submit his evidence for ratification until he has a response. 'That's only fair to Vin Cox and the others in my view.'

Like Bate, Sayarer expresses respect for his rivals - except Beaumont. He describes himself as 'a big fan' of Bowthorpe ('He's working of Beaumont with a groundbreaking charity for Parkinson's disease') and is generous about Cox. 'I respect what he did to the route, especially the fact that he didn't necessarily go for the flattest possible ride.'

Behind the visible divisions, there is clearly a strong bond of mutual respect among this group of athletes. Beaumont tracked down Humphreys to ask the more experienced rider's advice about routes and kit before leaving to set the standard all the others would chase. When that record was broken, Beaumont contacted the riders in question to congratulate them (with the understandable exception



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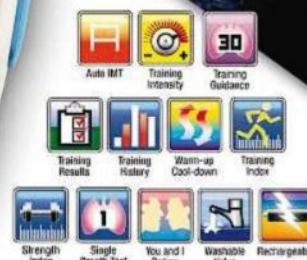
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Cox takes a break in India



‘The people who have ridden around the world have more in common than they do in difference’

Bowthorpe's route took in San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge



‘We’re the same age, we’re both politics graduates,’ Sayarer wrote in that blog entry. ‘I feel no desire to make excuses for him that I would never make for myself.’

Global village

Despite the acrimony, what’s most striking about the cyclists’ recollections is hearing them talk about the unexpected friendliness they encountered. Humphreys talks about two churches – one Baptist, one Mormon – who banded together to buy him a new bike in Arizona. Beaumont recalls the woman who ran him down in New Orleans, took him home and had her son fix his bike. Cox remembers the frankness of the Australians he met crossing the Outback (‘How the fuck d’you do this? It’s so fucking boring out there’) but also the man who stopped his van in the desolate Nullarbor plain to hand him a cold Coke. And Sayarer was humbled by the welcome he received almost everywhere. ‘In New Zealand, people were amazingly friendly,’ he says. ‘I’d pull up at a farm and ask if I could camp, and by the time I’d got my tent out they’d be going, “Well, my wife can make you up a bed”. In Kazakhstan, people would invite you for dinner.’

There were clearly bad times too – misunderstandings, intimidation, even robberies. But these are also shared experiences. ‘The people who have ridden around the world have more in common than they do in difference,’ says Cox. ‘I’d rather focus on the kinship of our experiences, our motivation and determination. Everyone’s got their own different ways of doing it. But I’m going to recognise the similarities first.’

of Sayarer). And when Sayarer completed his record-breaking journey and attacked Beaumont in the way he felt he’d earned, the consensus was that it was unsportsmanlike.

‘I really enjoyed following his trip,’ Humphreys says. ‘He’s quite a poetic guy on his blog. The piece he wrote, I have to say, I thought was very rude.’ Cox’s response was similar. ‘I could see where he was coming from. I just think he can make a point as strongly as possible by doing it for his reasons and saying what they are, rather than criticising someone else’s.’

If it was unsportsmanlike, perhaps that’s because sportsmanship is not at the centre of Sayarer’s moral compass. The outburst came from a set of ethics about which he is uncompromising. In contrast to Beaumont and his continued TV career, Sayarer’s more modest aims are to ‘make a living doing things that I enjoy and that don’t compromise me’. What drove his attack on Beaumont was not the pair’s differences but their similarities.

Kings of the roads

Got a week off work and a hankering for adventure? The riders share their favourite stretches of the route

Turkey

MARK BEAUMONT

‘I really enjoyed the ride through Turkey, all the way from Istanbul through to Kurdistan, Mount Ararat and the Iranian border in the east. It’s pretty mountainous riding, and it was a hot summer when I was going through it, but it’s a really beautiful country.’



Chile

ALASTAIR HUMPHREYS

‘In southern Chile there’s a road there called the Carretera Austral. It was tough but not ridiculously tough and with my GCSE Spanish, I could muddle along quite nicely. It was safe, it was clean, it was beautiful – I think that’s how I’d imagined cycling around the world was going to be before I set off.’



Utah

VINCENT COX

‘Monument Valley. It’s the most beautiful place and it’s part of every cowboy film you’ve ever seen, with these huge natural structures popping out of the desert. There was a tailwind and I was feeling strong and motivated to get some good distance. I ended up with nearly 240km for the day.’



Find out what the cyclists wished they’d known before setting out at mensfitness.co.uk/links/cycletheworld



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Lessons from the gym floor

You know why you're in the gym. But what the hell are all those other people doing? And what - if anything - can you learn from them? >

Words **Joel Snape** Illustrations **Comicstripper**





The Bodybuilder

He's the one who looks like a professional wrestler - shoulders like cannonballs, calves like tree trunks and trapezius muscles like coathangers made of meat



What he's doing Either aiming to compete in a bodybuilding show - in which case he'll also need to pay attention to every last detail of his diet and spray-tan himself orange - or just trying to sculpt himself in his own idea of physical perfection.

What he's getting right 'He knows how to hit his muscles from every angle,' says personal trainer Will Purdue. 'So as well as the classic "big" moves, like the bench press and squat, he'll be working his "weak" points with isolation moves. This might be the preacher curl for the biceps or one-armed row for the back.'

What he could improve 'Bodybuilders aren't concerned with sports performance,' says Purdue. 'So they're often carrying a lot of excess muscle that would actually hamper them during sports. If they're working separate body parts rather than their body as a whole, it's possible that they'll develop imbalances that can lead to injuries further down the line.'

What not to say 'You know what I fancy after this? A big bag of chips and a pint.'

The Powerlifter

You'll spot the lifting belt, the huge number of weight plates and the Metallica T-shirt being stretched to its limit by a vast gut

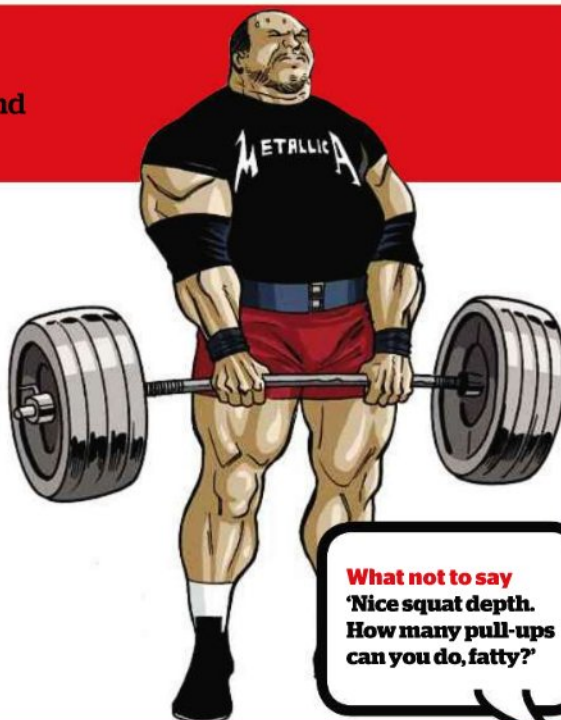
What he's doing Aiming to improve his deadlift, bench press and squat, the three lifts that are scored in powerlifting competition. Everything else is secondary, hence the girth, which helps these guys stay stable in the squat.

What he's doing right 'Lifting heavy weights with good form,' says Zoran Dubaïc, co-founder of Strength & Performance

UK. 'Powerlifters are meticulous with their lifting preparation, spending plenty of time on warm-up sets and fine-tuning their technique in order to maximise gains and avoid injury. These guys train hard to get stronger and more explosive - athletes should certainly take a leaf out of their book.'

What he could improve 'These guys seldom care about

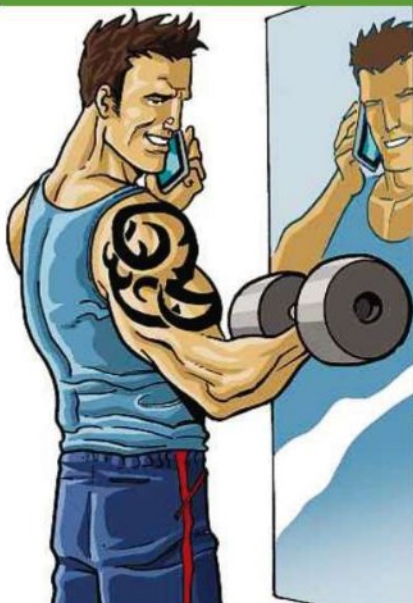
appearance and don't count calories except to check they have consumed more than 7,000 a day,' says Dubaïc. 'Powerlifters also tend to spend all day lifting and very little time working on weak areas, mobility and on foam rolling or recovery work. This combination of overindulgence and lack of preparation work can make them oversized, unfit and immobile, with posture like a lowland gorilla.'



What not to say 'Nice squat depth. How many pull-ups can you do, fatty?'

The Poser

He's wearing a sleeveless top to show off his tribal tattoos, twinned with baggy sweatpants that disguise his neglected legs



What he's doing Aiming to impress girls, intimidate other would-be alpha males, and amaze everyone else in the gym with his fearsome biceps.

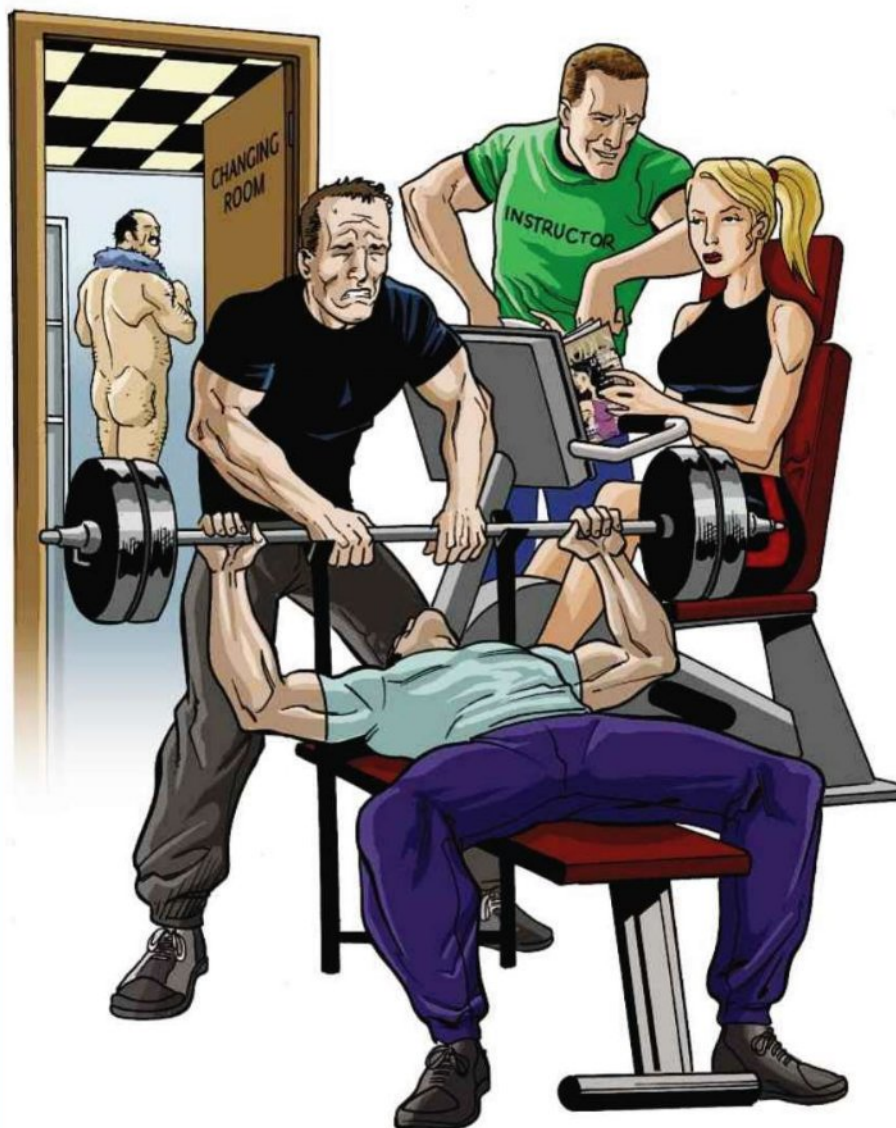
What he's getting right 'There's nothing wrong with taking pride in your physique,' says Purdue. 'This guy probably knows his priorities, has a gym programme set in stone and pays careful attention to his nutrition to achieve those goals.' When you're grabbing a ham sandwich on the way back to the office, he's drinking a recovery shake, then grazing on his carefully prepared punnets of chicken to stimulate his metabolism throughout the day.

What he could improve 'Spending less time posing,' says Purdue. 'Posing means his workouts can drag on and he's lacking in intensity. Not including your warm-up, you should be able to get in and out of the gym in an hour at most. It doesn't help that he's happy to spend 30 minutes on five variations of biceps curls, and always manages to miss out the heavy squats.' He's probably justifying this with the knowledge that he doesn't want to show off his legs. But heavy compound moves will cause a surge of growth hormone, helping those arms grow.

What not to say 'Take off the lifting gloves. I'm pretty sure girls think calluses are hot.'

Advanced spotting

Every gym has these people. How many do you recognise?



The Bench Brothers

They move as a unit: one benches, another spots by upward-rowing half the weight, and the third man whoops encouragement. To be fair, they aren't always hogging the flat bench - sometimes they'll stray as far as the decline or do some dumb-bell presses. Don't ask how many sets they have left: the answer is always 'loads'.

Sexy Bike Lady

Her hair and make-up are catwalk-standard. Her gymwear cost more than your best outfit. She once read an article about the fat-burning zone and now her every workout consists of 90 minutes on the bike, idly flicking through the latest issue of *Grazia*. The hard part? Pretending not to notice all the staring.

Inappropriate Personal Trainer

Yes, it's fine to check the glutes are firing properly. No, there's nothing wrong with assisted stretching. But come on, you've seen less uncomfortable invasions of personal space in late-night Channel Five prison dramas. And how come he never does it with the 60-year-old divorcees?

Naked Changing Room Man

Everyone has a changing room system. The thing is, for most, it's towel round the waist, a quick blast of deodorant and pants on as fast as possible. For him, it's moisturise, inspect pores in front of the mirror, and make tooth-grindingly uncomfortable eye contact with everyone. And no, that is never an acceptable use of the hairdryer.

The CrossFitter

He's sprinting between the pull-up station and Olympic bar, occasionally glancing at a stopwatch. He doesn't take rest breaks and he's finished in 20 minutes but he spends another ten lying on the floor, dry heaving

What he's doing

Following the workouts from crossfit.com, a website that combines bodyweight moves, gymnastics and heavy lifting into workouts to tax the whole body.

What he's getting right

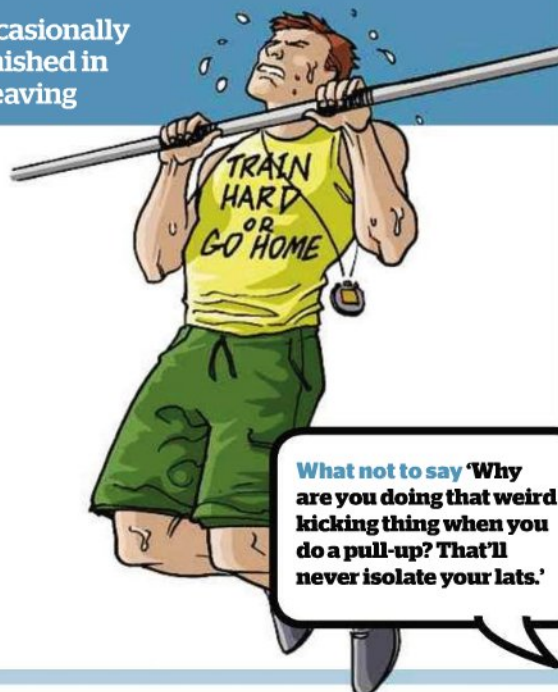
'He will be working very hard during his short workouts, doing movements that mirror life outside the gym,' says Chet Morjaria, director of functional

fitness organisation funkey.co.uk. 'For example, you'll often see him "kipping" on the pull-up bars - using the whole body in unison to generate more power, therefore doing more reps in less time. And the stopwatch gives him an easy way to measure improvement.'

What he could improve

'Usually, his problem is inadequate recovery,' says Morjaria. 'Due to the complex

demands put on the body by the variety and intensity of this training, CrossFitters need more recovery than most. CrossFitters by definition are training to be well-rounded athletes, but they're also often guilty of favouring workouts they like, such as doing intense circuits instead of strength work. It's important to train both strengths and weaknesses to achieve all-round functional fitness.'



What not to say 'Why are you doing that weird kicking thing when you do a pull-up? That'll never isolate your lats.'

The Athlete

He's monopolising the otherwise-neglected squat rack, wearing flat shoes instead of trainers - they encourage good form - and sneaking prohibited lifting chalk onto his hands

What he's doing Aiming to get much stronger and more explosive for his chosen sport.

What he's doing right

'Because he's dedicated to bettering his sports performance, you'll rarely see him doing isolation moves like the triceps kickback - he's more likely to do

functional, full-body moves, such as lunges, cleans and presses,' says Purdue. 'He's also likely to be noting down every set, rep and weight, which lets him track his performance and identify weak points.'

What he could improve

'He loves training, often to the point of mild

addiction,' says Purdue. 'However, he doesn't put as much focus as he should on his recovery and often overtrains, which can lead to injuries. It's crucial to include recovery days in your training plan, where you work out less intensely to give your muscles a chance to recover.'

What not to say:

'Mind if I work in? I just need to take some of the weight off the bar, though, so I can do a few biceps curls.'



The Endurance Specialist

He shuns the weights room in favour of the bike or treadmill, making him a lean bundle of slow-twitch muscle that's ideal for long-distance races

What he's doing Trying to shave a couple of minutes off his 10K time.

What he's getting right

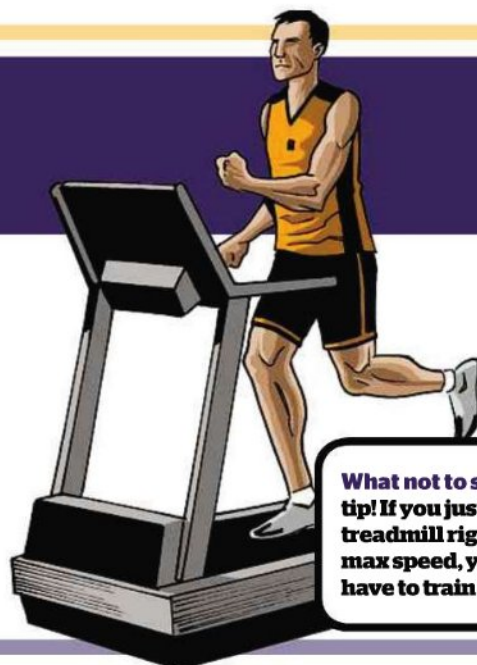
'He's training hard, eating clean and maximising rest and recovery,' says Sean Keefe, co-founder of Strength & Performance UK. 'Top-level endurance athletes are excellent at listening

to their body and they develop extreme mental toughness.'

What he could improve

'Endurance athletes often have serious imbalances,' says Keefe. 'Cyclists spend so much time hunched over their handle bars that they need to work on thoracic

extension - they should work on basic exercises such as band pull-aparts [holding a stretch band out in front of your chest then pulling your hands out to the sides] and wall slides. For runners, squats and deadlifts should be a staple because a strong posterior chain is crucial in injury prevention.'



What not to say 'Top tip! If you just crank the treadmill right up to max speed, you don't have to train for as long.'

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Where is my mind?

What's going through extreme sports athletes' heads as they tackle their toughest challenges? *MF* finds out

Words Ben Ince, Joel Snape



Valery Rosov

THE BASE JUMPER

THE SHOT An X Games gold medallist with more than 8,000 base jumps under his belt, Valery Rosov (in the red, white and blue suit) has leapt off towers in Pakistan and into an active volcano. Here, the Russian uses a wingsuit to get clear of Norway's infamous Troll Wall, a favoured spot for the pioneering first generation of base jumpers.

WHAT I'M THINKING 'Psychologically base jumping is very challenging. You have a parachute that you can open two to three seconds before landing. Maybe it isn't the most dangerous sport but it's surely the most extreme, because of psychological tension and time concentration. The problem is nobody can control you. From the moment you start you rely entirely on yourself, because you can't be rescued. You have to do quick and correct movements under a lot of psychological stress. Taking photographs is tricky, too - you have to shoot three metres away from the other person, and it's difficult to fall so close, at a low altitude, while co-ordinating simultaneous parachute openings. You also have to trust your partner. Everyone experiences stress because of their self-preservation instinct. Everyone experiences fear. But some can control it and make the right actions, and others can't.'



**'Everyone
experiences fear
but some can
control it and
others can't'**

Valery Rozov



Ueli Steck

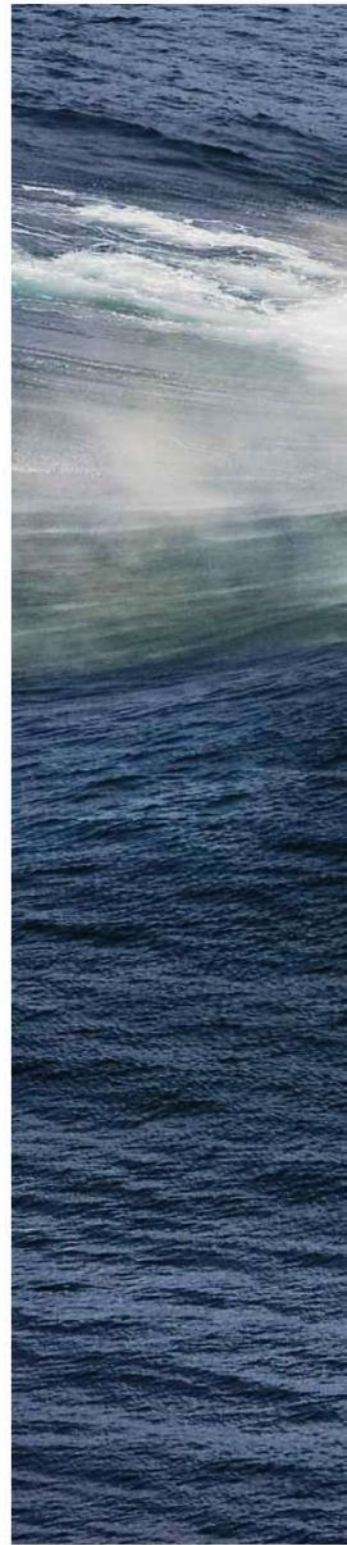
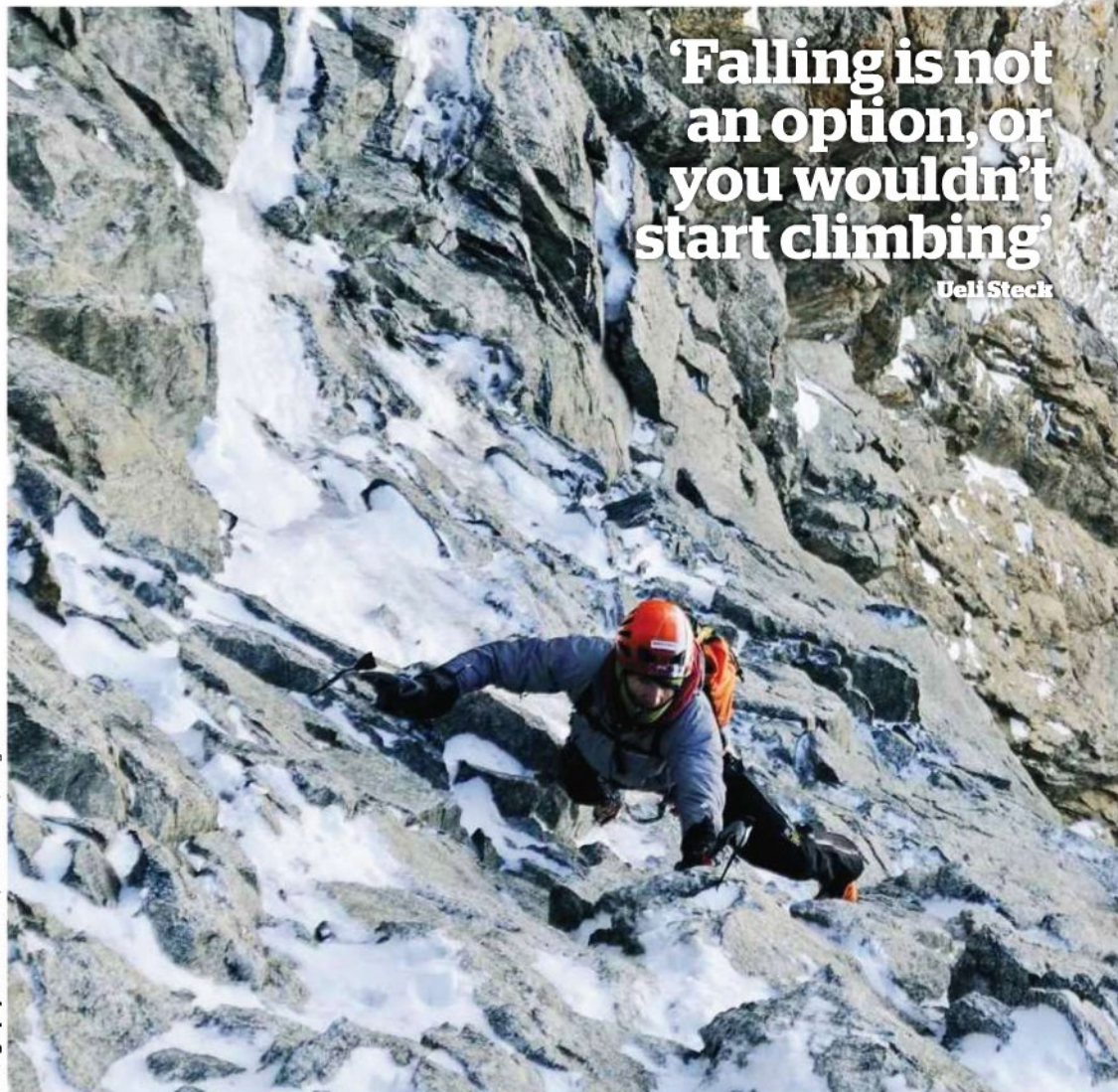
THE SPEED CLIMBER

THE SHOT Most soloists - climbers who ascend without backup or protection - move slowly and carefully. Not Ueli Steck, the world's foremost speed-soloist, who's broken records with quick scrambles up the Eiger, the Matterhorn and, as seen below, the Mont Blanc massif's Grandes Jorasses.

