

# Shape up with the athlete's workout

Discover your inner athlete with these top tips from the Pros!

McCain, Principal Partner of UK Athletics (UKA), has teamed up with Sally Gunnell and Olympic 2012 hopefuls including Perri Shakes-Drayton, Marilyn Okoro and Steph Twell to devise a fun, simple fitness programme anyone can do that is guaranteed to boost your tone and condition whilst not costing a penny!

You don't need to have the ambition of Paula Radcliffe or the genes of Kelly Holmes to reap the rewards of an athlete's training programme. Simply cherry-picking the most effective routines and exercises can get you great results for both your fitness level and your figure!

## The Athlete's Workout

### Part I: The Cardio Workout

Slot these workouts into your usual routine to challenge muscles and improve cardiovascular function.

#### Work on... speed

If you don't fancy heavy running sessions at the track, keep it simple with a fartlek (Swedish for speed play) session. Enjoy an easy warm up of 10 minutes of jogging then run fast for, say, four lamp posts and slow down and walk for two lamp posts. You can then jog easily for five minutes and repeat. This will raise your metabolic rate and improve your speed too.



#### Work on... agility

Improve body control and performance and help to prevent injury by working on co-ordination, timing and balance. Practise the following drills once a week:

- **Figure runs.** Picture the numbers 1, 3, 8, 9 and imagine that they are 30m in length in front of you. Then try and run the shape of the figures.
- **Tennis ball drop.** You'll need a willing partner on hand to help out with this one...The other person holds a tennis ball at your shoulder height. As they drop the ball, try and catch it before it bounces a second time (your ball-thrower can move further away or change the height of the drop to make this more challenging).
- **Hopscotch.** Whether you're in your hallway or garden, you can always practise a few laps of hopscotch. Start by balancing on one leg and then jump forward in the air landing on both feet positioned wide apart.



#### Work on... endurance

Focus on duration and intensity with this workout to keep you working harder for longer. A long, hilly run (you don't need to run - you could cycle or even do a brisk walk) should accomplish this. Pick a hilly route that includes small, steep hills and bigger, gradual hills and run, cycle or power-walk for at least 30-40 minutes. Remember to keep your pace constant and posture upright.



## Part II: Killer Moves

We often associate athletics with lots of lower body training and while this should form an integral part of your workout, don't forget the rest! Strong arms help to prevent lower body fatigue while toned abs and a strong core provides a good base from which all your limbs operate. Do these time-honoured faves to strengthen and sculpt.

### Squat thrusts – a total body move to strengthen and tone



From a standing position, crouch down to a squat position with your hands on the ground near your feet. From this position, jump back with your feet so you're positioning yourself in the press-up position keeping your abs tight and buttocks in line with your body. Then jump forward back to your squat position with your hands still on the floor. Try for 2 sets of 10.

### Burpees – an explosive move to improve power

Begin in a squat position with your hands on the floor in front of you. Kick your feet back behind you as if you were going to perform a press up. Then immediately jump back in and return your feet to the squat position, before leaping up as high as possible from that squat position. Repeat this straightaway, moving as fast as possible. Aim for 10.



### Wall press-ups – an easy way to tone the upper body when you're pushed for time

Stand 3ft away from a tree or wall. With feet hip width apart, raise your hands to chest height (to form a 'T') and then bend your elbows out to the side and lean in against the tree/wall. Then straighten your arms and push back until your arms are nearly straight (taking care not to lock your elbows) and repeat. Do 15 times then rest and repeat.

### Boxer crunches – get a truly defined tum with this crunch-with-a-twist

Lie on your back on the floor with legs bent and feet flat on the ground and bend your elbows with fists clenched so