WHAT I'M THINKING 'I'd climbed the Eiger many times before I broke the record on it. But alpinism isn't about learning a route and I wanted to take a step forward. That's why I decided to do the Grandes Jorasses on site [without practising it beforehand]. I'd planned it for more than a year. I didn't even know how hard the route was. Mentally it's a completely different game: you have to be constantly careful that you're not getting yourself into a bad situation. The process on the whole climb is to decide whether the next 100 metres look like a snowfield - there are sections you can try for speed but others where you have to be very careful. Falling is not an option, otherwise you wouldn't start climbing. It exists as a possibility during the preparation but not from the moment you start to climb. It was a new dimension, a new level for me. You feel like everything is totally under control for every single second. It's an incredible feeling. It's all about you and the mountain, pure and simple.'

'Falling is not an option, or you wouldn't start climbing'

Ueli Steck





'If you were consciously making decisions it wouldn't be happening fast enough'

Tom Doidge-Harrison



Tom Doidge-Harrison

THE BIG WAVE SURFER

THE SHOT Tom Doidge-Harrison surfs one of his favourite spots in County Clare, Ireland. 'It's such a big, hollow break that I have to make my own boards to handle it,' says Harrison.

WHAT I WAS THINKING This shot was probably taken 20 seconds after I'd first seen the wave. When you spot one, you've only got a second or two to decide whether you're going. You'll be thinking, "Is there another one behind it that's even bigger, that's going to hold me down if I don't make it?" Half of you is going, "That looks horrible" while the other half is going, "Go for it". I'm not very conscious of what I'm actually doing once I'm on the wave. If you were consciously making decisions it wouldn't be happening fast enough - you need to be on a slightly higher plane of processing. During the wave, though, I remember getting on the front of it and coming back up to try to slow down. I'm very high on the wave in the photo, I nearly drifted over the top - I remember consciously adjusting. Mostly it's too quick to remember what's happened - it's the coming off the wave afterwards that's amazing, when I think, "I can't believe I just made that". That's what keeps you going back. On the wave after this one, I broke a rib.'



Orlando Duque

THE CLIFF DIVER

THE SHOT With nine world championship titles in the Red Bull cliff-diving series and two Guinness world records under his belt, Orlando Duque has built on 14 years of competitive diving experience to become the world's foremost cliff diver. Here, he readies himself to take the plunge from the Rick's Café jump spot in Negril, Jamaica - 26 metres, straight down.

WHAT I'M THINKING 'All the dives [on the Red Bull tour] are between 26 and 28 metres, so you can attempt your hardest dive every time - it's just about making minor adjustments. I know all the preparation has been done and I'm physically and mentally ready. I know I have to be careful of the danger - I have a sense of respect for it. I know how hard the water will be if anything goes wrong but I push the thought of it out of my mind and focus 100 per cent on the dive. I can feel my heart beating and I'm breathing fast. Once I step to the edge, I'm diving - if the judges or safety team stop me I'll step back, but I will not back down on my own. I'm on the edge and I can't hear anything around me, then before I know it I'm in the air. As soon as I've left the edge I know if it's good or not, and I immediately start making calculations and adjustments to the dive. My brain's processing so much at once but it's doing it automatically.'

'Once I step to the edge I'm diving - I will not back down'

Orlando Duque



THE ULTRA RUNNER



Jez Bragg

THE SHOT Jez Bragg, arguably the UK's best ultra-distance athlete, tries to keep up the pace during the final stretch of the Ultra Trail du Mont Blanc, after disastrous weather on the first day of the race forced a restart on a shortened course. Bragg won the revised race with a time of 10hr 30min.

WHAT I'M THINKING 'The climb up the Grand Col, where I am here, is renowned as a nasty one but I actually quite like it. It's not that vertical and the climb seems to be over before you know it. Usually the amazing views help but the only view I had was of the feet of the runners ahead, although they kept changing because I was gaining places. It wasn't a conscious push at this point, I was just trying to maintain how I had set off. As I approached the top, the winds got higher and the temperatures colder. My extremities were starting to go numb, so it was important to keep moving. The descent was fun though - it was the first time I could really let go. That was when I did consciously push, with the novelty of entering another country, Switzerland, adding to my spring. I didn't really have a race strategy at the start but as things started to pan out en route I decided the section down to Praz-de-Fort would be a key one, because the fast and runnable trail suits my style. I was probably feeling that descent a week later.'

'As I approached the top, the winds got higher and the temperatures colder, so it was important to keep moving'

Jez Bragg

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Hitting the road is a great way to get in shape. Get the correct footwear to stay injury-free

If you usually buy a new pair of trainers because you like the colour, you need to change your selection process. 'There are many factors that can affect your choice of footwear,' says Carl Austin of sports shoe website ransacker.co.uk. 'As a rule of thumb, the two most important factors are how much you pronate [roll your foot inwards as it lands] and your foot arch type. To cater for the varying needs of runners, manufacturers offer three trainer categories: cushioned, stability and performance. You should visit a specialist running store for advice - or alternatively, many manufacturers now offer online tools to help you decide.' When you know what type of shoe you need, we've rounded up the best of each category for you to choose from.

Shoe pictured
New Balance 1080

Turn
over for
our running
shoe
reviews



Cushioned

'As the name suggests, these shoes provide plenty of midsole cushioning and minimal medial support,' says Austin. 'You should buy these shoes if you are an efficient runner - which is someone who doesn't overpronate, and is likely to have high arches. A cushioned shoe is flexible through the arch to allow the foot as much motion as possible. No longer do you have to sacrifice performance for cushioning. The latest crop includes sees some fantastic innovations and shoes that not only look the part but offer the perfect blend of cushioning and a responsive road feel.'



Adidas adiSTAR Ride 2
£100

A plush forefoot gives this shoe a comfortable fit, while Adidas' Climacool technology ensures it's very breathable, since the shoe's fabrics are designed to move sweat away from the skin and keep feet cool.
adidas.com/uk/running



Asics Gel Cumulus 12
£85

With a Gel cushioning system in the heel this shoe provides shock absorption without added weight, thanks to its streamlined design and a low collar that also reduces ankle irritation.
asics.co.uk/running



New Balance 1080 £90

Abzorb cushioning technology supplies this shoe with enhanced shock absorption on the heel and forefoot. At only 276g it's light for a cushioned shoe and is available in a range of eye-catching colours.
newbalance.co.uk/running



Nike LunarGlide+ 2
£80

The latest shoe in Nike's Lunar range, the Glide+ 2 benefits from an improved fit around the midfoot and heel areas thanks to extended Flywire support and a virtually seamless inner.
nike.com



Reebok ZigSonic
£80

While it probably won't win any style awards, Reebok's ZigTech design - the unusual zigzag bottom unit - will help to reduce wear and tear in key muscles, to keep you running for longer.
reebok.com/gb

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Stability

'This category suits 85 per cent of the population - mild to moderate overpronators,' says Austin. 'It's a common misconception that stable shoes are not cushioned. While they are often firmer in the midsole to help with stability, they can have just as much of the soft stuff as a "cushioned" shoe. Heavier runners [more than 80kg] with low arches often require stability running shoes. With the introduction of some revolutionary technology, the stability running shoe market has been transformed. This year the theme is all about "dynamic support". Effectively this means shoes that adjust to suit your running style.'



Adidas adiSTAR Salvation 2 £100

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adidas.com/uk/running



Newton Gravity £135

This lightweight, top-end shoe from Newton allows you to run faster with greater efficiency thanks to enhanced durability in the heel and a high-rebound midsole that also helps to prevent overuse injuries.

newtonrunning.co.uk



K-Swiss Konejo £75

Stability and motion control are enhanced with a Y-beam arch support and a medial posted midsole, while a removable sock liner provides added cushioning. Extra reflectivity will keep you safe when running in the dark.

kswiss.co.uk/running



Brooks Adrenaline GTS 10 £85

The sturdiest of all Brooks' stability shoes comes with Progressive Diagonal Rollbar (PDRB) support, positioned on the shoe's heel and arch, that helps to take the strain off your ligaments, joints and muscles.

brooksrunning.co.uk



Puma Complete Vectana 2 £85

The Vectana is designed to guide the foot through a natural transition from touchdown to toe-off, aided by Puma's innovative KMS midsole, which is 30 per cent lighter than standard EVA (foam rubber).

pumarunning.com

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Performance

'These shoes are designed for faster runners and they provide the bare minimum in cushioning and support,' says Austin. 'They're recommended for racing or tempo runs because they offer efficient runners a responsive ride. Unsurprisingly, due to their minimalist construction, they are extremely lightweight with most performance shoes weighing around 200-250g. Although they've been seen as being purely for elite runners, this isn't true any more. The performance category has seen huge growth recently due to the barefoot movement, with many runners seeking stripped-down shoes, so if you've ever fancied trying some now is your chance.'



Asics Gel Hyperspeed 4 £60

This shoe features a broad platform base for enhanced stability and a rear foot gel cushioning system that will ensure a smooth run. Asics' vented Magic Sole also helps to keep feet cool.

asics.co.uk/running



Nike LunarElite+ £85

The LunarElite+ has springy Lunarlon cushioning in the midsole and Nike's Dynamic Support system, which adjusts automatically depending on how much pressure you put on different parts of the sole.

nike.com



K-Swiss Blade-Light Run £65

An innovative progressive cushioning system keeps this shoe feeling soft when running at low speeds, but responsive and springy as you increase the pace, while its overall weight is kept down by a lightweight synthetic upper.

kswiss.co.uk/running



Saucony Type A4 £75

Weighing in at a mere 181g, the Type A4 is one of the lightest running shoes available, thanks in no small part to its minimal, lightweight upper and an XT-Lite sole that also provides extra traction.

sauconyrunning.co.uk



Mizuno Wave Musha 2 £59.99

The heel of this shoe has been designed to minimise the rapid acceleration and deceleration of the foot during transition to create a smooth ride, while its Acceleration Polymer midsole is lightweight, responsive and durable.

mizuno.eu

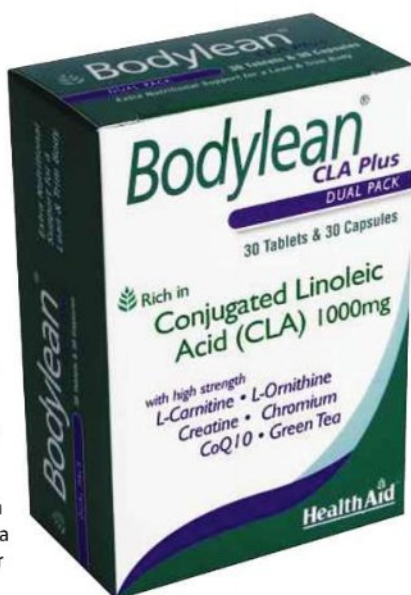


We've reviewed even more running shoes at mensfitness.co.uk/links/soleman

Name: Bodylean**Occupation: Fast fat loss and more muscle tone****BODY BEAUTIFUL**
Bodylean® CLA Plus
to help your workout
work well.

Bodylean® CLA Plus can help reduce body fat and in turn increase muscle tone.

Conjugated Linoleic Acid is added to manipulate the way the body stores fat and helps you utilise it as energy, regulating and lowering body fat percentages and increasing muscle tone. Other ingredients include L-Carnitine, L-Ornithine and CoQ10 for enhanced metabolism, together with Chromium and Gymnaema Sylvestre to regulate sugar cravings and blood sugar levels. Maximum benefit is achieved if it is taken in conjunction with a healthy balanced diet and regular exercise.



HealthAid

■ **More info:** Bodylean CLA Plus dual pack retails at £16.99 for 60 capsules and tablets. Contact HealthAid Ltd on 020 8426 3400 for purchase and stockist information or visit www.healthaid.co.uk.

Name: Olive Leaf Complex**Occupation: Immunity-boosting natural olive extract****Made from fresh olive leaves,**
this offers great protection
and immune support.

With four times the antioxidant activity of vitamin C, Comvita's Olive Leaf Extract is made from fresh leaves which are picked at dawn and processed by lunch to help maintain their freshness. With at least 12 powerful natural antioxidants, including Oleuropein, Comvita's Olive Leaf Extract can help maintain your energy levels, heart health and immunity.

It's a daily health tonic known for its natural antiviral protection made from only fresh olive leaves - the only one on the market.

COMVITA

■ **More info:** Available from larger Boots, Holland & Barrett and leading health food stores. Visit www.comvita.co.uk.

Name: Oxyfit**Occupation: Pure oxygen in a can**

The additional oxygen that must be taken into the body during and following vigorous exercise to restore all systems to their normal states is called oxygen debt. This is when the body craves extra oxygen to facilitate the recovery process. Oxyfit - pure oxygen in a can - satisfies oxygen debt, prolonging the time to exhaustion and greatly reducing recovery time, allowing shorter intervals between exercise sessions. Oxyfit also significantly reduces Lactic acid build up, another limiting factor for continued intensive exercise.

Oxyfit is 99.5 per cent pharmaceutical grade oxygen and is supplied in lightweight cans holding two, five, eight, 66 and 110 litres. It's simple and safe to use, and is supplied with a convenient inhalation cap or breathing mask and tube.

Oxyfit currently sponsors Britain's 'Ultra-Marathon Man' Mike Buss, who recently completed 100 marathons in 100 days, raising funds for Help for Heroes charity.



OXYfit

■ **More info:** Available from Pushback Ltd. Telephone: 08455 440212 or visit www.oxyfit.co.uk.

Name: iwantpants.com**Occupation: Designer men's underwear and swimwear**

Iwantpants.com is the answer to all your underwear needs. With hundreds of different types of designer pants to choose from, we have it covered.

Our unique designer collections guarantee style, comfort and fit with the additional bonus of FREE WORLDWIDE delivery. Whether it's Calvin Klein, Bjorn Borg, Emporio Armani or Ralph Lauren fashion stock arrives regularly. Choose from bright prints and block colours with Björn Borg and DT Underwear from Australia.

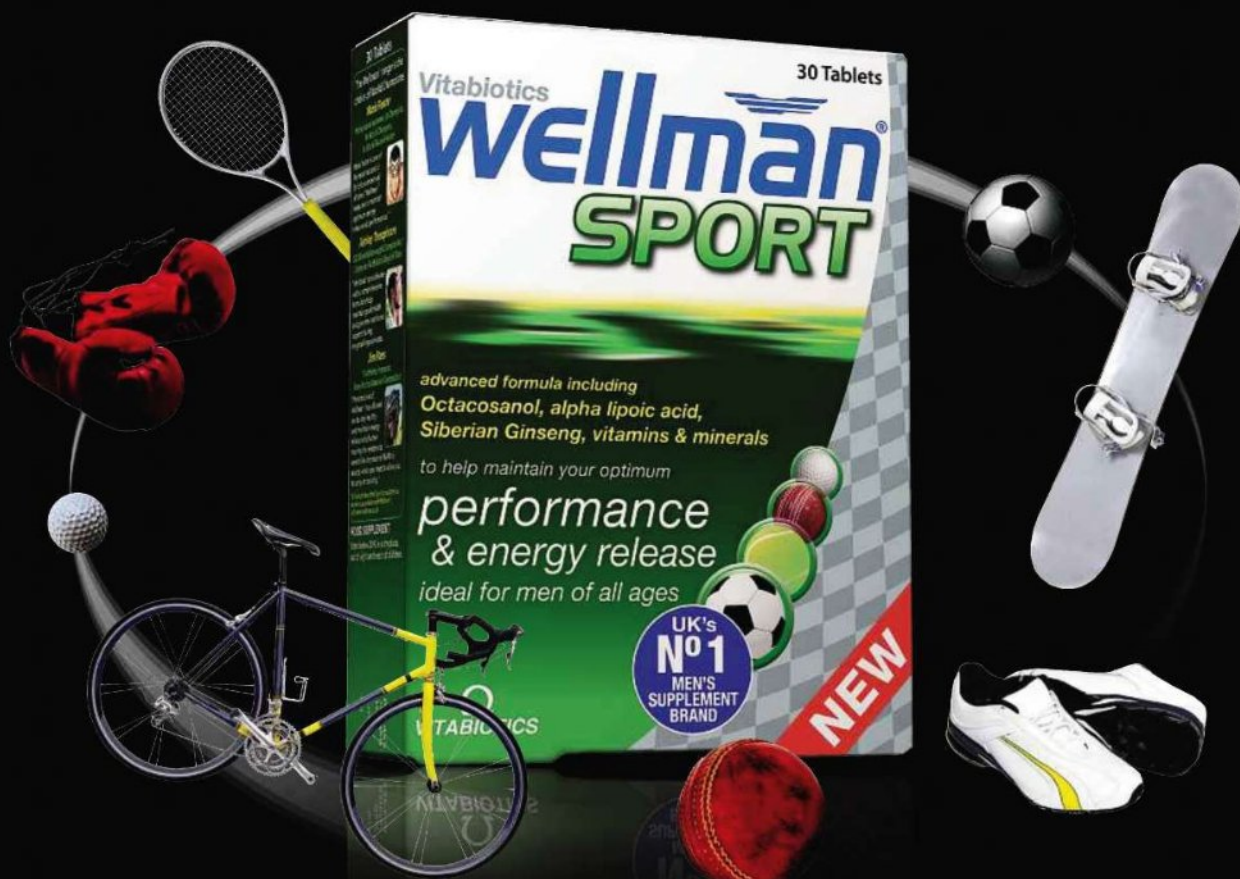
We also stock trunks, briefs, jockstraps, boxer briefs, vests, bottoms, gowns, long johns and swimwear as well as body-sculpting tops and core precision undershirts from Equemen.

■ **More info:** Visit www.iwantpants.com or call 01792 812147.



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Mark Foster Professional swimmer, 5x Olympian, 6x World Champion, 8x World Record Holder "Wellman® helps me to maintain optimum energy release and performance."	Ashley Theophane GB's World Featherweight Champion No.1 Contender For British & English Titles "Wellman® provides me with a comprehensive formula and gives me nutritional support during my gruelling workouts."	Jim Rees Triathlete, Ironman, Race Across America elite athlete "Wellman® has allowed me to stay healthy and maintain energy release when training for extreme endurance events like Ironman or RAAM."
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supplements
for specific life stages



VITABIOTICS



+ Smooth talkers

They make calls, of course, but these fantastic gadgets do so much more. Pick the one that will improve your life

1 Best for camera HTC Desire HD £539.99

With its huge 8-megapixel camera and dual-flash, the HTC Desire HD is perfect for capturing photos when you're out and about. A 1GHz Qualcomm 8255 Snapdragon processor allows you to record high-definition video too, which can be played back on its massive 109mm LCD display - and it's all housed within a sleek and stylish aluminium body. htc.com

2 Best for apps iPhone 4 £499

When it comes to apps, the iPhone remains by far the best catered-for smartphone on the market, with more than 225,000 currently available through Apple's App Store. With dedicated categories for sports and health, there are a huge number of useful apps that can help you train, including iMapMyRun, Nike+ GPS and Bike Doctor. apple.com/uk

3 Best for toughness Motorola DEFY £349.99

This slim but robust smartphone has been built to withstand anything you can throw at it, with a dustproof and water-resistant body and a large, resilient display. CrystalTalk ensures you can speak and be heard in noisy environments, thanks to two microphones that filter out background noise and amplify your voice so you don't have to shout. motorola.com

4 Best for music Nokia N8 £429

The N8 features Nokia's exclusive Ovi Music Unlimited service, which allows you to download music from the Ovi Music website to your computer. Not only is there no limit to the number of songs you can download - 16GB of which you can store on your phone - but they're all yours to keep as well, even after your phone contract expires. nokia.co.uk

5 Best for networking BlackBerry Torch 9800 £499.99

This BlackBerry has a large touchscreen and a full QWERTY keyboard to help you make the most of its expanded messaging capabilities that simplify social networking, providing integrated access to Facebook, Twitter and various instant messaging applications. It also comes with dedicated apps for YouTube, podcasts and other assorted media. blackberry.com/uk



+ Groom like an expert

Top male grooming experts give us their favourite products and tips to use them

Best skincare product

Shiseido Men Cleansing Foam
(£20 for 125ml, shiseido.co.uk)

Picked by Lee Kynaston of
[online retailer mankind.co.uk](http://online.retailer.mankind.co.uk)

'My favourite ever cleanser is the Shiseido Men Cleansing Foam. It creates a wonderful, cleansing lather, has the faintest of fragrances, and leaves skin clean as a whistle and comfortably hydrated.'

Expert tip 'Because it creates such a generous lather you only need the tiniest of amounts, so it's actually very good value - especially since it can be used as a shaving foam as well.'



Best eye-care product

SkinCeuticals Eye Balm
(£61 for 15ml, skinceuticals.co.uk)

Picked by Graham Barber, commercial director of
Gentleman's Tonic male grooming salon

'Whether you're burning the candle at both ends or just in need of some moisture around the eye area, this product really works and lasts a long time too. It tackles key signs of ageing, such as collagen breakdown and free radical damage.'

It really brightens dark circles and reduces puffiness under the eyes, leaving the skin looking hydrated and fresher, and feeling smooth and firm.'

Expert tip 'Apply it once or twice a day, after cleansing and moisturising, to the under-eye area and brow bone. Avoid your eyelids because they are fragile.'



Best hair product

Shockwaves Re-Create Styling Wax
(£2.99 for 75ml, nationwide)

Picked by celebrity hairdresser Michael Douglas

'The Shockwaves Re-Create Styling Wax is a favourite of mine. It gives you precise styling and a sculptured appearance. It also lasts a long time, so you can easily re-style your hair if you're heading out somewhere after a long day at the office.'

Expert tip 'Use about a 5p coin-sized scoop of the Shockwaves Styling Wax, rub it over your hands and work it through the hair, creating texture and shape. Make sure to always apply the wax to dry hair.'



Best shaving product

Gillette Mach 3 razor blades
(£11.49 for 8, boots.com) with
EShaver handle (£48, mankind.co.uk)

Picked by male grooming expert Jason Shankey

'I do a lot of shaving with a cut-throat razor in my job, but at home it's much easier and faster to use a safety razor. My razor of choice is the Gillette Mach 3, which gives me a close, sharp and smooth shave. I use the Mach 3 blades with a separate handle, which I find improves the grip of the razor.'

Expert tip 'Before shaving, splash your face with warm water for at least 20 seconds to soften your beard and make shaving easier. After your shave, splash cold water on to help prevent blackheads and razor burn.'



Best dental product

Oral-B PC Triumph 5000 with SmartGuide
(£160, nationwide)

Picked by TV dentist Dr James Russell

'The key to a great smile is good mouth health. The Oral-B PC Triumph 5000 with SmartGuide is a hi-tech electric brush that has a wireless monitor to make sure you brush with the right force and for the right amount of time in each part of the mouth. It's also good at removing plaque, which will keep your teeth bright and your gums healthy.'

Expert tip 'Most men don't brush for long enough. Brush at least twice a day for two minutes at a time, using the SmartGuide timer for optimum cleaning of all quadrants.'



We've got reviews of other new electric toothbrushes at mensfitness.co.uk/links/thebrushoff

WHAT'S NEW



Jason Shankey Expert shaving range

Regular *MF* grooming expert Jason Shankey is taking on the big shaving boys with his own range. In his salons he uses a cut-throat razor, and these products help make an old-fashioned shave more effective. The face and scalp scrub contains olive stones to remove dead skin cells, the shaving cream softens stubble, and the moisture balm helps reduce the need to shave daily. From £13 jasonshankey.co.uk

ON TEST

Energising moisturisers

Repair your skin and look fresh with this essential skincare



Nickel Bio Green Boost £24 for 50ml

This sinks in easily, smells nice and feels like it really tightens up the skin, thanks to the inclusion of organic bamboo stem. It's the priciest on test but it's a decent investment.

■■■■■

nickelspalondon.co.uk



No7 for Men SPF15 £7.75 for 50ml

This has an aquatic scent with a thick, creamy consistency, making it a great winter choice when skin tends to be drier. It perks up skin using vitamin C and you'll look more awake after using it.

■■■■■

boots.com



L'Oréal Men Expert Hydra £10.49 for 50ml

Don't be put off by the slightly odd blue colour of this gel-lotion - it's a great moisturiser. It reduces puffiness and freshens and tightens the skin.

■■■■■

Available nationwide



Gillette Series £7.99 for 50ml

The pump-action top is a bit flimsy but the moisturiser is rich enough to soothe skin deeply after shaving, avoiding greasiness and leaving your face smooth and soft.

■■■■■

Available nationwide



Nivea For Men Revitalising Gel Q10 £11.59 for 50ml

The mint extract in this lightweight gel helps to cool your skin, making it perfect for those hot post-workout showers at the gym.

■■■■■

Available nationwide

WHAT'S NEW



Lab Series Skincare for Men Power Protector SPF50

Sun damage happens all year round and can be a particular concern if you're taking part in winter sports. This new moisturising treatment from Lab Series is not only designed to tackle damaging UVA and UVB rays with its high sun-protection factor but also claims to visibly improve signs of existing damage by reducing dark spots and dullness.

£38 for 100ml mankind.co.uk

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'Inspire us' winner

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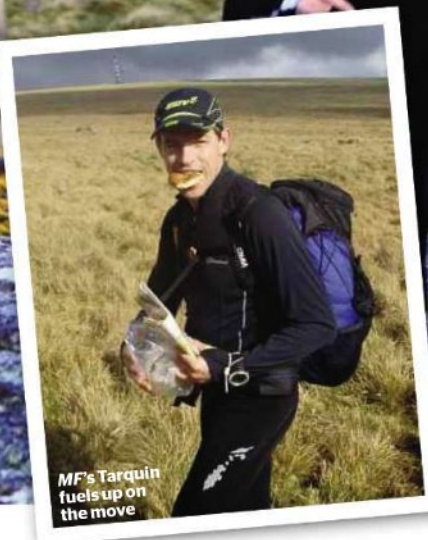
Race Report **OMM**

Hill on earth

The Original Mountain Marathon is not just a fell race - it's a tough two-day challenge pitting you against the elements. *MF's* Tarquin Cooper takes on the 2010 route over Dartmoor



The OMM competitors have to work out where they're going and deal with the terrain



MF's Tarquin fuels up on the move

Race details

What The Original Mountain Marathon 2010

Where Dartmoor, Devon

Disciples Running/trekking, orienteering

Fitness level Intermediate to high

***MF's* race distance** 57km (C class distance)

***MF's* time** 11hr 0min 49 sec

***MF's* position** 20th out of 176 teams

Winner's time 8hr 0min 49 sec

More info theomm.com

Is this just a marathon on a mountain?

Not at all. Teams of two must navigate the old-school way with a map and compass to checkpoints marked on a map (GPS is banned). They must then camp overnight, having carried their own sleeping bag, tent and food and then be up for another run the following day.

How long is it?

There are two types of event within the OMM: a straight line course, in which you follow a pre-determined route; and the 'score' class, where you visit as many checkpoints in a given time. Within these are various sub-categories. At the top end, the elite category involves a full marathon on each day with 2,500m of total ascent. I did the C class, a 57km course with 1,800m of ascent.

Where and when is it?

It's in a different location every year, although it's always on mountains or moorland. This year it was the peat bogs, tussocks and tors of Dartmoor, a place so bleak it's home to both a notorious prison and Arthur Conan Doyle's spooky tale *The Hound Of The Baskervilles*. But it's always held at the end of October to provide the best chance of miserable weather, which it usually delivers. Two years ago it attracted press coverage when floods forced it to be cancelled.

Sounds great. So why would I want to do this race?

I asked myself that very question on the second day when the cloud came down, I couldn't see anything, it started raining horizontally and I lost the feeling in my feet. But to complete the OMM is to join an elite club. It's been going

'There's no relief when you arrive at camp. All I wanted to do was collapse'

for over 40 years and it's the ultimate test of fortitude, teamwork, endurance and outdoor savvy. Reaching the finish brings genuine elation and real satisfaction. A lot of events make bold claims about being the hardest around, but the OMM doesn't need to. It's genuinely tough. Survive and you'll feel like a champion.

Who does it?

A lot of the competitors are serious fell runner types who think nothing of running 10K up and down some mountains in a vest before breakfast. But don't let them put you off - there are also plenty of individuals who are fit and just want a challenge. With training, some navigation practice and a healthy appetite for suffering, anyone can do it.

How good does your map-reading have to be?

Navigating when the cloud comes down can be a real challenge. You have to use your compass

Do not neglect your map-reading skills unless you fancy being lost on the moors



Learn from our experience

Get mountain trained

New to the outdoors? Sign up for an OMM training weekend at the Plas y Brenin National Mountain Centre in Wales to learn map-reading and self-preservation skills. Visit pyb.co.uk/omm.



Go light

A pack weighing less than 10kg is the difference between misery and fun. Start getting your gear together weeks in advance. Read the OMM forums (theomm.co.uk/forum) for advice.



Drink like a dog

Don't bother carrying a water bladder - they're heavy and it will only slow you down. Take a small water bottle that you keep on the outside of your pack and drink at rivers.



Run the hills

The race requires a good eight weeks of endurance and strength work. Lunges, squats and calf raises will prepare your legs while core work will help your running posture. And do plenty of hill running to get used to it.



to take a bearing from a known position on the map, and follow it blindly for a while. If all goes to plan, it'll take you to your next checkpoint. If not, you'd better hope mountain rescue find you before any escaping convicts do. You definitely want to put in some practice beforehand.

What are the trails like?

The terrain can be brutal. Just when I thought it was safe to start running, my leg sank into a bog or stepped on a tussock that threatened to twist my ankle. The more tired I became, the worse it got. More than once I treated the famous Dartmoor ponies - who frankly could have offered me a lift - to some profanity-laden cries.

Any properly hairy moments?

On the morning of the second day we had to get across a fast-flowing river. We walked more than a kilometre upstream before we found a spot that was narrow enough to cross, and even then it still came up to our

After a hard night, Tarquin was delighted to have to wade across a river



Racers try to orient themselves amid the crowds at the start



You'll find expert off-road running tips at mensfitness.co.uk/links/righttrack

Essential OMM gear Kit to help you survive this demanding race

Suunto Core £230

A mountaineering timepiece such as Suunto's Core comes in extremely handy. It has an altimeter, which helps navigation, and the log also tells you how far you've climbed.

suunto.com



Terra Nova Laser Photon Elite £330

The Laser Photon Elite is a bit cosy for two, but it's the weight that counts and at just 660g it's the world's lightest double-walled tent. Pair it with the 265g Yeti Passion One sleeping bag (upandrunning.co.uk).

terra-nova.co.uk

OMM Kamleika Race Jacket £117

A Gore-Tex jacket is essential and the Kamleika is one of the few that is light enough to run in. Flexible and close-fitting, it does its job of keeping you warm and dry without getting in the way.

upandrunning.co.uk



Inov-8 Roclite 295 £70

Leave your regular trainers at home: for the OMM you need a serious off-road weapon that can grip in the mud. Inov-8 is the pioneer of lightweight trail running

shoes with low profiles and the Roclite 295 is a good mid-range choice, offering some cushioning as well.

inov-8.com



The wild Dartmoor environment is unforgiving in the autumnal conditions

waists. There were no other teams around so a slip wouldn't bear thinking about. When we emerged, we were so cold that we had to start running immediately to warm up, even though it was the last thing we felt like doing.

What was the overnight camp like?

There's no relief when you arrive. All I wanted to do was collapse, but with most of the teams already in, I had to search for a patch of turf that wasn't under water. Then, just as I was putting up the tent, a gale nearly sent it airborne across the moor. And supper was a miserable dehydrated meal.

How did you feel towards the end?

'Physically drained' doesn't come close to

describing it - I was a zombie. The exertion of all the ascent plus the mental focus demanded by map-reading left me feeling like I'd taken on David Haye and Garry Kasparov simultaneously. I didn't even notice when my partner's rucksack came open and the contents spilled out - neither of us would have realised if we hadn't been alerted by the team behind.

Be honest, was it fun?

Actually yes. With the right gear and preparation, the OMM always provides a fantastic journey across a genuinely wild region of the UK. The camaraderie between competitors is also great - you'll find you keep bumping into the same team along the way. And you'll dine out on the experience for months. 

Next race The next OMM will take place in October 2011. For more information go to theomm.com.

Anything sooner? The Lowe Alpine Marathon in the Scottish Highlands in June 2011. Go to lamm.co.uk.

Thanks to PlanetFear.com, a worldwide adventure sports community that aims to inspire people to explore the higher reaches of their ability and is dedicated to selling the best outdoor sports kit available.



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In early 2010, 400m GB Hurdlers Dai Greene and Rhys Williams put themselves through a punishing pre-season training schedule, fuelled by MP MAX® ELITE. In the summer of 2010, they became European and Commonwealth medal winners, walking away with two gold, one silver and one bronze.

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Laurent Bannock

MSc (ExSci) MSc (Nutr)

Elite performance nutritionist & exercise physiologist.

He is the UK representative for the International Society of Sports Nutrition (CISSN)

Dai Greene 400m hurdles

2010 European Gold Medallist

2010 Commonwealth Gold Medallist

Rhys Williams 400m hurdles

2010 European Silver Medallist

2010 Commonwealth Bronze Medallist

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Best events in 2011

Achieve your fitness goals by completing one of these challenging events

1 Etape du Tour **11th and 17th July**

The Etape du Tour offers a unique opportunity for cyclists to ride some of the iconic stages of the Tour de France. This year two routes are available, with a relatively short but steep 109km route from Modane to L'Alpe d'Huez in the first event, while the second is considerably longer but flatter at 208km.

sportstoursinternational.co.uk

Want something more accessible?

The Haywards Heath Howler on 7th August offers a variety of shorter routes that climb the spectacular South Downs.

ukcyclingevents.co.uk

2 Brighton Marathon **10th April**

After a successful first event last year, the Brighton Marathon returns bigger and better for 2011, providing competitors with a challenging race in the heart of this vibrant city. The route itself takes in the picturesque Lanes, the Royal Pavilion and a host of stunning seaside panoramas, culminating with a dramatic finish in front of the city's historic pier.

brightonmarathon.co.uk

Want something more accessible? Try the Whipsnade Zoo Stampede on 6th June, a colourful 10K race around the animal enclosures.

zsl.org/challengevents

3 Strength & Power Series **June, July and August**

The UK Strength & Power Series is a competition inspired by traditional strongman disciplines that's designed to be accessible for athletes of all shapes and sizes. Previous events have featured truck pulling, atlas stones and giant tyres. This year the series will be visiting Reading, Manchester and south Wales over the course of the summer.

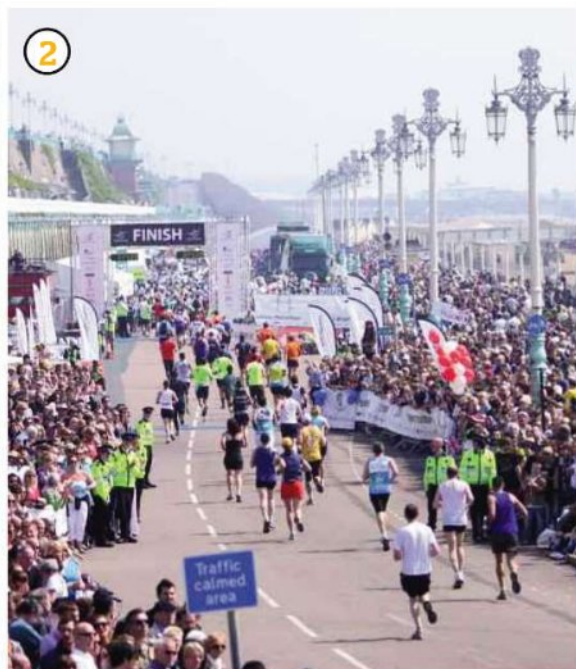
funckey.co.uk

Want something more accessible? Try the Men's Fitness FitBrit Challenge to gauge your fitness over a series of timed exercises.

mensfitness.co.uk/fitbrit



For more must-do events, go to **mensfitness.co.uk/links/allaction**



4 **Classic Quarter 2011** 25th June

This 70km trail run follows the mesmerising South West Coast Path from the southernmost point of Great Britain, Lizard Point, to the westernmost tip of England, Land's End. This dawn-to-dusk race is the ultimate trail runner's rush, with spectacular exposure and challenging terrain - all a stone's throw away from the potentially pounding Atlantic swells.

endurancelife.com

Want something more accessible? The Cotswolds Running Challenge offers 8km and 16km courses running through the scenic trails of Wychwood Forest on 20th November.

bhf.org.uk/events

'The world's biggest mass-participation triathlon will see more than 13,000 racers descend on London to brave the murky waters of the Thames'

5 **London Triathlon** 30th-31st July

The world's biggest mass-participation triathlon will see more than 13,000 racers descend on London to brave the murky waters of the Thames and run and cycle the closed roads of the capital. There's a variety of course lengths on offer, ensuring that everyone from first-time triathletes to elite-level competitors will be well catered for.

thelondontriathlon.com

Want something more accessible? Skip the swimming and test your running and cycling prowess at the Ashton Duathlon on 27th March.

dbmax.co.uk

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Personal Trainer
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QX Trail Run

Whether you're a novice or an old hand, this trail run has something for everyone

The details

What QX Trail Run

When 20th February 2011

Where Wasing Park, Berkshire

Fitness level Beginner to intermediate

Disciplines Running

Details qxmultisport.co.uk

What to expect

The first Quest X-Terrain Trail Run of 2011 takes place in Berkshire's Wasing Park, amid surroundings that are both beautiful and taxing. Its open countryside, peaceful lakes and picturesque woodland provide plenty of varied off-road terrain. Quest says the 5km course is ideal for novice trail runners, but there's also a 10km event for those looking for more of a challenge. The trails are muddy without being treacherous as well as wide enough for overtaking to make sure it's a real race.

Expert tips

'Don't go off too fast because the terrain can really sap the energy from your legs,' says Quest director Martyn Ward. 'Another way to avoid fatigue is to make sure you slow down on steep climbs - you can make up lost time on the flat and downhill sections. It's tempting to look down at your feet to watch out for rocks and tree roots, but keeping your head up and your eyes on the trail ahead will give you an advantage.'

Avoid fatigue by making sure you slow down on steep climbs'

Essential kit

The North Face Single-Track £89

To conquer the QX you'll need a versatile shoe. The Single-Track offers plenty of traction and support for covering treacherous terrain but it's also light enough to not slow you down during fast sections.

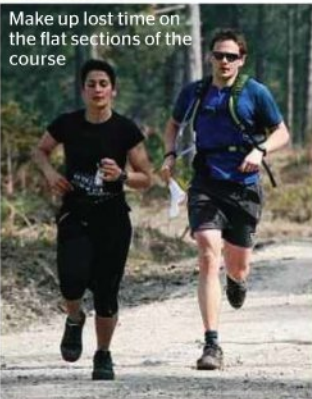
thenorthface.com/eu



Take that leap of faith - your hard work in training will pay off



Make up lost time on the flat sections of the course



Staying hydrated will keep your body in peak condition

Turn over for our six-week QX Trail Run training plan

Six-week QX Trail Run training plan

A 10K trail run isn't as straightforward as a 10K on the flat – it requires proper off-road training. Get ready to hit the trail with this plan



Daniel Carrivick
is the QX race director

'QX trail runs are designed for athletes of all abilities but if you want to get the most from the race it's important that you train properly for it. It's not just about the amount of training but also the quality and variety of the sessions.

'The first few weeks focus on building up your stamina and getting used to running off roads and on uneven trails. After this you'll move on to hill sessions and concentrate on developing your race pace, before easing off in the final week in preparation for race day.'

Effort levels

- 1-3** Easy up to a gentle pace
- 4-5** Able to have a conversation
- 6-7** Getting out of breath
- 8-9** Can't talk, uncomfortable
- 10** Flat-out sprint

Fitness level Before you start this plan you should be able to run comfortably for 20 minutes without stopping.

Hill sessions

Find a hill that takes two to three minutes to run up. Go up moderately hard (at least level 6), then jog back down to recover before running up again.

Fartlek sessions

Fartlek training involves injecting bursts of controlled speed into your workout at regular intervals (the name is Swedish for 'speed play'). To add fartlek intervals to off-road runs, sprint for 30 seconds every fifth tree before slowing to a normal pace.

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	Rest	Road run at level 3 for 20 mins.	Rest	Road run at level 5 for 25 mins.	Off-road run at level 3 for 20 mins.	Rest	Road run at level 4 for 5 mins, then level 6 for 30 mins, then level 3 for 5 mins.
2	Rest	Off-road run at level 5 for 25 mins.	Rest	Road run at level 7-8 for 30 mins.	Road run at level 4 for 25 mins.	Rest	Off-road run at level 4 for 5 mins, then level 7 for 30 mins, then level 3 for 5 mins.
3	Rest	Road run at level 8 for 25 mins.	Road run at level 4 for 25 mins.	Off-road run at level 6 for 35 mins.	Rest	Off-road run at level 4 for 25 mins.	Off-road run at level 5 for 5 mins, then level 7 for 30 mins, then level 4 for 5 mins.
4	Rest	Fartlek or hill sessions at level 7 for 25 mins.	Cross-training session at level 4 for 30 mins.	Off-road run at level 7 for 40 mins.	Road run at level 4 for 25 mins.	Rest	Off-road run at level 5 for 10 mins, then level 8 for 30 mins, then level 4 for 10 mins.
5	Cross-training session at level 3 for 30 mins.	Off-road run at level 8 for 45 mins.	Road run at level 4 for 25 mins.	Fartlek or hill sessions at level 8 for 25 mins.	Cross-training session at level 5 for 30 mins.	Rest	Off-road run at level 4 for 10 mins, then level 6 for 40 mins, then level 4 for 10 mins.
6	Cross-training recovery session at level 2.	Off road run at level 5 for 35 mins.	Rest	Off-road run at level 4 for 25 mins.	Rest	Rest	RACE DAY Stretch, eat and drink well after the race.



Building better sports nutrition

CNP's move to a new facility will further improve its products

Sports nutrition specialist CNP Professional has moved to a purpose-built manufacturing and warehousing facility in Hyde, near Manchester, taking as much as 70 per cent of its manufacturing in-house.

The move follows a dramatic growth in sales during the past two years, due to CNP's increasing appeal across a wide variety of sports. The company now works with athletes in virtually every arena, from the Team Sky cycling team to former UFC light-heavyweight champion Quinton 'Rampage' Jackson (right).

Already renowned for the quality of its products, CNP believes that increasing the level of in-house manufacturing will allow it to develop even better products

'The company now works with athletes in virtually every arena, from cycling to the UFC'

in the future, helping its customers to stay at the forefront of their sport.

'The facilities we have here are amazing,' says Kerry Kayes, who leads the nutrition team at CNP. 'We're now investigating ways to enhance both the quality and flavours so that athletes can get even more out of the products.'



Above: CNP's new purpose-built, 16,000 square foot manufacturing and warehouse facility



CNP by numbers

32

Number of countries around the world in which you can find CNP products

70

Number of sachets a minute of ProMR rolling off the CNP production line

272

Number of calories in CNP's meal replacement ProMR

16,000

Size in square feet of CNP's new facility in Hyde

Most of CNP's leading products are already being manufactured in-house, including top sellers Pro Peptide, ProMR and Pro Recover, which are blends of fast and slow-acting proteins. Go to www.cnpprofessional.co.uk for more information, training guides and product information.



Two days on a knife edge

The Cuillin Ridge traverse is known as the greatest alpine-style mountaineering challenge in Britain. *MF* takes on the Isle of Skye's jagged black mountains

Words **Jon Lipsey** Photography **Alec Roberts**





My research into the Cuillin Ridge traverse, a continuous crossing of a 12km-long mountain range on the Isle of Skye, doesn't start well. Pictures of

the ancient volcanic rock route that is widely acknowledged to offer the greatest alpine-style mountaineering challenge in Britain are easy to find. The problem is that looking at the steep, imposing slopes makes my palms sweat.

The local mountain rescue team's advice doesn't make things better. 'Inexperienced walkers should not even consider tackling the ridge,' it says. 'Nor should anyone contemplate visiting the range in less than ideal weather conditions.' This isn't good. My low-grade vertigo means I've always avoided mountains. And at this time of year the weather is unpredictable.

Fear factor

The Cuillin Ridge is arguably Britain's best-kept adventure secret. Few people outside the mountaineering scene are familiar with what early 20th-century climber Noel Odell, the first man to complete a solo traverse, called 'the finest expedition outside the Alps'. It's something every active man should attempt and I'm keen to find out whether fitness and determination, rather than experience and a head for heights, are enough to make my trip a success.

Unfortunately, the stats aren't in my favour. According to Alec Roberts, a rock climbing and mountaineering instructor from Guided Mountain (guidedmountain.co.uk) and the man who'll be escorting me along the route, about 90 per cent of first-timers fail. But, as a man who has completed the ridge many times, he understands the appeal.

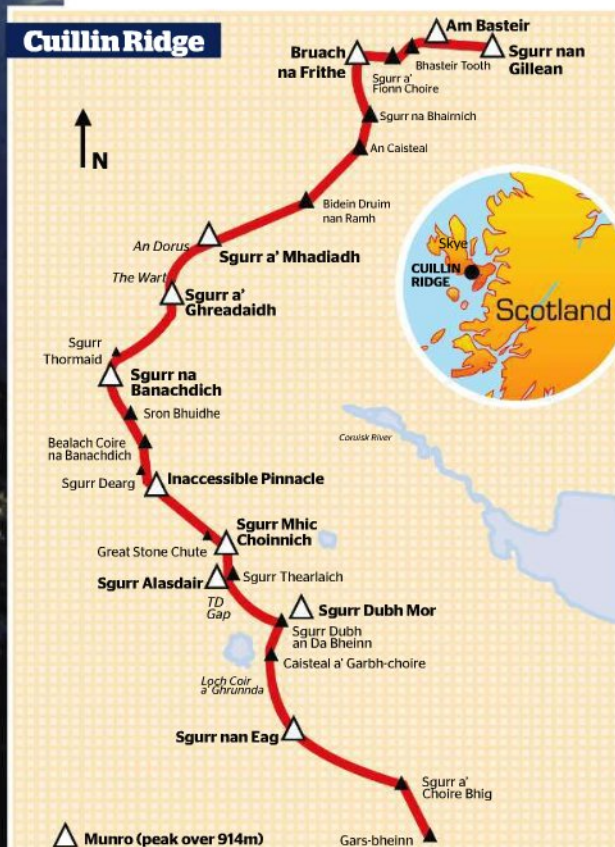
'It's unique in Britain because of the quality of the rock, the closeness of the sea and the mystery of the isles,' says Roberts. 'It feels like the edge of the world. It's romantic and it harks back to another time.' He also has a word of caution about the weather. 'It's one of the main factors that determine success or failure,' he says. 'In bad weather it gets challenging to the point where it's a fight for survival.'

Getting a grip

The ridge starts at Gars-bheinn and from there we'll negotiate a long rocky crescent punctuated with 11 Munros until we get to the finish at Sgurr nan Gilleann. To take advantage of the daylight hours we need to be on the ridge at sunrise. But there's a three-hour hike and climb just to get to Gars-bheinn, so we set off at 4.30am with headtorches lighting the way.

Roberts moves quickly and nimbly through the coarse grass while I stumble like a drunk in a hurry. 'Try to walk with an upright stance because that puts weight through your legs and on to the foothold,' suggests Roberts. 'If you bend forwards with your hands out, your feet are more likely to slip.'

I'm OK on the rough rock that makes up much of the Cuillin and offers some grip, but I'm not too



‘At one point I’m reduced to crawling along a narrow stretch of rock... It can’t be sensible for me to be up here’

good on the scree formed from loose bits of smooth basalt. This time Roberts advises me to 'imagine you're trying to balance a book on your head'. It seems to work and when we eventually get up on to the ridge I get my first proper view of the stark landscape. It's intimidating but happily the sun is out, the sky is clear and there's hardly any wind.

Our first task is to ditch the rucksacks, turn right to reach the start point at Gars-bheinn, and then head back to collect the bags and continue along the ridge. 'It'll only take ten minutes,' says Roberts, as he skips off and out of sight. As I edge along the ridge, the 'easy' start turns out to take four times longer than he predicted. At one point I'm reduced to crawling on my hands and knees across a narrow stretch of rock.

I'm going nowhere fast but my mind is racing. Should I really be up here? It can't be sensible for me to be up here. And why did Roberts agree to do this with someone so inexperienced? Is he mad? He's mad. Oh, brilliant. I'm up here with a madman.



MF's Jon nears the peak of the ominously named Inaccessible Pinnacle

Roberts is, of course, not mad and it's me who's struggling with sanity. He later tells me he was concerned about my cautious start. 'I was worried about us making it to the overnight camp,' he says. 'I thought we'd have to come down at the earliest opportunity.'

Over exposed

I hold it together enough to get to Sgurr nan Eag, the first of the Munros, which stands at 924m, before descending to the Caisteal a' Garbh-choire - a big lump of rock protruding from the ridge. 'If it's too steep to walk down, turn and face the rock,' says Roberts. 'The trick is to have low hands so you're able to step down and hold on. Keep your body vertical because that will give you enough space to see where you're putting your feet.'

I'm already feeling uncomfortable about the exposure before we even start the first section of proper mountaineering, which comes now and involves negotiating a sheer slab of rock with a tiny ledge and huge drop below. We break out the ropes and inch along before abseiling into the Thearlaich Dubh Gap, also known as the TD Gap.

To get out of this mini abyss requires the most technical climb of the route. The first few metres are manageable but then it's just flat stone and no obvious way up. I grip the vertical edges of a recess, jam my feet into the gap and perform a couple of awkward pull-ups to haul



'The mist glows in the morning sun. It looks beautiful, until I realise I have to navigate through it'

Ridge ready Key moves to do before your traverse

1 Single-leg step-up

Sets 2

Reps 10 each side

Why? Your knees will take a battering on the ridge. This move will stabilise the joint through a big range of motion while also developing your quads.

How? Plant one foot on a thigh-high platform and push through that foot to straighten your leg. Try not to use your standing leg to aid the movement.

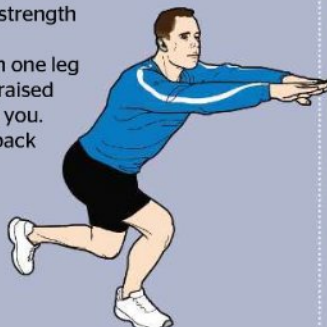


2 Single-leg squat

Sets 2 Reps 8-10 each side

Why? A successful traverse requires good leg strength, particularly single leg strength. This move will build both strength and balance.

How? Stand on one leg with the other raised slightly behind you. Keeping your back upright, sink into a squat, making sure your knees are in line with your toes.



3 Pull-up

Sets 4 Reps 6-8

Why? Climbing should be done with the legs but when you get to the tricky point in the TD Gap, you'll need good upper-body strength to haul yourself up.

How? Take an overhand grip and hang straight down from the bar without swinging. Pull yourself up until your chin is over the bar then lower slowly until your arms are fully extended.



my body up to the next set of footholds. When I reach the top of the 30m climb Roberts seems surprised to see me. 'I've spent 20 minutes dragging someone out of the TD Gap before,' he says. 'One time a guy started crying.'

King of the swingers

Next it's a scramble over loose rock up to the top of Sgurr Thearlaich followed by a painfully slow, palm-moistening traverse off a knife-edge section of the ridge. The second abseil of the day is slightly trickier than the first, with a descent to the left to avoid an overhang. I'm bouncing happily down the rock when I hear Roberts shout 'keep your legs wide to avoid swinging'. The advice sinks in just as my body and the rope form a big pendulum and I lurch violently to the right. I keep my legs out and, thankfully, avoid smashing my face on the rock.

Fresh from evading disaster, Roberts and I discuss our route options. 'If we go right we're on steep ground and I won't be able to hold you if you slip,' he says. 'If we go left we can scramble down then climb back up.' Left it is.

Another successful ascent up Kings Chimney boosts my confidence. But the exposed stretch that follows soon takes it away. And this really isn't the time to lose my bottle, especially with the spirit-crushingly named Inaccessible Pinnacle, looming in the distance.

I've read about this summit. One climber, in the 1947 book *Mountaineering in Scotland* described it as 'a knife-edge ridge, with an overhanging and infinite drop on one side, and a drop on the other side even steeper and longer'. It's not the most technical ascent but as you get higher the rock tapers, leaving you clinging to a thin spike at the top.

The steep descent to our overnight base is slow but methodical. The camp may be just a small circle on a flat bit of the

ridge but, after nearly 14 hours on the go, it looks as inviting as any four-poster bed. After a dinner of pasta and hot chocolate I drift off into an uneasy sleep, dreaming I'm in my bivi bag, slipping off an exposed ledge.

Rock and a hard place

I wake up hoping the harsh landscape has morphed overnight into some pleasant rolling hills. But the only change is that we're surrounded by mist glowing in the morning sun with parts of the ridge poking through the thick

blanket of fog. It looks beautiful, until I realise I'll have to navigate my way through it.

I'm also hoping that yesterday's experience will have seeped into my muscles and I'll move skilfully across the terrain. That doesn't happen either but at least it's a gentle start as we scramble steadily up Sgurr na Banachdich.

Near the top we have to traverse narrow ledges jutting out of steep walls of rock. Roberts advises me to plant my foot as close

Essential kit

Having the right kit will improve your chances of success. Here's what you need



Waterproof layer

Outdoor Research Furio, £235

This is a lightweight, waterproof jacket with adjustable ventilation. 'Make sure your waterproof layer is a good fit so you're comfortable,' says Roberts.

mountainboot.co.uk

Windproof layer

Marmot Tempo jacket, £80

The Tempo is breathable and stretchy, so it won't inhibit movement. 'You need a lightweight, windproof layer because it can get very windy when you're on exposed ground,' says Roberts.

cotswoldoutdoor.com



Boots

Scarpa ZG10 GTX £179.99

'Use a robust, light alpine boot that has a supportive sole. Avoid anything too heavy and also thin soles because they will tire your feet out,' says Roberts. This comfortable Scarpa boot fits the bill.

scarpa.co.uk



Backpack

Osprey Exos 46 backpack, £130

Osprey's Exos pack has enough room to store all your gear but doesn't have unnecessary extra pockets and straps. 'When you pack it, the weight should be distributed between your shoulders and hips,' says Roberts.

cotswoldoutdoor.com



Sleeping and bivi bags

Mountain Hardwear Lamina 20 Long sleeping bag, £100/Rab Alpine Bivi, £150

'For most traverses you need a compact three-season synthetic bag, as well as a bivi bag to keep it dry and add warmth,' says Roberts.

cotswoldoutdoor.com



Abseiling into the Thearlaich Dubh Gap - difficult, but at least it's a break from climbing

Ridge by numbers

8,000m

Total ascent and descent

1924 The first solo traverse, by Scottish climber Noel Odell

992 Height in metres of Sgurr Alasdair, the highest point of the ridge

3hr 17min The fastest recorded traverse, set in 2007 by Esmond Tresidder, although this doesn't include the hike to the start or the descent off the ridge

13hr 42min Active hours on *MF*'s first day, including the hike up to the ridge

11 Munros (peaks more than 914m high) along the ridge

to the edge as possible so my weight is angled into the rock face. It makes sense but it's hard to fight the instinct to do the complete opposite.

The section after the summit is even harder, with another incredibly narrow ridge with steep drops on either side that once again reduces me to crawling.

Slippery slope

Having conquered what felt like a tricky part of the route I summon the courage to ask what the next bit, the climb up Sgurr a' Ghreadaidh, is like. I soon wish I hadn't. 'The slope off to the left disappears into a void,' says Roberts. 'There are a couple of paths now and again but it's long and you don't get much respite.' This turns out to be a pretty accurate description.

When we get to the top the mist has been replaced by thick cloud. The rocks are getting wet too, turning them into slippery slabs. The temperature has also plummeted meaning four layers, a hat and gloves aren't enough to prevent me from shivering.

Roberts suggests we take a quick break and we huddle in a small recess at the bottom of The Wart, the large and charmingly named protrusion just past Ghreadaidh, to decide what's ahead. 'At this pace there's no way we're going

The An Dorus gully is steep and rocky, but it's a safe way down

Mist obscures the view from camp on the second morning

'The rocks are getting wet and slippery'

to complete the ridge before dark,' says Roberts. Our progress has been slow but this is the first time since we started that we've talked about the possibility of not making it to the end. 'If we carry on then we'll be in difficult terrain, with a lot of stress and no easy way off the ridge,' he adds.

Surrounded by the cold, wet stone, I've never felt less brave. And the weather is getting worse, not better. The thought of having to traverse in wind and rain on the kind of ground I struggled with in the

sun is, frankly, terrifying. It feels as if the ridge and the elements let me have a go yesterday, giving me perfect conditions, but now they've decided I don't deserve to join that small band of people who complete the traverse at their first attempt.

Corridor of uncertainty

We walk for a few minutes before Roberts suggests we turn left and head down the gully at An Dorus, a steep corridor of rock. If this is an easy way off, I'm glad we haven't had to resort to a difficult option.

The cloud and mist make it impossible to see what lies ahead. My imagination decides it's going to be loose boulders and huge drops. But the huge drops don't come and instead we work our way down the slope. After a couple of hundred metres we slide down the scree that eventually gives way to stable rocks and then grassy ground.

I didn't beat the odds and I failed to complete the ridge, but Roberts offers some consolation. 'It was the right thing to do, to come down when we did,' he says. 'Your fitness is there and your climbing is there but it's just such an alien environment for you. You were in at the deep end.'

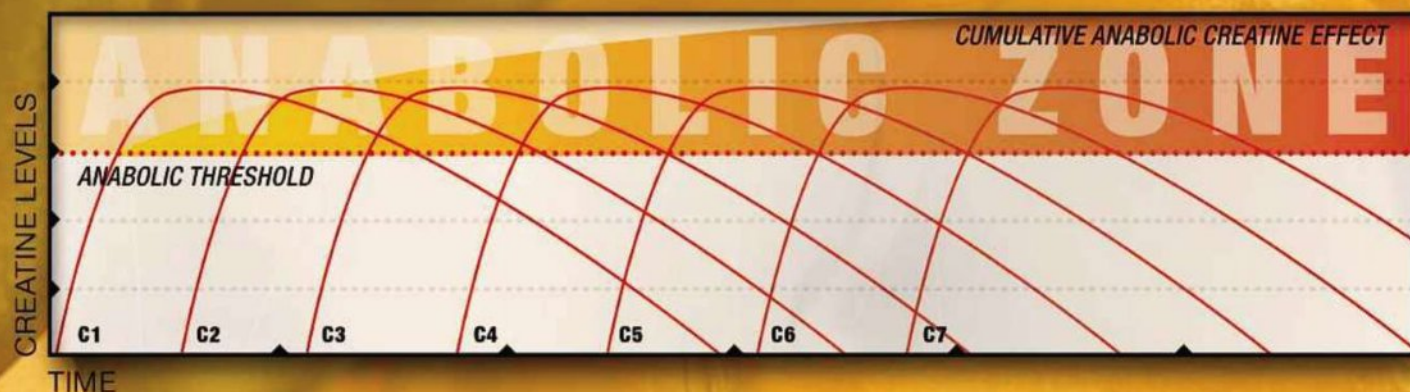
And he's right. I can't see this as a failure. I've traversed exposed ledges and ascended inclines I thought would be beyond me. I've completed the most technical climbs and I've scaled seven of the 11 peaks along the route. I've challenged myself and I'm proud that we didn't, as Roberts had feared, fall at the first hurdle. I guess I'll just have to come back some day to this amazing place and finish what I've started. **MF**

Men's Fitness attempted the Cuillin Ridge Traverse with Alec Roberts from Guided Mountain (guidedmountain.co.uk). Roberts has more than 15 years' experience as an instructor and holds the Mountain Instructor Certificate, the highest qualification for instructing summer and winter climbing, and all related mountaineering activities, in the UK. For enquiries about trips to the Cuillin Ridge and other areas, email alec@guidedmountain.co.uk or call 01594 541622.



To watch a clip of *MF* taking on this terrifying traverse go to mensfitness.co.uk/links/cuillin

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EatFit

Muscle omelette

Quick and easy to make, omelettes are ideal for breakfast but versatile enough to be eaten at any time of the day.

The quality protein and fats found in eggs will keep you feeling full for longer, while they also contain biotin, a vitamin that helps the body to process and burn fat more efficiently. But eggs should just be the starting point - here are the additions that will make your omelette into a top-class muscle-building meal.

Kale

How much? A handful

Kale is full of indole-3-carbinol, a phytochemical that helps lower excess oestrogen in the body, thereby promoting muscle growth. It also contains vitamins A, C and E, which are all vital for muscle recovery.

Eggs

How many? Three

As well as a hit of muscle-building protein, eggs contain omega 3 fatty acids, which are thought to be crucial for overall good health and help prevent cardiovascular disease by lessening the risk of blood clots.

Quick tip

Make sure you cut the turkey into small pieces, because large chunks could cause the egg to tear when you flip it.

Turkey

How much? 50g

Turkey is low in calories but high in protein, making it excellent for building muscle. It also contains selenium, which helps to strengthen your immune system and defend against harmful free-radical cell damage.

Feta cheese

How much? 25g

Feta offers muscle-building protein and bone-strengthening calcium. Eating it after a workout also helps to replace the sodium lost through sweat thanks to its salt content.

Inside

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Fill a bagel with the right things to get on the path to serious bulk

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Muesli can get your day off to a healthy start. We rate five types

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Potatoes aren't evil - eating starchy foods can actually help weight loss

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Time to stop being fat and lazy. Eating well isn't hard - here's how

Energy bagel

This snack will fuel your training and help you to build serious muscle

Eat this bagel before training and the carbs will help to keep your glycogen levels topped up, ensuring your body uses them for fuel, rather than your protein stores. It will also help to energise your workouts.



What you will need



- 1 wholemeal bagel
- 2 thick slices of turkey
- 1 hard-boiled egg, sliced
- 1 sliced tomato
- Handful of spinach

What you will get



Wholemeal bagel

A wholemeal bagel is packed with high-quality carbs for a sustained energy boost. It also helps contribute towards your daily requirement of dietary fibre.

Turkey

Turkey is a lean and low-calorie way to pack on muscle, thanks to its generous protein content. It is also rich in selenium, which strengthens the immune system and wards off the free-radical damage caused by exercise.

Egg

Eggs contain all the essential amino acids that your muscles need to build and repair themselves. They are also packed with testosterone-boosting zinc, which helps you to build muscle and burn fat.

Tomato

Vitamin C makes a hefty contribution to your amino acid metabolism, which helps the body to form new muscle. Tomatoes contain betacarotene and lycopene, which reduce inflammation and muscle soreness.

Spinach

Spinach is full of iron, which supplies working muscles with oxygen. Its high vitamin K content will also strengthen your bones.



What supp? Your sports supplement questions answered

Q What is creatine and why should I take it?

A Creatine helps supply energy to cells. It occurs naturally in the human body - it's synthesised from arginine, glycine and methionine in the kidneys, liver and pancreas - but can be increased by taking supplements, usually in powder form. 'If you are looking for increased power or explosion in the gym, want to progress your strength training and muscle development or if you compete in sprinting sports, creatine could

be the supplement for you,' says USN nutritionist Karl Bickley. 'If your body has optimum levels of creatine stored in your muscles, you will have an abundance of short-term energy to fuel your training. This delivers increased repetitions, power and strength. Creatine also speeds up the recovery between short bouts of exercise or sets of weight training, meaning you can train at higher intensities to maximise gains.'



You don't need dynamite to make an explosive supplement



You'll find a tasty post-workout smoothie at mensfitness.co.uk/links/recoverydrink



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we'll get you there

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Morning star

For a breakfast that fills you up and provides protein, look no further than muesli

If you're looking to improve your diet after an indulgent festive period, you can't do much better than a bowl of muesli for breakfast. A combination of rolled oats, dried fruit, nuts and seeds, muesli is high in fibre and protein and will leave you feeling full for the rest of the morning. The sugar content in muesli can vary between brands, though, so it's worth comparing them before you buy. We've put five types to the test to see which makes the tastiest brekkie.



Which muesli tastes the best?



Alpen Original
You can't go wrong with this classic, tasty recipe from Alpen that's full of hazelnuts, raisins and almonds.
23.1g sugar per 100g
★★★★★
£2.65 for 750g
weatabix.co.uk



Jordans Fruit & Nut
An abundance of fruit gives this muesli a sweet taste but also means high sugar levels.
27.6g sugar per 100g
★★★★★
£2.78 for 750g
jordanscereals.co.uk



Familia Swiss
Apples, bananas and dates help this organic muesli to taste delicious despite having no added sugar.
13g sugar per 100g
★★★★★
£1.69 for 340g
bio-familia.com



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24.3g sugar per 100g
★★★★★
£3.49 for 750g
dorsetcereals.co.uk



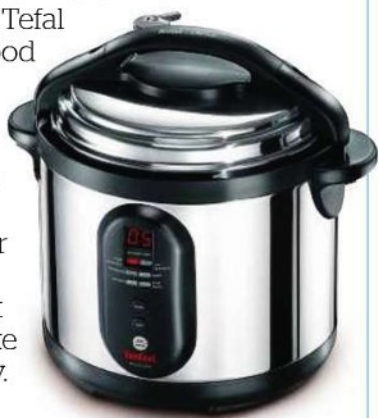
Alara Rich
While it's healthy, this organic muesli lacks flavour, despite being over 40 per cent fruit, seeds and nuts.
19.5g sugar per 100g
★★★★★
£2.15 for 500g
alara.co.uk

Best in test

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This clever device from Tefal uses pressure to cook food at high temperatures in very little water. As a result, food is cooked much faster and retains its full nutritional value, while the natural flavour of each ingredient is preserved - so you don't have to be Oliver to make healthy meals in a hurry.
£99.99 tefal.co.uk



Cupboard essential

Cinnamon

This sweet spice can help you train harder and recover quicker

Cinnamon can be used in both sweet and savoury dishes. Not only is it high in antioxidants, which reduce post-workout muscle inflammation, but it also helps to regulate blood sugar levels - preventing you from getting between-meals munchies - and aids digestion. Eating cinnamon will provide you with a decent helping of manganese, a mineral that helps

your body to absorb more oxygen, allowing your muscles to work to their full potential. Its combination of fibre and calcium helps to reduce the risk of colon cancer too.

Quick tip Ground cinnamon adds spice to the simplest of dishes: mix it with your porridge or sprinkle it over a sliced apple and bake for a tasty, healthy dessert.



To check out the honey taste test we did, go to mensfitness.co.uk/links/tastynectar

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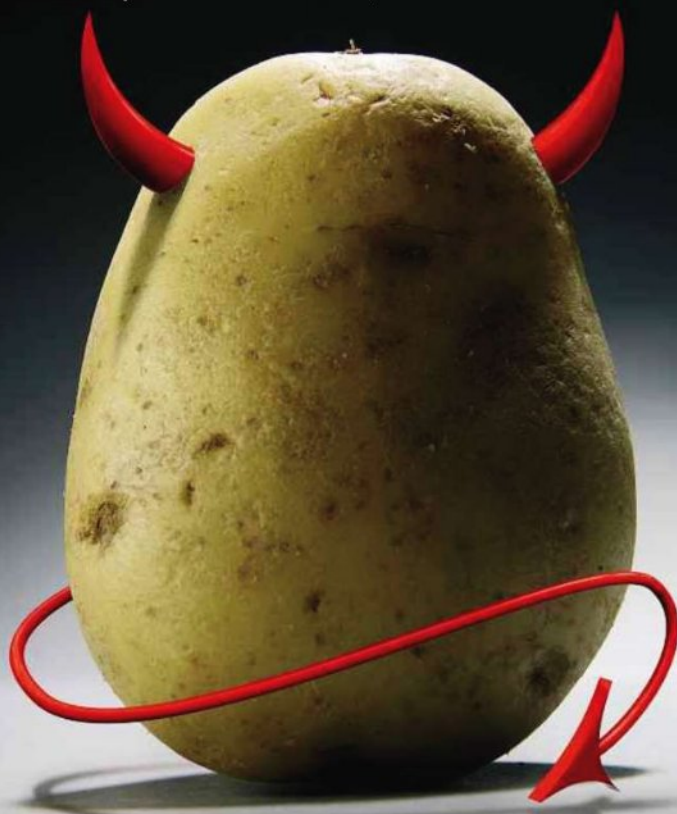
Top tip

Don't demonise spuds

Reap the rewards of having more starch in your diet

Potatoes were given a bad name during the low-carb craze but recent research has found them to have a number of weight-loss benefits. The type of starch in spuds resists digestive enzymes and stays in the intestines for longer, delaying hunger pangs, according to a study from the University of Utah.

Studies in Denmark have also found that the **starch in potatoes can improve blood-sugar control, which helps the body to burn fat**. What's more, one medium-size spud contains just 110 calories, provides almost half your daily requirement of vitamin C, and is free from fat, sodium and cholesterol.



Nutrition Q&A

Dr Sarah Schenker is a nutritionist at the British Nutrition Foundation and an accredited sports dietitian.



Q Nuts are high in fat and calories but I'm told they are good for fat loss. Why?

A Some experts recommend eating more nuts for their health benefits, which include reducing the risk of heart disease - but their high fat content can make people reluctant to do so. Yet numerous studies have found that nuts are not associated with weight gain, largely because of their high satiety capacity and their poor energy absorption, which means that, while on paper nuts contain about 600 calories per 100g, you only consume around 300-400. There's also evidence that shows regularly eating nuts increases metabolic rate, further reducing the net energy they provide. Moreover, comparison of weight-loss plans that ban and allow nuts shows greater weight-loss results for the plans that permit nuts.



Mixed berry fat loss smoothie

A delicious way to help you lose weight

What you will need

- 75g raspberries
- 75g strawberries
- 75g blackberries
- 250ml low-fat yoghurt
- 125ml cup skimmed milk
- 10-12 ice cubes

Why you should drink it

Raspberries

Full of fibre, raspberries keep you feeling full for longer. They contain calcium, which boosts your metabolism to help you burn fat efficiently.

Strawberries

They contain an enzyme called COX-2, which can reduce inflammation and pain, helping you recover quickly from each gym session.

Blackberries

The pectin helps keep blood sugar levels steady, so you avoid the crashes that lead to snacking. Blackberries are high in fibre and the antioxidant ellagic acid, which has antiviral and antibacterial properties.

Low-fat yoghurt

Many vitamins and minerals are fat-soluble, which means they're

better absorbed when ingested with fat - that's why this smoothie uses low-fat yoghurt rather than fat-free.

Skimmed milk

A recent study found that people who drank two to three glasses of skimmed milk daily reduced their body fat thanks to the vitamin D content.



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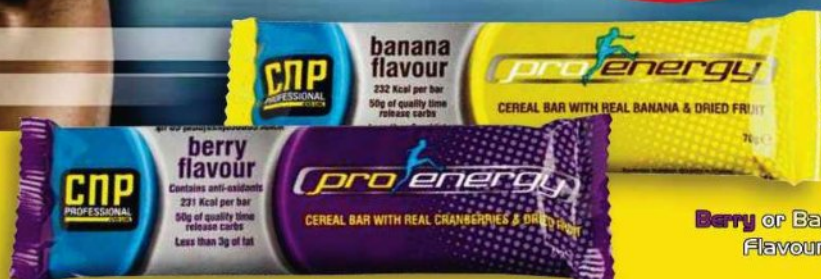
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No more excuses

Working late? Stressed? Skint? Here's how to avoid letting life make you fatter



I'm too busy

The excuse I've got a busy life, leaving no time to cook.

Fix it Preparing food quickly doesn't mean it's unhealthy. 'Grilling a chicken breast, seasoned with pepper and lemon, while steaming some veggies, can be done in the same time it takes to order a takeaway,' says nutrition consultant Lynn Clay (fitness-iq.co.uk). It provides high-quality protein to keep you full, and you get a shot of vitamins and minerals from the veg.



It's too expensive

The excuse Healthy meals drain my wallet - it's cheaper to load up my fridge with ready meals.

Fix it 'You pay a premium for ready meals,' says Clay. 'Cook from scratch and you'll not only reduce your intake of salt and added preservatives but also save a small fortune.' Tuna, eggs and lentils are cheap and should be cupboard staples, while seasonal fruit and veg, beans and salads are very cheap ways of getting your daily vitamin needs.



I'm stressed

The excuse Work is very hectic right now and I'm craving sugary, fatty comfort foods.

Fix it You're far better reaching for a carb-based snack. 'Carbohydrate-rich meals increase levels of serotonin, a hormone

known to induce a feeling of calm,' explains Elisabeth Weichselbaum of the British Nutrition Foundation (nutrition.org.uk). Next time, try a slice of wholemeal bread with peanut butter and some fruit. Still not working? Hit the gym. A study from the University of Missouri shows high-intensity exercise reduces stress and anxiety.



I've got no willpower

The excuse I just can't resist the tempting smell of the chippie or the sweets aisle in the supermarket.

Fix it Prevention is protection, so avoid being tempted in the first place. If you never fill your cupboards with sugary snacks your willpower isn't constantly being tested. 'But eating healthily doesn't mean you have to avoid your favourite foods,' says Weichselbaum. 'If you're addicted to pizza, use a thin, wholemeal base, go easy on the cheese, add veg and use wafer-thin ham instead of pepperoni.'



I'm too tired

The excuse It's 4pm and I'm fading - I need a chocolate bar to power through to the end of the day.

Fix it You may initially enjoy that sugar rush but it always leads to a crash and you'll feel worse than before. 'A protein-rich snack will release energy over a longer period of

time, while chocolate and crisps will only give you energy for a short time before your blood sugar comes crashing down,' says nutritional therapist Henrietta Bailey (puresportsmed.com). Beat your slump by grabbing a handful of unsalted nuts whenever you get peckish. They'll keep you full and provide vital vitamins and minerals.



I'm eating out

The excuse When eating in a restaurant, I don't have any control over what food is available.

Fix it You can't change the amount of salt in your meal but there are a few tricks to keep you on track. 'Look on the menu for sources of lean protein, such as white meat or fish, and choose a tomato-based sauce rather than a cream-based one,' says Clay.



I'm on holiday

The excuse I've paid to enjoy the all-inclusive deal.

Fix it Cocktails and ice cream are all part of holiday fun but you'll have to blast off any extra fat when you get home. Try turning the holiday excuse on its head. 'Holidays are a great time to start a health regime with plenty of fresh fruit, vegetables and fish available,' says Bailey. If you are out and about, pack protein bars or nuts to snack on, which will stop you pigging out later. **ME**

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Lewis Moody

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Tip of the month

Do a rock-solid deadlift

You might think doing your deadlifts on an unstable surface would make the move harder and therefore give you better benefits - but you'd be wrong. Doing the move on solid ground generates more muscle activity, according to a new study published in the *Journal Of Strength And Conditioning Research*. When subjects did five reps of 70 per cent of their one-rep maximum for the lift, they produced more force and had higher levels of muscle activation than when they used either a Bosu ball or a T-Bow, a curved bit of stability kit.



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Get all-over muscle in four weeks



NEW YEAR'S EVOLUTION

The pictures on the left and right here are of the same man, taken just 12 weeks apart. If you want to undergo a similar transformation in 2011, read on

If you want to make big changes in the way you look then you need to make a big effort. Just ask Glenn Parker.

When Parker approached personal trainer Nick Mitchell he weighed in at 98.2kg with body fat of 23.9 per cent. After just three months of following Mitchell's fitness plan, he had lost 13kg of fat, added 7kg of muscle and had a body to be proud of, with body fat of just 6.8 per cent.

This degree of transformation doesn't happen without hard graft: in this case, training twice per day - once in the morning and once in the evening. While this may sound like a strategy better suited to an Olympic athlete than someone juggling work, family and other commitments, it's a surefire way to strip fat while building solid muscle. The result? The body you've always wanted.

Why two workouts?

'The morning workout is strength-based and designed to fire up your high-threshold motor units, which are



This month's trainer
Nick Mitchell

Nick Mitchell is a personal trainer and founder of Ultimate Performance Fitness (upfitness.co.uk)

responsible for power and muscle growth,' says Mitchell. 'Performing this workout first thing will make you stronger in the afternoon session, when you'll work a wide range of your muscle fibres to increase muscle size.' Put simply, the morning strength session fires up your central nervous system, allowing you to work harder during the afternoon hypertrophy session.

Training structure

The training programme Mitchell built for Parker ran along these lines: train twice per day for two days, take two days off, then train for two more days before taking a single day off. Repeat this the following week, before doing a whole week of low-intensity training.

'I'm not going to lie - this was an extreme transformation that required intense effort and commitment from Glenn,' says Mitchell. 'You need a lighter week every third week to allow your body to recover, otherwise you'll overtrain and burn out. But this doesn't mean put your feet up: work just as intensively but with about 30 per cent of your maximum limit.'

Morning sessions

The morning workouts consist of two moves for five sets of five reps, using

WEEK 1

Weight **98.2kg**
Body fat **23.9%**

'This is a surefire way to strip fat and build muscle. The result? The body you've always wanted'

the same weight for all five sets. If you lift heavy weights for low reps with a short time under tension, this taps into the high-threshold motor units that are responsible for strength and power,' says Mitchell. 'This heightens nervous system activation with decreased inhibition of the muscle's protective mechanisms, both of which will prepare you for the afternoon sessions. The result is the ability to lift more weight, for more reps, leading to greater muscular damage, which equals better results.'

Afternoon sessions

The afternoon sessions consist of drop sets, in which you perform a set to failure before decreasing the weight and continuing, which results in greater muscle-fibre breakdown. For most of these workouts you'll perform ten reps of the first move.

As soon as you're done, drop the weight and do another ten reps before dropping the weight again and doing a final ten reps. In total you'll do three sets of ten reps of the same move without rest. Then take 60 to 90 seconds to recover before moving on to the next exercise.

Lift off

Mitchell adds a final word of warning. 'This programme isn't for everyone. If you're generally happy with the way you look, it's not the workout for you,' he says. 'This is designed for people who really want to make a big change in the way they look.'

At a glance

- ▶ Do two workouts a day.
- ▶ The morning workout is a strength-based superset, while the afternoon workout is four moves of three drop sets each.
- ▶ Train for two consecutive days on, then rest for two days, then train for the next two then have a single day off to complete the first week.
- ▶ Repeat for a second week, then do a full week of low-intensity lifting.
- ▶ Start the day with a high-protein meal and eat six small meals per day.

Tempo guide

Each move has its own tempo guide for how quickly you lift the weight, and this guide is made up of four numbers. The first relates to how many seconds you take to lower the weight. The second indicates how long you hold the weight at the bottom of the move, the third the time taken to lift the weight back to the start, and the fourth how long you hold the weight in the top position. So a 4010 tempo means you lower the weight in four seconds, before lifting back up in one second. The two zeroes mean there is no pause at the bottom or top of a move.

WEEK 12

Weight **92kg**
Body fat **6.8%**



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Words Joe Warner Photography Tom Miles Model Ben Kirby@Wathletic
Thanks to Reebok Sports Club, Canary Wharf, London (reeboksportsclublondon.com)

Day 1 Chest and biceps

Morning workout Supersets Do 1A, rest for 2min, do 1B, rest for 2min, then repeat



1A Bench press

Sets 5 Reps 5
Tempo 4010
Holding the bar with your hands slightly wider than shoulder-width apart, slowly lower the barbell until it touches your chest. Immediately press the bar back up.



1B Straight bar preacher curl

Sets 5 Reps 5
Tempo 4010
At a preacher bench, hold a straight bar with your arms fully extended. Curl the bar up quickly. Immediately lower the bar back to the start slowly.



Afternoon workout Drop sets Perform three sets in succession, reducing the weight each time

1 Cable flye

Reps 10/10/10
Tempo 3111
Attach high handles at the opposite sides of a cable machine. Standing in the middle with arms fully extended, bring your hands together in a smooth arc before returning to the start.



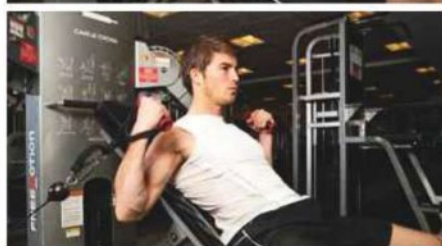
2 Incline dumb-bell press

Reps 10/10/10 Tempo 3111
On an incline bench, hold two dumb-bells at shoulder height. Press them straight up, then lower slowly back to the start.



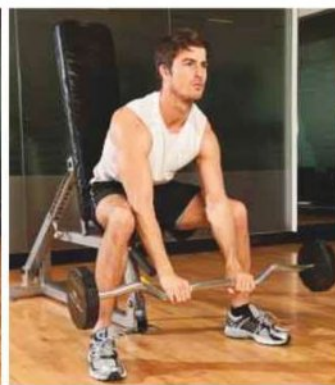
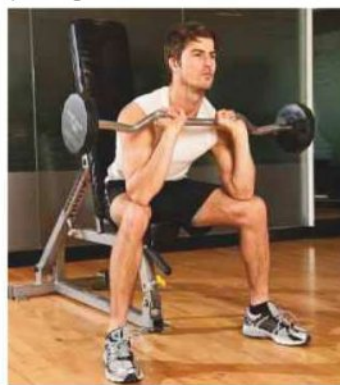
3 Incline cable curl

Reps 10/10/10
Tempo 3111
On an incline bench in the middle of a cable machine, hold two low handles with arms extended. Curl the handles up to shoulder height, then lower slowly.



4 Reverse EZ-bar concentration curl

Reps 10/10/10 Tempo 3110
Seated on a bench, hold an EZ-bar with an overhand grip. Resting your elbows on your thighs, lower the bar to shin level, then reverse the move back to the start.



Nutrition tip 'I got Glenn eating steak for breakfast each morning,' says Mitchell. 'It wakes you up by getting all the right neurotransmitters firing. Everyone I've ever put on this nutrition plan absolutely raves about how great they feel the whole day.'



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Day 2 Quads and calves

Morning workout Supersets Do 1A, rest for 2min, do 1B, rest for 2min, then repeat

1A Barbell squats

Sets 5 Reps 5 Tempo 5010

Start with a barbell across the back of your shoulders. Squat down, keeping your knees in line with your toes, until your thighs are parallel to the ground, then return to the start.



1B

Single-leg calf raise

Sets 5 Reps 10

Tempo 3011

Using the machine, stand with one leg on the step and the other out behind you. Raise yourself up, then lower slowly.



Afternoon workout Drop sets Perform three sets in succession, reducing the weight each time

1 Leg extension

Reps 20/20/20 Tempo 2010

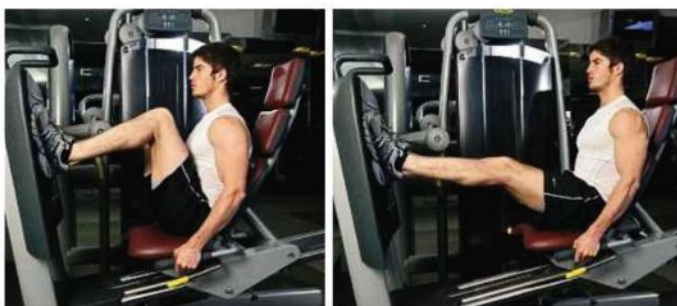
Start with the padded bar at about shin level. Raise it by straightening your legs, then return to the start.



2 Leg press

Reps 20/20/20 Tempo 2010

Start with your knees bent at right angles. Push back by straightening your legs.



3 Seated calf raise

Reps 10/10/10 Tempo 2010

With your toes flat against the bar, press it down, keeping your legs straight throughout the move.

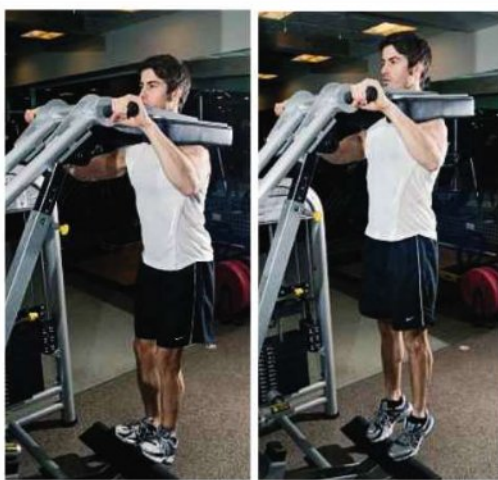


4 Standing calf raise

Reps 15/15/15

Tempo 3010

With your toes flat against the step, stand up on tiptoes, keeping your legs straight.



Nutrition tip 'After breakfast Glenn had five small meals of fish and greens in a day, one every couple of hours,' says Mitchell. 'He'd vary the type, which is important to get the best nutrients.'

Days 3 and 4

30 minutes gentle swimming. 'Use these light cardio sessions as active recovery,' says Mitchell. 'You should splash and stretch, not go hell for leather.'

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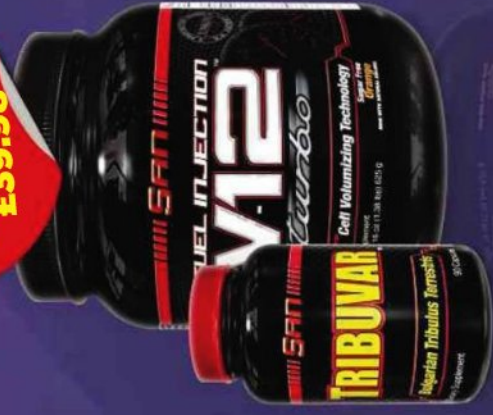
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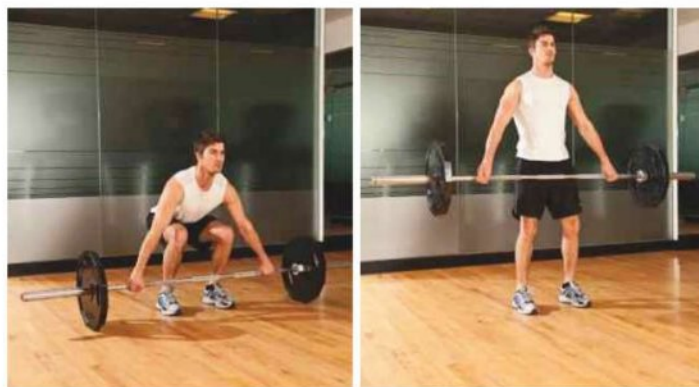
Day 5 Shoulders and ham

Morning workout Supersets Do 1A, rest for 2min, do 1B, rest for 2min, then repeat

1A Snatch-grip deadlift

Sets 5 Reps 5 Tempo 4110

Squat down with a neutral back and grip the bar with your hands twice shoulder-width apart. Driving through your heels and keeping the bar close to your body, raise it to hip height, then reverse the movement back to the start.



1B Seated dumbbell press

Sets 5 Reps 5

Tempo 4010

Starting with dumb-bells at shoulder height, press them directly above your head and then lower slowly back to the start.

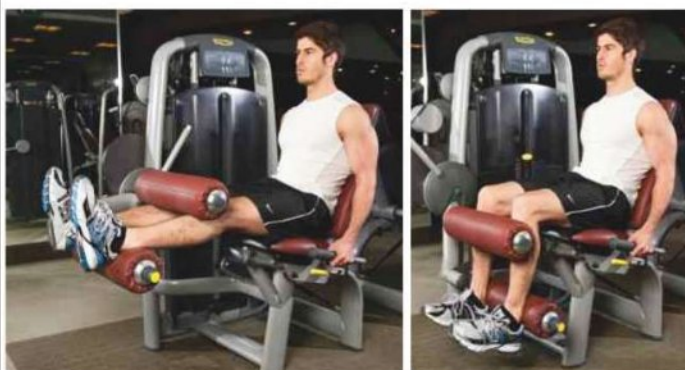


Afternoon workout Drop sets Perform three sets in succession, reducing the weight each time

1 Seated leg curl

Reps 6/6/6 Tempo 4010

With your ankles on the padded bar, use your hamstrings to curl the bar back until your knees are bent at right angles. Then return to the start.



2 Romanian deadlift

Reps 10/10/10 Tempo 3010

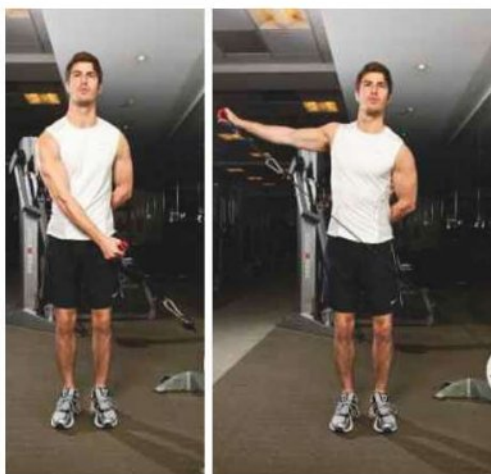
Start with a barbell at the top of your thighs. Keeping your legs straight, bend at your hips to slowly lower the bar to shin level, then return to the start.



3 Single-arm cable lateral raise

Reps 10/10/10 Tempo 3010

Stand side-on to a cable machine holding a handle attached at the bottom. Raise your hand up to the side, then return to the start.



4 Seated press behind neck

Reps 10/10/10

Tempo 3010

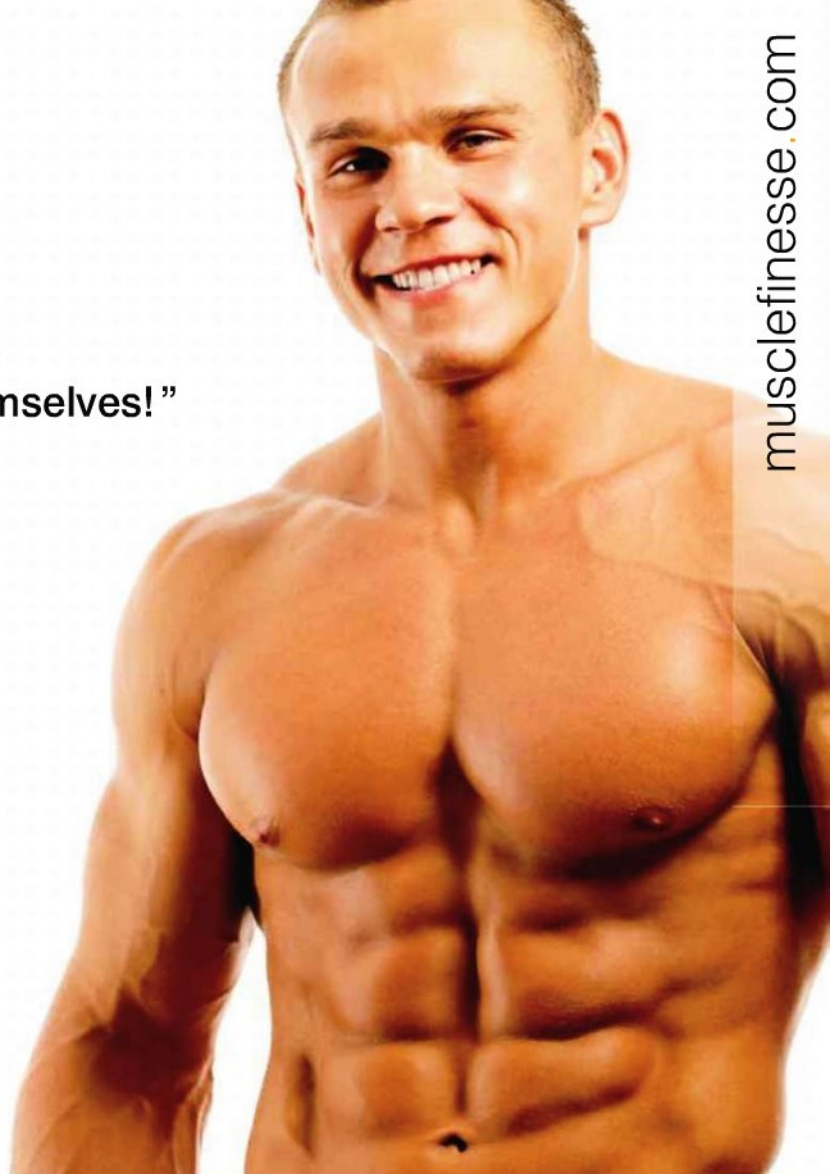
Sit on an upright bench holding a bar behind your neck. Press it straight up until your arms are fully extended, then reverse the action back to the start.



Nutrition tip Having a post-workout protein shake is crucial for burning fat and building muscle,' says Mitchell. 'I gave Glenn a shake containing 50g whey protein and 20g glutamine, then 10g essential amino acids capsules (available from upfitness.co.uk) twice a day as a "snack".'



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Day 6 Back and triceps

Morning workout Supersets Do 1A, rest for 2min, do 1B, rest for 2min, then repeat

1A Single dumb-bell row

Sets 5 Reps 5 Tempo 4110

(Bring weight to a dead stop by resting on floor for one second between each rep.) With one hand and one knee flat on a bench, hold a dumb-bell in your free hand with your arm fully extended. Row the weight up to your side, leading with your elbow.



1B Lying triceps extension with EZ-bar

Sets 5 Reps 5 Tempo 4010

Lie flat on a bench holding an EZ-bar directly above your head. Keeping your elbows pointing up, lower the bar to your forehead before pressing the weight back to the start.



Afternoon workout Drop sets Perform 3 sets in succession, reducing the weight each time

1 Wide-grip pull-down

Reps 10/10/10 Tempo 3010

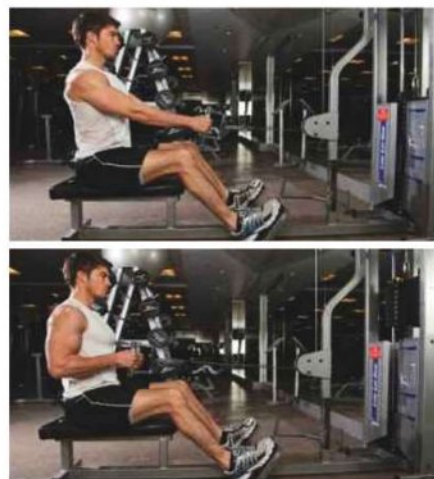
Using a wide grip, pull the bar down to the top of your chest, keeping your back straight throughout. Slowly return to the top.



2 Seated pulley row

Reps 10/10/10 Tempo 3011

Hold a double-grip attachment with your arms fully extended. With a neutral back and braced core, pull the handle towards you. Slowly return to the start.



3 Standing overhead cable French press

Reps 10/10/10 Tempo 4010

Stand with your back towards the cable machine, holding a double rope attachment behind your head. Straighten your arms to raise it above your head, then return to the start.



4 Triceps pushdown

Reps 10/10/10 Tempo 3011

Facing the cable machine, hold a double rope attachment at chest height. Straighten your arms to pull the handles to about hip level, then return to the start.



Nutrition tip 'There's nothing better than essential amino acid capsules in stabilising blood sugar levels and killing any cravings for snacks,' says Mitchell.

Day 7
Rest before you start the workout again on day 8.



You'll find more fitness and fat loss advice from Nick Mitchell at mensfitness.co.uk/links/nicktips

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TARGETS



Shoulders, core, legs

Fit Note

The resistance of a stretch band starts low and increases towards the end of a move, which gives a different training effect to dumb-bells or cables, where the resistance remains constant.

START

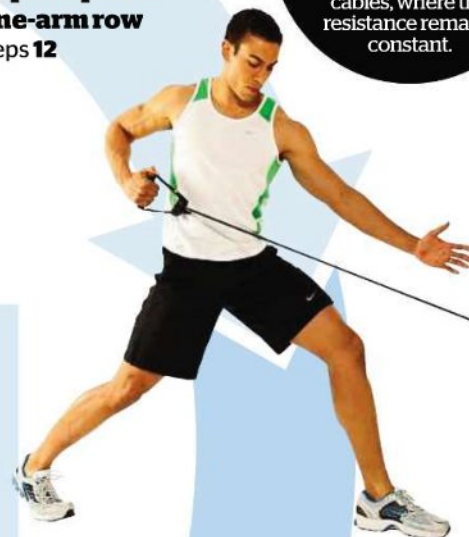
1 Internal rotation Reps 15



2 External rotation Reps 15



3 Split squat to one-arm row Reps 12



DO THIS

Level Beginner

Kit Stretch band

- Warm up with three minutes of running on the spot and dynamic stretches.
- Do exercises 1-6 in order, without resting, for one circuit.
- Rest for one minute between circuits. Do three circuits.

FINISH

6 Judo throw Reps 12



4 Split squat to one arm press Reps 12



5 Squat to high pull Reps 12



PERFECT FORM

1 Internal rotation

Bend your elbow at 90° with your forearm horizontal and pointing away from you. Rotate your arm inwards across your body, keeping your upper arm vertical.

2 External rotation

Bend your elbow at 90° with your forearm horizontal and across your body. Rotate your arm away from your body, keeping your upper arm vertical.

3 Split squat to one-arm row

Start at the bottom of a squat with a split stance. As you stand up, rotate your torso away from the band and pull the handle to your side.

4 Split squat to one-arm press

Take a split stance with the handle at shoulder height. As you stand up, rotate your torso and press the handle away from you.

5 Squat to high pull

Squat down then, as you stand up, pull the handles to shoulder height, leading with your elbows.

6 Judo throw

Stand side on to a stretch band with your arms out straight at shoulder height. Twist away from the band, bringing the handle over your shoulder, then crunch forward using your abs.

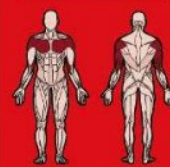


Triceps dip

Build big arms with this classic bodyweight move

'When building big arms, a lot of guys favour biceps moves over those exercises that focus on the triceps,' says Neil Odell, personal trainer and founder of Fit For My Day (fit4myday.com). **'But the triceps make up about two-thirds of your upper-arm musculature, so you can't afford to ignore this muscle if you want to add some size and strength.'** Dips are also great for working the lower chest and shoulders, especially the small, stabilising muscles of the shoulder joint that get neglected when using resistance machines, and your core, which you must keep tight to prevent your lower body from swinging.'

TARGETS



Triceps,
chest,
shoulders



How to do it

- Grip parallel bars, keeping your body upright.
- With your elbows pointing straight back, lower your body as far down as you can comfortably go without stressing your shoulders.
- Keep your core braced and don't swing your legs for momentum.

Too tight?

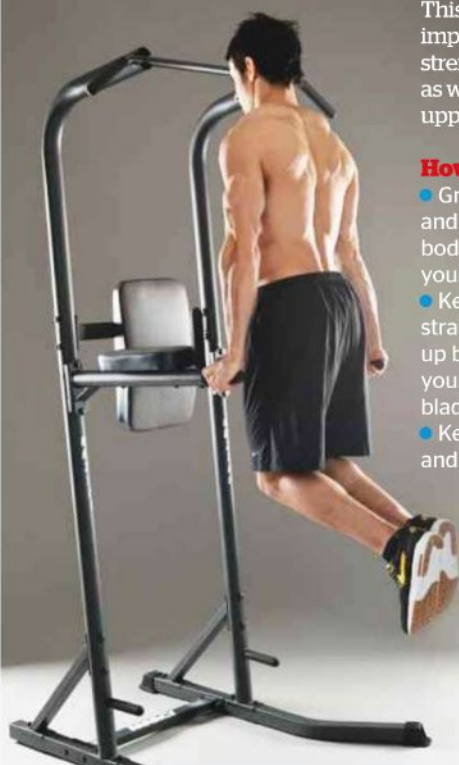
Tightness or poor flexibility in the shoulder joint will affect your ability to dip, so do some mobility work. Rounded shoulders - caused by doing too much chest work at the expense of back work - can also limit your dip depth, so don't neglect your upper back muscles.



Put your triceps strength to the test at mensfitness.co.uk/links/tricepsdeath

Four moves to improve your dip

Dip bar raise



This is a great move for improving shoulder strength and stability, as well as working your upper back.

How to do it

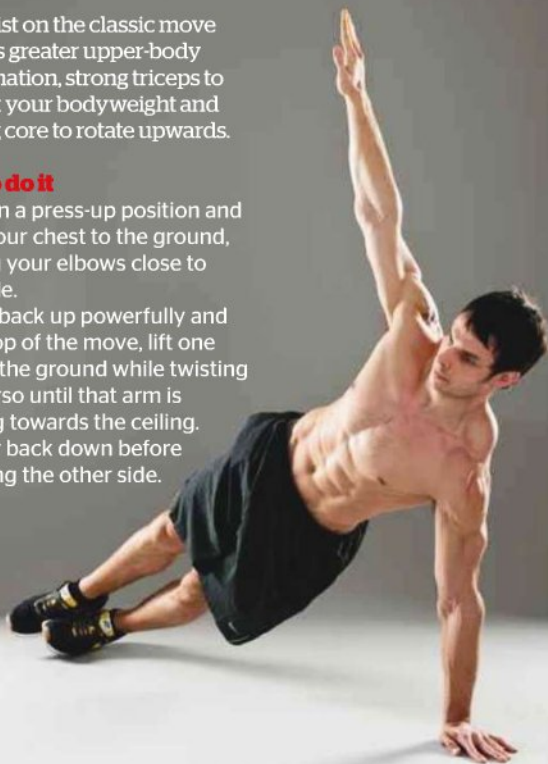
- Grip parallel bars and support your bodyweight on your arms.
- Keeping your arms straight, push yourself up by squeezing your shoulder blades together.
- Keep your chest up and your core braced.

T press-up

This twist on the classic move requires greater upper-body co-ordination, strong triceps to support your bodyweight and a strong core to rotate upwards.

How to do it

- Start in a press-up position and lower your chest to the ground, keeping your elbows close to your side.
- Press back up powerfully and at the top of the move, lift one arm off the ground while twisting your torso until that arm is pointing towards the ceiling.
- Lower back down before repeating the other side.



Medicine ball press-up

This press-up variation places greater emphasis on the triceps, while the instability of the ball forces your core to work overtime to keep your body rigid.

How to do it

- Start in a press-up position but with your hands either side of a medicine ball, rather than flat on the floor.
- Keeping your body in a straight line from head to heels, lower until your chest touches the ball before powering back up strongly.

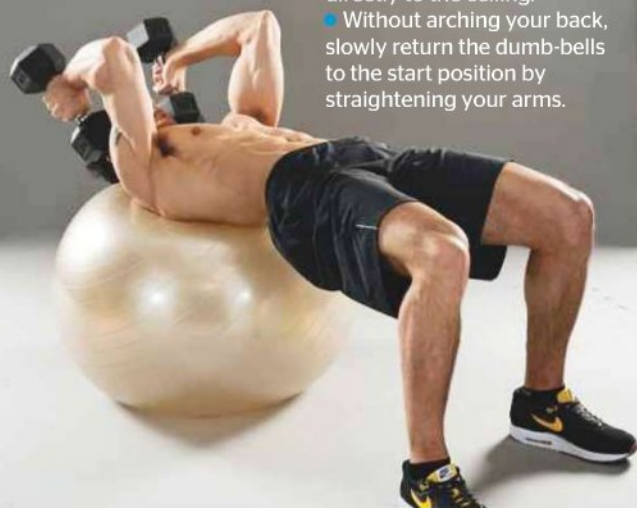


Lying triceps extension

This move isolates your triceps muscles, forcing them to work hard throughout the entire move.

How to do it

- Lie flat on a bench, holding dumb-bells above you with your arms kept straight.
- Slowly lower the weights towards the top of your head by bending your elbows, which should stay pointing directly to the ceiling.
- Without arching your back, slowly return the dumb-bells to the start position by straightening your arms.





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Avoid the muscle pitfalls

If you're doing any of these, stop - before you undo all your hard muscle-building work

Thinking you can get big arms just by doing biceps curls

'To build big arms in the quickest time you should favour compound moves, such as the bent-over row and chin-ups, instead of isolation moves such as biceps curls,' explains trainer Greg Brookes (greg@gbpersonaltraining.com). 'Compound exercises involve more than one joint, so hit multiple muscles at the same time, because this means you can lift heavier weights and get a bigger growth-hormone response. For an even better response, slow down the lowering part of each lift to keep your muscles under tension for longer, leading to greater fatigue and faster gains.'

Training harder for fast results

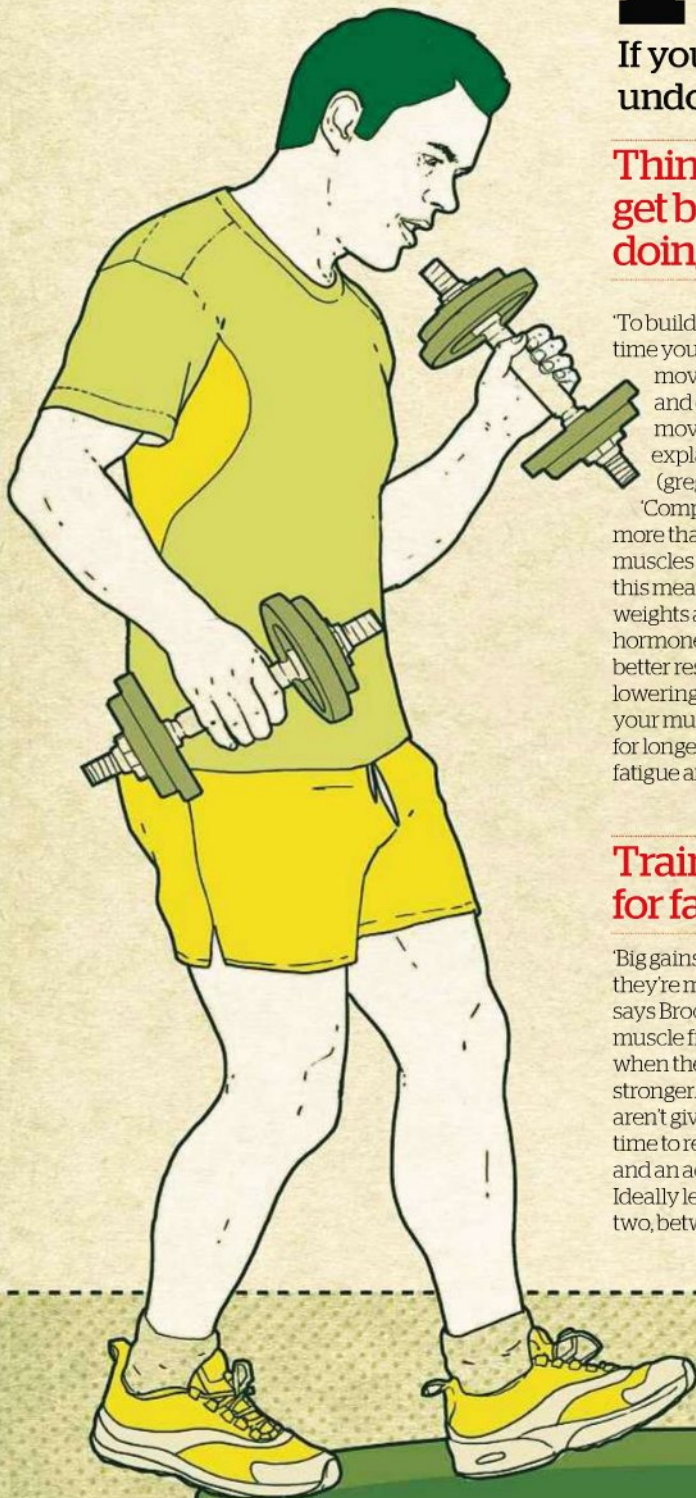
'Big gains aren't made in the gym, they're made when you're resting,' says Brookes. 'Training breaks muscle fibres down; recovery is when they grow back bigger and stronger. If you train too much you aren't giving your muscles sufficient time to recover, resulting in fatigue and an actual decrease in strength. Ideally leave at least a day, if not two, between heavy sessions.'

Believing you can turn fat into muscle

'Fat and muscle are two totally different body tissues, and the process of building muscle and burning fat is unrelated,' says trainer Sion Colenso. 'Muscle is active tissue that burns calories, while fat tissues store excess energy. When training hard you burn off fat and build muscle, giving the appearance that one has turned into the other but it's not the case.'

Doing crunches to get a six-pack

'It doesn't matter how many crunches you do, if you have a thick layer of fat over your abs you won't see them,' says personal trainer Rob Bray (myfitnessstudio.co.uk). 'The best way to reveal your abs is to eat a sensible diet based around lean protein and vegetables, and to do a mixture of high-intensity cardio and lifting weights. In fact, many big lifts - such as overhead presses, squats and deadlifts - work your abs harder than sit-ups, because they have to stabilise your upper body.'



Working to failure in every set

'Training to failure - which is when every set ends with you unable to do any more reps - can be beneficial for building muscle, but doing it every set of every session will take an enormous toll on your body and could lead to over training,' says Bray. 'Mix up your workouts with combinations of high-weight, low-rep sets and low-weight, high-rep sets for optimum muscle size and strength.'

Avoiding heavy weights for fear they will make you look too muscular

'Making large muscle gains is hard work,' says Colenso. 'You need to lift heavy weights regularly to stimulate muscle growth, eat high-quality protein and carbohydrates, and get plenty of sleep. It's a big commitment. But lifting weights will help you achieve a lean and slim look because it increases your metabolic rate, so you burn more calories.'

Not squatting because you think it's bad for your knees

'Any move is dangerous if performed incorrectly,' says Colenso. 'A correct squat - in which your feet are

shoulder-width apart, and your knees stay in line with your toes - places emphasis on the quads, glutes and hamstrings, and not on any joints. This actually reduces the risk of injury by strengthening the muscles and supporting tissue around the knee.'

Attempting to tone your muscles by using light weights

'When people say they want to "tone up" they mean they want to add muscle or lose fat, or both,' says personal trainer Shaun Stafford (shaunstaffordtraining.com). 'You can't "tone" a muscle, only build it or maintain it, while stripping away fat to give it a more prominent appearance. To make your muscles bigger while losing fat, do a variety of big lifts combined with high-intensity cardio.'

Sticking to the resistance machines

The gym's full of weights machines so they must be the best muscle-builders, right? 'Resistance machines are great for beginners and allow experienced trainers to isolate specific muscles and lift more weight,' says Stafford. 'But because the movement pattern is restricted, they aren't so good for working the stabilising muscles that are so important in staying injury-free. Free weights require more skill to use,

recruit the stabilising muscles and better prepare your body for sports.'

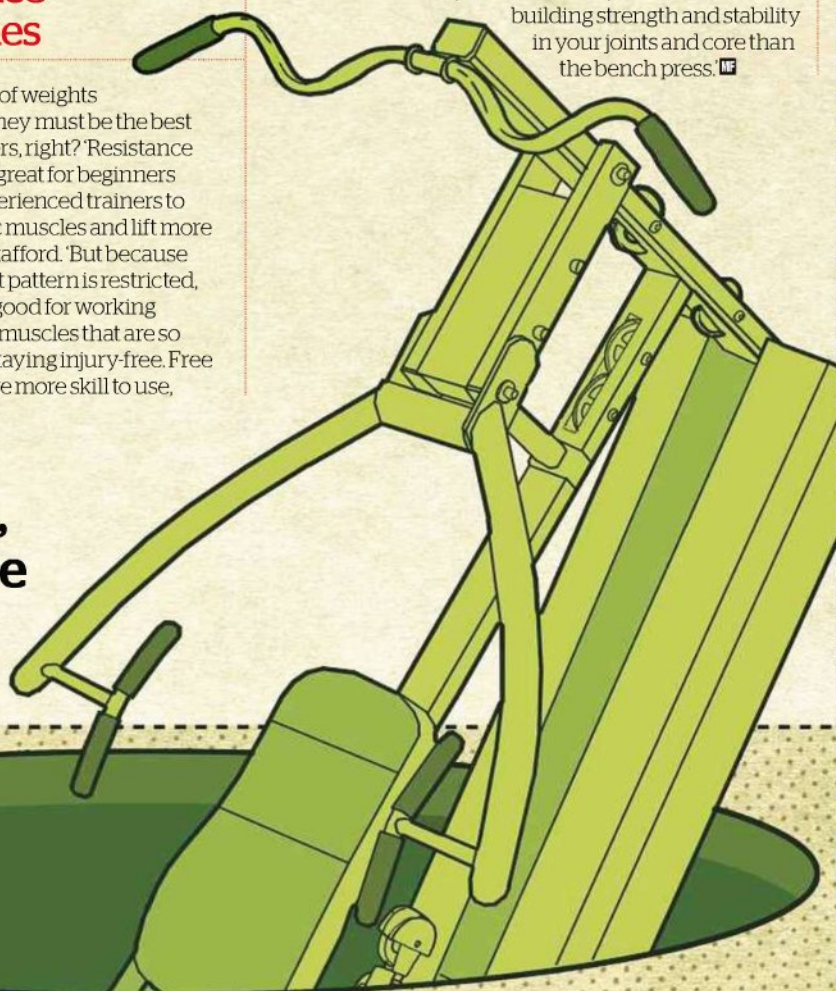
Worrying that deadlifts are bad for your back

'Deadlifts performed with poor technique can be bad for your back,' says Stafford. 'But performed correctly, they're great for developing a strong and supportive lower back. Perfect your technique - back straight, chest up, heels through the floor - before adding more resistance.'

Not believing press-ups will build muscle

'If you're new to resistance training, or returning from injury, simple bodyweight press-ups can build your chest, shoulders and triceps,' says Stafford. 'They are far better at building strength and stability in your joints and core than the bench press.'

'Resistance machines are great for beginners, but free weights require more skill to use and recruit more muscles'



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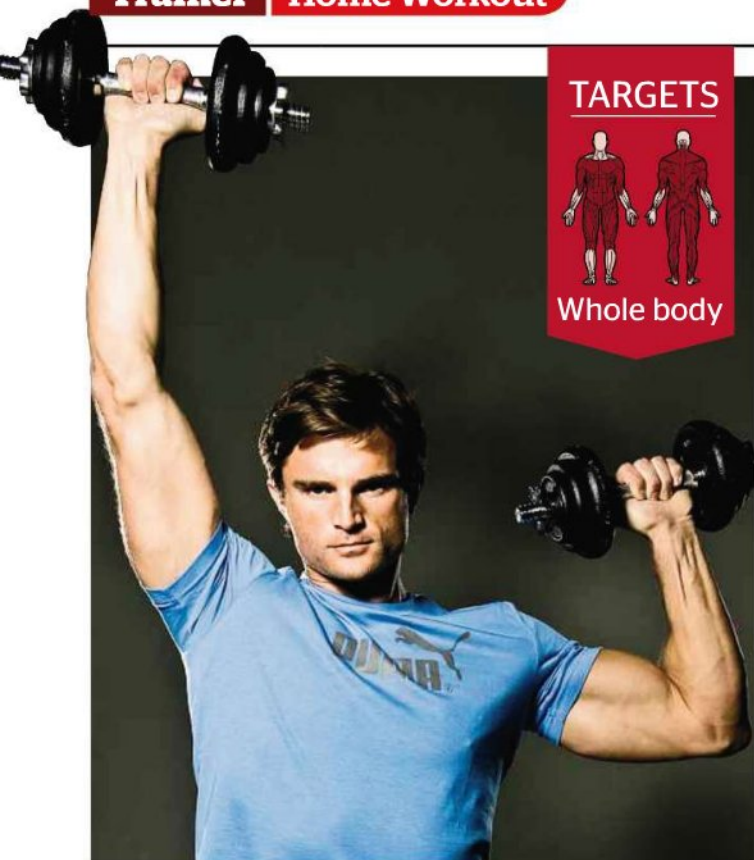
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TARGETS



Whole body

Balance of power

Do one-sided moves for perfectly balanced muscles

This workout is very one-sided – in that all the moves only work one side of your body at a time. That's useful because each side has to do the same amount of work, so you get balanced muscle growth. Most people have some level of strength imbalance, which can't be addressed when you do two-sided moves, such as barbell shoulder presses, because it's difficult to tell whether or not one side is working harder than the other. These moves are also good for your core muscles because your midsection has to be switched on to prevent you from rocking.

How to do it



Days Do this workout three times a week for four weeks. For a new four-week home workout, make sure you get the next issue of *Men's Fitness*.



Timing This workout should take about 30 minutes, including a quick warm-up.



Warm-up Spend five minutes doing bodyweight moves such as press-ups, squats and lunges.



Sets and reps Follow the set and rep counts indicated for each exercise.



Weight Choose a weight that allows you to complete all your reps but no more.



Tempo Take one second to lift the weight, pause then take three seconds to lower.



Rest Rest for 30-45 seconds between sets and for one minute between exercises.

What you need

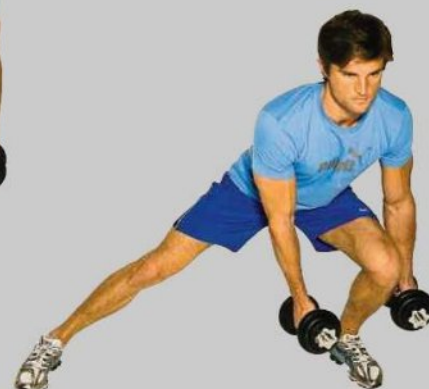
20kg dumb-bell set
From £34.99
Gym ball
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START

1 Anterior leg reach

Sets 2 Reps 10 each side

Raise your arm and arch your back slightly, then bend at the hips to bring your hand down to your opposite foot.



6 Dumb-bell side lunge

Sets 2 Reps 10 each side

Take a big side step with your trailing leg straight and your knee over your toes on your leading leg.



7 Hammer curl

Sets 2 Reps 10 each side

Perform a biceps curl without rotating your wrists outwards as you lift the weight.





2 Gym ball dumb-bell alternating chest press

Sets 2 Reps 10 each side

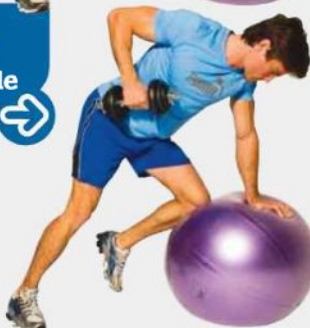
Lie with your shoulders on the gym ball and press one dumb-bell. As you lower the weight, start to press the other dumb-bell.



3 Gym ball dumb-bell one-arm row

Sets 2 Reps 10 each side

Kneel on a gym ball, supporting yourself on one hand with a dumb-bell hanging down in the other. Pull the dumb-bell up to your chest, keeping your elbow high.



5 Standing alternate shoulder press

Sets 2 Reps 10 each side

Press one dumb-bell overhead. Then, as you lower it, press the dumb-bell in your other hand.



4 One-leg squat

Sets 3 Reps 8 each side

Stand on one leg with your other foot off the ground. Sink down into a squat, keeping your torso upright and your knees in line with your toes.



8 Standing overhead triceps press

Sets 2 Reps 10 each side

With your upper arm vertical and the dumb-bell behind your head, straighten at the elbow.



9 Alternate dumb-bell roll-out

Sets 1 Reps 10

Roll both dumb-bells out together, then draw one back into your body and roll it out again. Repeat that on the other side for one rep.



FINISH



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Our experts give their opinions

The Panel



Chris Rogers
Fitness First



Matthew Moulton
Nuffield Health



Phil Learney
The Third Space



Robert Kane
David Lloyd Leisure

Question 1
What is the most underused item of gym kit?

Free weights. Most gym-goers stay within their comfort zones using treadmills and resistance machines, but learning how to use dumb-bells and barbells will allow you to vary your workouts for improved results.

I'd say the foam roller – people seem to have limited time for myofascial release routines (soft tissue massaging that stretches the connective tissues of the muscles) or stretching unless they're injured.

The squat rack. Squatting is one of the most fundamental movement patterns in sport and everyday life, and using the rack will go a long way towards correcting postural flaws, too.

The foam roller, which can be used to roll the knots out of your muscles, allowing you to move freely and easily while burning calories more effectively.

Question 2
What is the most useless item of kit you'll find in a gym?

The adductor and abductor machines. You can achieve better results faster by performing squats and lunges.

It has to be the abs cruncher. It's not a functional movement, it doesn't engage any stabilisers and people generally use their arms to do most of the work anyway.

The adductor and abductor machines because people think you can use them to shape flabby thighs, but you can't tone body fat. Overusing them can also lead to imbalance around the knees and hips.

The adductor and abductor machines. You can't use them to reduce body fat. There are far more effective ways to work your thighs, burn calories and build strength.

Question 3
If you had to train a client with only one item of gym kit, what would it be?

Kettlebells are so versatile you can apply them to virtually any gym goal, be it fat loss, strength, endurance or core training. They're great fun to use too.

Definitely the ViPR, because it can be used to complete a variety of functional exercises, while slight tweaks in movement patterns will challenge your balance, control and agility.

A barbell, because it can be used to train almost any facet of fitness, including speed, strength, endurance and flexibility.

The ViPR is a versatile, fun and effective piece of kit that can be used for both resistance and cardio workouts across three planes of movement.



The ViPR is great for resistance and cardio workouts

New fitness gear

The Grid

What is it? A sturdy foam roller with a series of grooves and finger-sized nubs.

What's it good for?

Foam rolling is essential for breaking down stubborn knots of muscle and aiding recovery, but after you do it for a while you'll notice a traditional roller can't deal with everything. Enter the Grid, which has different-sized 'zones' that mimic a masseuse's fingers for working on trouble spots. It's also made of the EVA foam traditionally used in running shoes, so it won't soften after six months like most rollers.

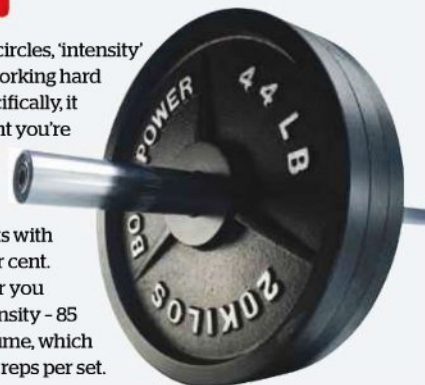


Grid Foam Roller from £45, amazon.co.uk

Lifting lingo Key gym terms explained

Intensity

When used in weight-lifting circles, 'intensity' is more technical than just working hard or training to your limit. Specifically, it refers to the amount of weight you're lifting in relation to your one-rep max. So if the most you can bench for one rep is 100kg and you're doing sets with 80kg, your intensity is 80 per cent. If you're trying to get stronger you should be going for high intensity – 85 to 100 per cent – but low volume, which means doing fewer than five reps per set.



To find out what abs equipment you should avoid at all costs go to mensfitness.co.uk/links/absolutelynot

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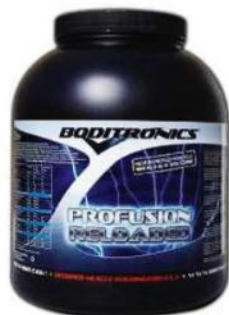
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Above board

Veteran Slovenian freestyle snowboarder Marko Grilc takes *MF* through the exercises that prepare him for pulling big tricks



Marko Grilc is at the top of the professional snowboarding tree. In the 19 years he's been boarding, the Slovenian has won several international competitions including four youth world championships, Billabong Air & Style in 2009 and London Freeze in 2010.

Grilc has also released a series of innovative videos and over the years his success has earned him sponsorship from snowboarding's biggest brands, including Burton, Adidas and Red Bull. *MF* met up with him in the Swiss resort Laax and

the sport than I did when I was younger. In the off-season I run four times a week, normally for more than an hour - this gives me the endurance I need to keep pulling big tricks all day. I also work with a personal trainer in Croatia to improve my balance and build my leg strength. The gym is definitely an old snowboarder's best friend.

So you've become more disciplined as you've got older?

Yeah, I've come a long way from just partying every day and throwing myself off cliffs. But going

'I have to do way more off-board training to stay at the forefront of the sport than when I was younger'

got him to spill the beans on how he prepares for a big day on the mountain.

At 27, you're one of freestyle snowboarding's older pros.

How has age affected the way you ride and train?

I have to do way more off-board training to stay at the forefront of

for it fully is what snowboarding should always be about.

How soon into a training session do you start doing difficult tricks, such as double flips and massive spins?

If I'm feeling really good, I'll start trying difficult technical tricks immediately. But normally I'll do a



Marko Grilc

Age 27

Height 1.78m

Weight 75kg

Achievements

● 2009 Billabong Air & Style champion

● 2010 O'Neill Evolution champion

Grilc applies the 'go big or go home' mentality to his snowboarding

lesser rotation during my first jump then go for something bigger off the second kicker.

Do you do any off-board training specifically aimed at spinning and flipping?

When I was younger I used to do a lot of trampolining but now I just visualise how to do a trick then try it for real.

How much attention do you pay to your diet?

I used to eat whatever I wanted to but now I try to be healthier. If I'm snowboarding in a park, I normally go to a restaurant for a well-balanced lunch rather than carry food up the hill. If I'm riding backcountry, I carry a litre of water to keep me hydrated and things to give me a quick hit of energy, such as fruit and chocolate.

You won London Freeze 2010 after dislocating your hip during the 2009 event. Did that mean a lot to you?

I had to really battle to perform there because the 2009 fall was always at the back of my mind. Winning really helped me overcome my hang-ups about my hip, which felt like more of an achievement than getting a medal. It had taken me about three months to recover physically from the fall but mentally, the damage lasts much longer. It forces you to realise how easily one bad slam could end your career.

How often do you scare yourself when you're riding?

All the time. In an environment as competitive as snowboarding you get left behind if you stay in your comfort zone.



Grilc came back from a serious crash at London Freeze 2009 to win the 2010 event

Marko Grilc's snowboarding workout

Part 1 Leg and back mobility

'Your legs and feet are the parts of your body that have to work the hardest during any trick,' says Grilc. 'You rely on them to spring into the air and they have to soak up the impact when you land, so you need them to be strong and flexible.'



1 Sitting reach Sets 3 Time 20 seconds

- Strap on your snowboard and sit down on the floor with a slight bend in your knees.
- Reach forward and grab the front edge of your snowboard between your legs with both hands.
- Straighten your legs as far as is comfortable and hold.

Grilc says 'As well as your hamstrings and calves, this also stretches your back and arms, which is crucial because it's easy to pull or strain something if you start busting out spins with cold muscles.'



2 Grab stretch Sets 2 Time 20 seconds each side

- Sit with your legs as straight as you can and grab the front edge of the board with one hand.
- Twist your torso away from your grabbing hand and use your other hand to stop you toppling over if you need to.

Grilc says 'This puts your body under the same kind of tension and positions it'll be in when you pull tricks off kickers. I do this as soon as I get out of the gondola, so my muscles are fully activated before I start riding.'

Part 2 Core strength and flexibility

'A strong midsection is essential,' says Grilc. 'Your core transfers movement from your upper to your lower body when you spin, enabling you to complete rotations. It also stabilises you when you land and improves your balance and posture for backcountry hikes through deep snow.'

1 Core rotation Sets 3 Reps 10 each side

- Stand with your feet just wider than shoulder-width apart holding your board against your lower back with the bindings facing away from you.
- Make sure the nose of the board is sticking out further than the tail.
- Rotate your upper body as far as you can one way, then the other. That's one rep.
- Keep your feet anchored in place throughout the move
- Once you've done ten reps, shuffle the board along so the tail is sticking out further than the nose and repeat the reps.

Grilc says 'This move mimics the twist your torso goes through during a spin. Having more weight on one side brings your obliques into play to keep your feet rooted to the spot.'



2 Exaggerated grab Sets 2 Time 20 seconds each side

- With your board strapped on, stand on a flat surface and lean over to one side, grabbing the end of your board with your leading hand.
 - As you bend, bring your other hand over your head, getting it as close as you can to the end of the board and hold.
 - Lift your trailing leg and twist your hips to accommodate the movement.
- Grilc says** 'Holding this exaggerated pose puts your back, arms, side abs and the muscles around your pelvis under more strain than doing tricks will. This means your body will feel comfortable when you start throwing nose and tail grabs off jumps.'



Marko Grilc's snowboarding workout

Part 3 Explosive power

'As well as the stamina to keep riding all day during a competition, a pro rider needs bags of explosive power because you're going to be constantly popping on to, over and off obstacles,' says Grilc.



1 Board presses Sets 3 Reps 10 each side

- With your board strapped on, stand on a flat surface.
- Bring one end of the board off the ground by leaning towards the other end. As you reach the outer limit of your balance, use the board's spring to flick you back the other way.
- Land with your weight over your other foot, so the previously grounded side of the board is off

2 Shifty ollie Sets 1 Reps 5 each side

- Approach a small jump or bump with your weight centred over the board.
 - Sink down as you reach the lip, putting your weight over your back foot to spring-load the board.
 - Lift your front foot off the ground as you lean back, then use the board's spring to get your back foot into the air too.
 - Centre your weight as you get both feet into the air, then twist your hips to one side so the board is angled away from where you want to land.
 - Straighten the board and land on both feet at the same time.
- Grilc says** 'The ollie or jump is the essence of most snowboard tricks. The shifty gets your hips and core ready for all the twisting they'll do and increases your spatial awareness in the air, preparing you for bigger, more technical moves.'



To see Marko Grilc's guide to doing a frontside boardslide on a box go to mensfitness.co.uk/links/tricktip



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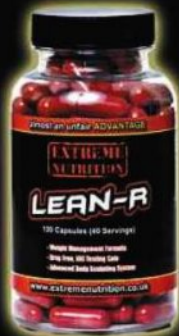
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Pole push

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How you should do it

- Kneel on the floor, holding a metre-long pole with your arms outstretched at shoulder height.
- Make sure the pole is planted in the ground about a metre in front of your hands.
- Move the pole into an upright position by contracting your abs and extending your body straight from hands to hips.
- Make sure your back doesn't hyperextend and return slowly to the start.

Stage 2

Stage 1

Sets **3**
Reps **12**

Intelligent muscle

Doing plyometric exercises, such as jump squats, will make you a more efficient runner, according to a new study in the *Journal Of Strength & Conditioning Research*. When two groups took part in an eight-week training programme, it was the explosive power subjects, rather than the concentric (lowering phase only) lifters, who saw their efficiency improve.



Test yourself Extended Arnold press



What it tests

'This is an all-over arm and shoulder exercise,' says personal trainer John Penny. 'It was developed to work your biceps, triceps and deltoids.'

How to do it

'Hold two 12kg dumb-bells and do a full biceps curl with both at the same time,' says Penny. 'Then perform a shoulder press while

rotating your wrists through 180°, and then reverse the whole movement until you're back at the starting position.'

Can't do it?

'Start by just doing a biceps curl or a shoulder press,' says Penny. 'Once you feel comfortable with both of these exercises, try combining them into one fluid movement.'

How you rate

Reps	Level
20 or more	Excellent
12-19	Good
6-11	Average
0-5	Poor



JOHN PENNY is the General Manager at the Reebok Sports Club in Canary Wharf, London. Visit reebokclub.co.uk

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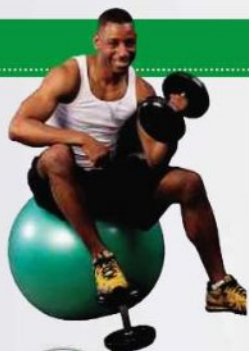
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Turn over
for this
month's
workouts
»»»

What you do



Monday Upper body p144



Wednesday Lower body p146



Friday Abs and core p148

How to do it



Timing Each muscle-building session should take approximately 40 minutes, including the warm-up.



Warm-up Spend five minutes doing bodyweight moves such as squats and press-ups. Before each big move, do a warm-up set with a very light weight.



Weight Choose a weight that allows you to complete all your reps but no more.



Tempo Take one second to lift the weight, pause, then take three seconds to lower.



Rest Rest for one minute between sets and two minutes between exercises.

MONDAY Upper body

1 Hammer-grip pull-up

Sets 4 Reps 8

Target Lats, biceps

This effective bodyweight exercise will fire up your workout and prompt a great growth hormone release. It will give you a strong back and help to give you a V-shaped torso. Using a hammer grip will really tax your biceps as well.

- Use a hammer grip with your palms facing each other and hang straight down with your arms fully extended.
- Pull yourself up without swinging, then lower slowly to the start.



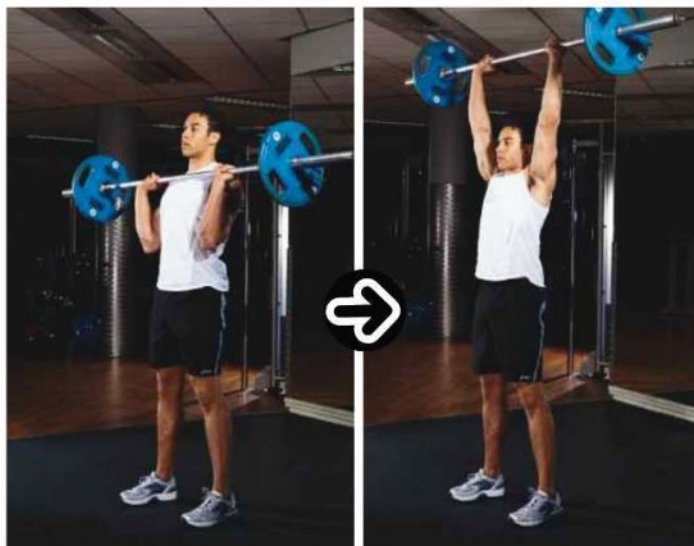
2 Dip

Sets 4 Reps 6-8

Target Triceps, chest

Follow the hammer-grip pull-up with another classic bodyweight move. It's a great exercise to do here because it's tough but taxes different muscles to the first move. It'll make your triceps bigger and stronger, and will also work your chest.

- Grip the dip bars with your arms straight and your body upright.
- Bend at the elbows to lower your body, making sure your torso stays upright and your elbows point backwards.
- Lower as far as is comfortable, then push back to the start.



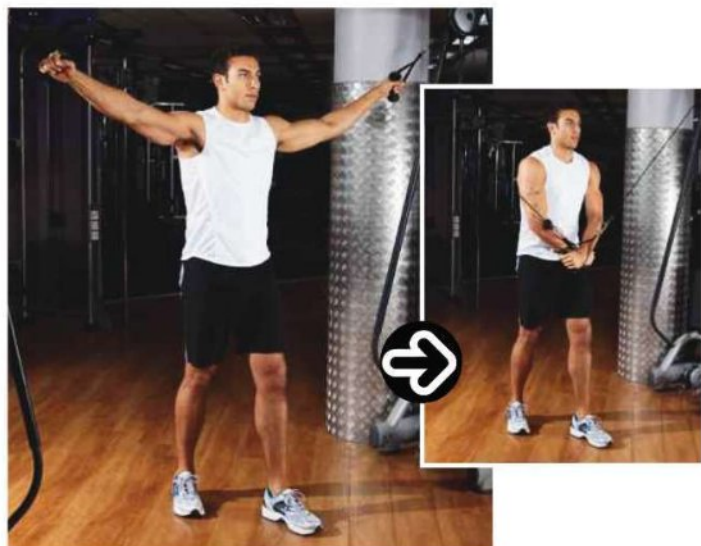
3 Shoulder press

Sets 3 Reps 10

Target Shoulders

The final upper body part that's yet to be worked, your shoulders, is targeted by this big compound move. By using a barbell you can lift heavy weights, which will lead to big muscle and strength improvements.

- Hold the bar just wider than shoulder-width apart and rest it on the top of your chest.
- Press the bar directly overhead, then lower to the start.



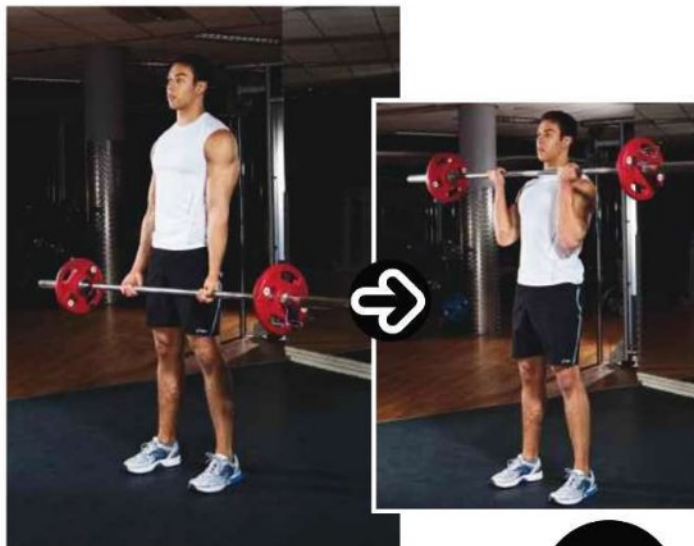
4 Cable crossover

Sets 3 Reps 10

Target Chest

You've done all the big compound moves so now it's time to focus in on key muscles. This move isolates your chest and the cable keeps the tension constant throughout the move.

- Stand in the middle of a cable crossover machine with your arms out holding the cables so that there is some tension in them.
- Use a split stance with your weight over your front foot.
- Draw the cables into the middle until your hands touch.



5 Barbell biceps curl

Sets 3 Reps 10

Target Biceps

The final move of the workout lets you fully fatigue your biceps after you've worked them in the hammer-grip pull-up. They've had a good chance to recover from that move, so you can still lift a heavy weight.

- Hold the barbell by your thighs, then curl it up to your chest
- Make sure you don't rock back because that would mean you're using momentum to help you lift the weight.

Turn over
for your
lower-body
workout
>>>

WEDNESDAY

Lower body

1 Front squat

Sets 4 Reps 8

Target Quads

A front squat will focus more of the effort on your quads than a conventional squat would. That's useful because it's still a big move that will give you great benefits, but it also means you can work a different part of your lower body in your next move.

- Start with the bar resting on the top of your chest with your palms facing up and your elbows high.
- Squat down until your thighs are parallel to the floor, keeping your torso upright and your knees in line with your toes.
- Straighten up by pushing through your heels.





2 Romanian deadlift

Sets 4 Reps 8

Target Hamstrings, glutes

The first exercise in this workout targeted the front of your thighs. This one focuses on the back as well as recruiting the glutes. Both those muscles are often under-trained, so this is an important move for making sure you get balanced growth.

- Stand with your knees slightly bent and rest the barbell on your thighs.
- Bend from the hips, rather than the waist, to send the bar down the front of your legs until you feel a strong stretch in your hamstrings.



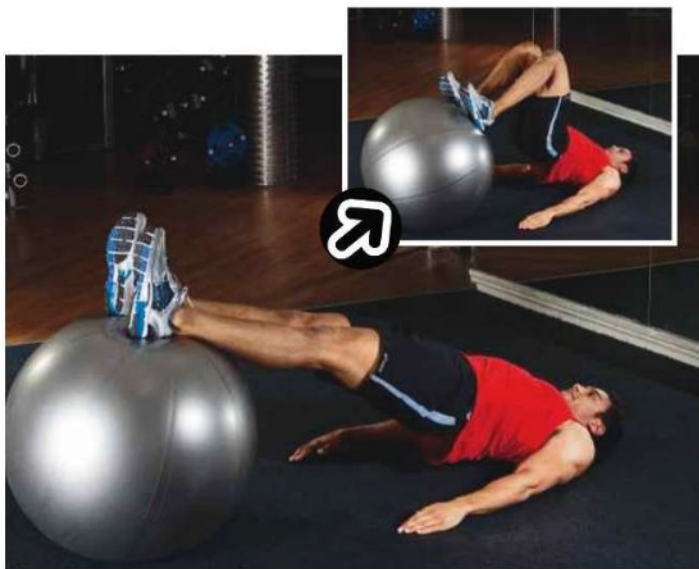
3 Bulgarian split squat

Sets 2 Reps 6-8 each side

Target Quads, glutes

This exercise requires a lot of concentration to stay balanced so it works your stabilising muscles. You're also going back to working your quads while your hamstrings recover.

- Stand with one foot on a bench and your other foot planted one stride in front of the bench.
- Rest the barbell on your back with your torso upright.
- Bend your knees to lower into the squat, keeping your torso upright and your front knee in line with your toes.



4 Gym ball hamstring curl

Sets 3 Reps 10

Target Hamstrings

By now your quads will be fatigued, so this move is all about hamstring and glute strength and stability. It takes effort to control the movement of the ball as you drag it towards your backside.

- Lie on your back with your calves resting on the ball.
- Lift your hips and drag the ball in towards your backside until your body is straight from knees to shoulders.

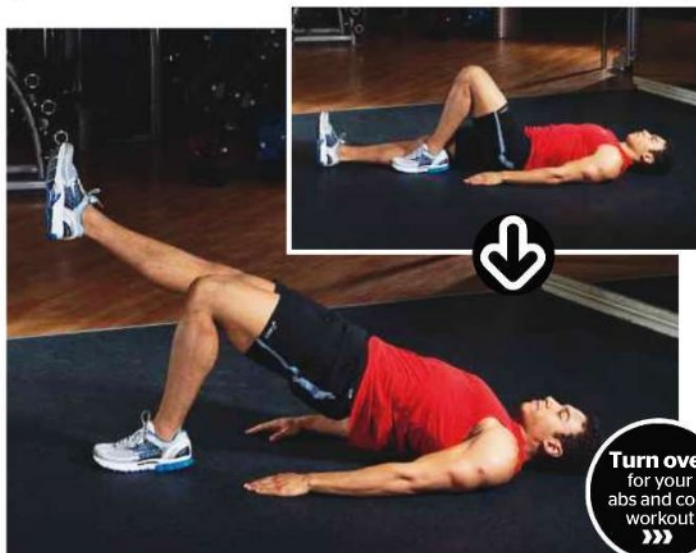
5 One-leg glute bridge

Sets 2 Reps 10-12 each side

Target Glutes

The final move in the workout targets your glutes. Strong glutes will make you a better runner and are also vital for performing big, demanding exercises, such as deadlifts.

- Lie on the floor with one knee bent and the other leg straight and off the floor.
- Raise your backside off the ground so your body is straight from knees to shoulders.



Turn over
for your
abs and core
workout
>>>

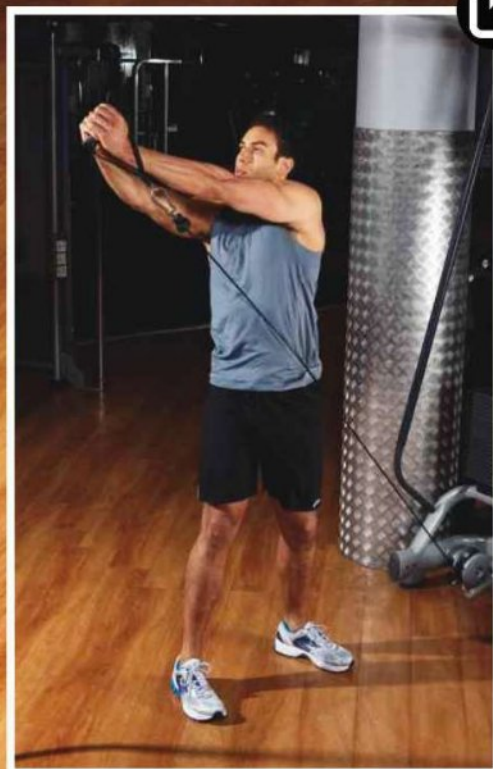
FRIDAY Abs & core

1 Cable woodchop Sets 2 Reps 10 each side

Target Obliques

You start the workout with a big abs move. It teaches your lower and upper body to work together while developing your ability to control big rotational moves.

- Squat down with the cable held outside your thigh.
- Rise up and bring the cable up and across your body as you rotate your torso.



Turn over
for the rest
of this
workout
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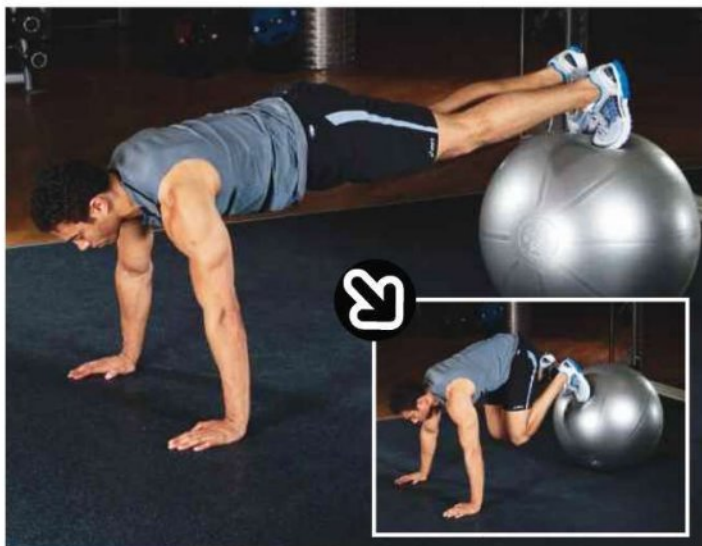
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2 Gym ball jackknife**Sets 3 Reps 10****Target Abs**

While your abs are still relatively fresh you can do this challenging move. It works your upper, middle and lower abs, as well as recruiting your obliques, which work to make sure you don't fall off the ball.

- Begin in a press-up position with your feet resting on the gym ball.
- Bend your knees to draw the ball towards you, without raising your backside.

**3 Twisting knee raise****Sets 3 Reps 5 each side****Target Lower abs**

The lower abs are the hardest part of your midsection to hit. This move will home in on that area. Once it becomes easy, make it harder either by doing it with a medicine ball between your legs.

- Take an overhand grip and hang straight down from the bar.
- Keeping your upper body still, bend your knees, raise your legs and twist to one side.

4 Barbell rollout**Sets 3 Reps 10****Target Abs, core**

This is a difficult but highly effective exercise. It puts your upper body in a very unstable position so your abs, core and lower back all have to work to keep your spine stable.

- Start on your knees with your core braced, your spine in a neutral position and the barbell directly below your shoulders.
- Keeping your core braced, roll the bar forwards as far as you can without curving your spine.

**5 Side plank****Sets 2 Time 30-45 seconds****Target Obliques, core**

The session ends with a static hold. This type of exercise is great for your core and for developing the deep-lying muscles that support your spine. By doing this exercise you'll become better prepared for doing big lifts.

- Position yourself so your elbow is directly beneath your shoulder and your body is straight from head to heels.
- Hold that position for the required time or until your hips sag.





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For more information about Heathrow, go to heathrowairport.com.

How to enter

Just go to mensfitness.co.uk/3dtv and answer the simple question below.

Which high street fashion store can you find at Heathrow?

- A) Fred Naker
- B) Ned Raker
- C) Ted Baker

Closing date: 27th January 2011

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

On completing and submitting this competition, you will automatically be entered into a draw for a 40in Sony Bravia HD 3D TV. No correspondence will be entered into and the winners will be notified by post or email within 28 days of the closing date. The competition is not open to employees of Dennis Publishing or participating companies. No cash alternative will be offered. The prizes described are available at the date of publication. Events may occur that render the promotion or the awarding of the prize impossible due to reasons beyond Dennis Publishing's (publisher of *Men's Fitness*) control, which may at its discretion vary or amend the promotion and the reader agrees that no liability shall be attached to Dennis Publishing as a result thereof. Proof of emailing will not be accepted as proof of delivery and no responsibility can be accepted for entries lost, delayed, mislaid or for any technical failure or for any event which may cause the competition to be disrupted or corrupted. In order to determine an outright winner or winners to a competition, the Editor reserves the right to request entrants to take part in an eliminating contest (or 'tie breaker'). Where for any reason there are more winners than prizes on offer, the Editor reserves the right to conduct a simple draw to determine the winner or winners of the prizes. Unless otherwise stated, entry to all competitions is restricted to entrants of 18 years of age or over. Names of winners will be available on receipt of a request enclosing a stamped self-addressed envelope to: Competitions Manager, Dennis Publishing, 30 Cleveland Street, London W1T 4JD. If the winner of a competition is unable to take up a prize for any reason, the Editor reserves the right to award it to an alternative winner, in which case the first winner chosen will not be eligible for any share of the prize whatsoever. The Editor's decision is final and it is a condition of entry to any competition that the entrant agrees to be bound by these rules whether they be published or not, and that the decisions of the Editor and judges on any matter whatsoever arising out of or connected with the competition are final. No purchase of the magazine is necessary and no more than one entry per household. Competitions open to UK residents only, unless otherwise stated.

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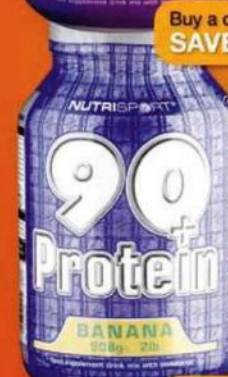
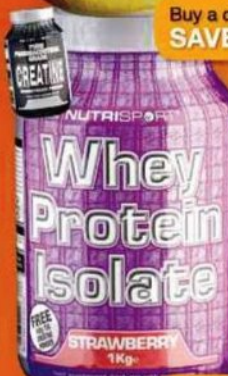
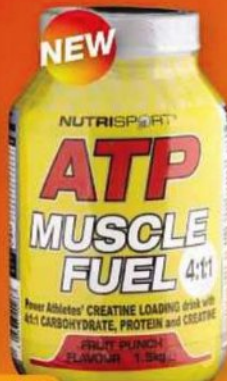
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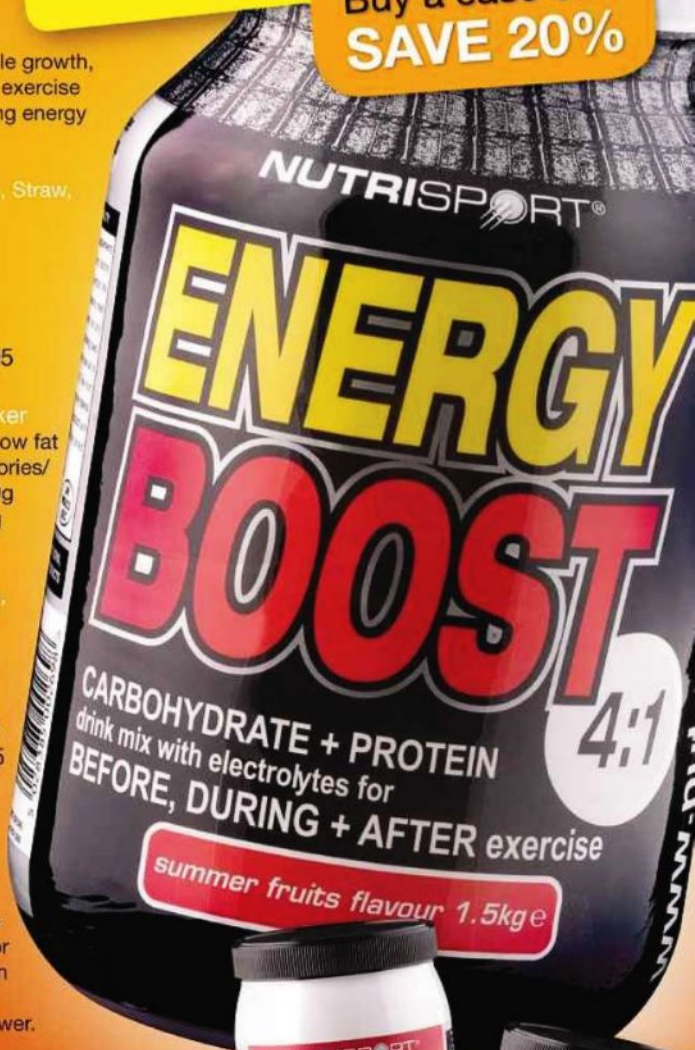
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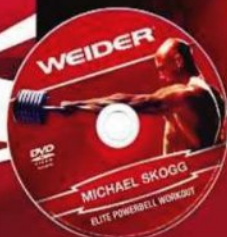
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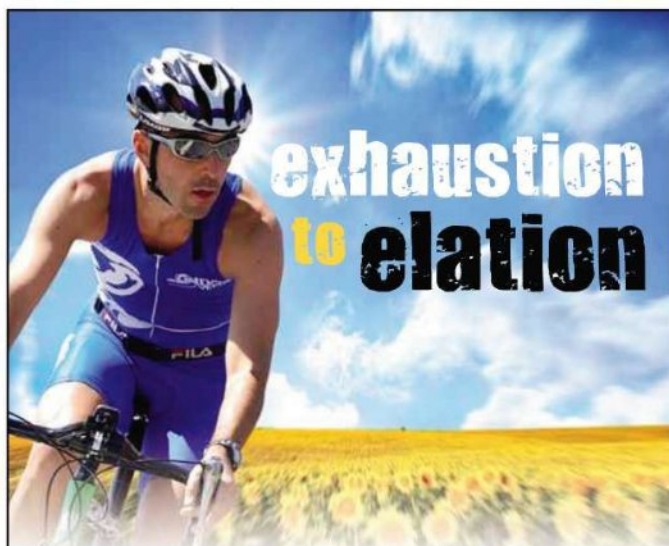
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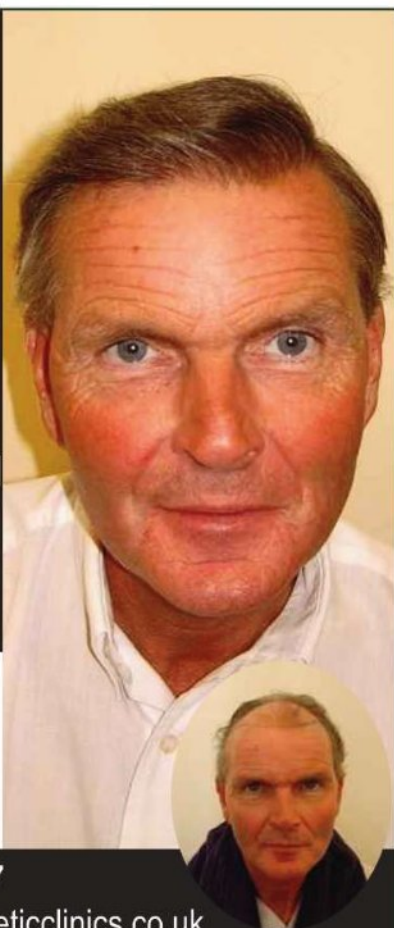


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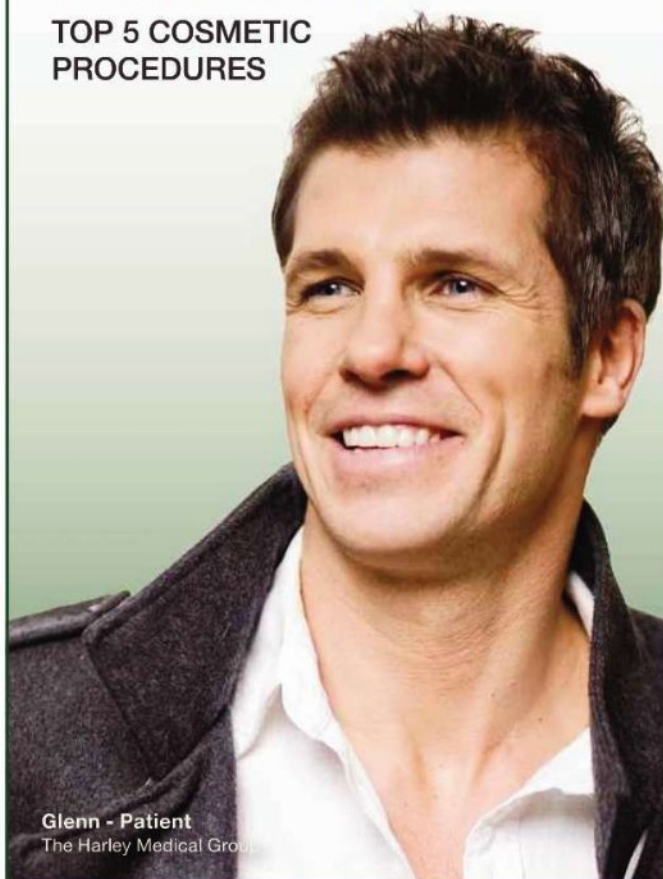
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RYAN GIGGS

The Manchester United star on his passion for yoga, winning trophies and becoming a manager

You've got a new yoga DVD out. How has it helped your game?

I'd been having hamstring problems in my 20s but when I started doing yoga I felt the benefits immediately. It's definitely helped me to stay fit, train a lot more and play more often.

Of all the players you've played with, who would you say was the fittest?

David Beckham was always fit. He was a natural runner with brilliant endurance. But then there were the likes of Roy Keane and Brian McClair, who would cover more ground than anyone during games.

You've played more than 800 games for Manchester United but which do you think was your best?

The night we beat Porto 4-0 in the Champions League quarter-final in 1997 was one of my best. Until

can keep the ball all night, but after the way we'd played that season our reaction was so disappointing.

Will anyone ever play more games or win more trophies at one club than you have?

It's going to be difficult because players generally aren't staying at clubs for such a long time any more. I'm quite lucky in that I've always been in a position to be winning or competing for trophies. It'll need to be someone who comes through at a big club as a teenager and stays in the side for a long time like I've done.

Of all United's celebrity fans around the world, who did you enjoy meeting the most?

For me, growing up in the 1980s, Duran Duran were a massive band, so meeting Simon Le Bon and finding out he was a United fan was great.

'I can't knock the ball past a full-back and get the other side of him, so I try to use my intelligence'

then I'd always played on the wing, but that was one of the first games where I was involved in a more central role. It's something I've done a lot more as I've got older.

Why do you think that is?

I think it's been a natural progression. I played in central midfield as a schoolboy but as I grew up I became known for my pace. I've got slower in recent years though and I'm not able to knock the ball past a full-back and get the other side of him any more, so I try to use my intelligence.

Which of the matches you've lost was the toughest to deal with?

Losing to Barcelona in the 2009 Champions League final. We were so confident going into that game but when they scored we didn't recover. You don't want to go one down against a side like that who

You're currently in the process of getting your coaching badges. What do you think your management style will be like?

I think until you actually become a manager it's hard to say what you're going to do. Are you going to sit in the dugout all game or will you be out on the touchline? I think a lot of it is dictated by the team you're managing and the players you have.

Great footballers don't always become great managers.

Why do you think that is?

For some ex-players I think it would be frustrating if you've got players who aren't able to do the things you could do, such as picking the right pass or making the right decisions. There's a lot of pressure to succeed if you've been a player at the top level and everyone's watching to see how you're going to do. ☐

Ryan Giggs has 11 Premier League winners' medals - more than any other footballer

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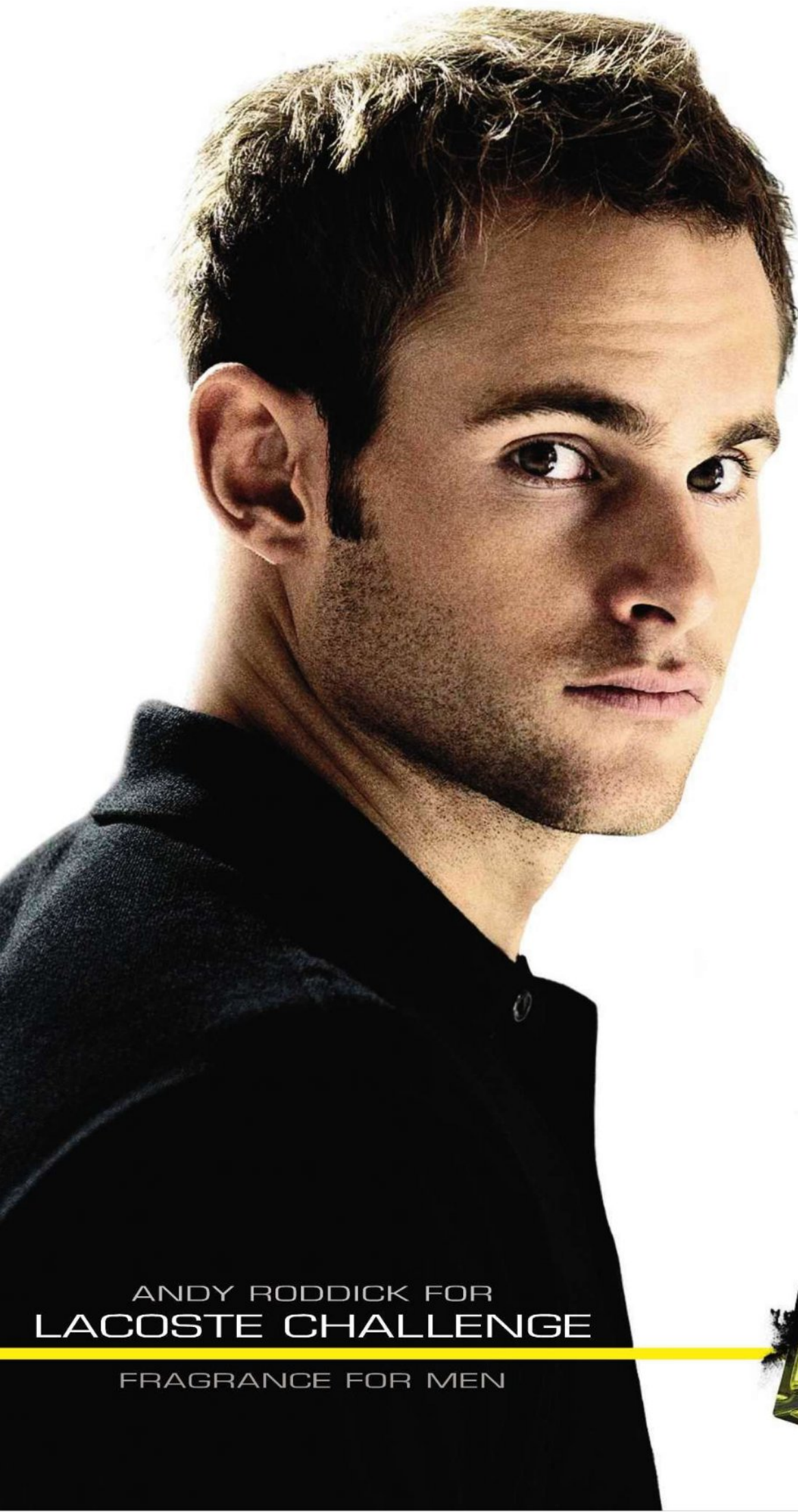
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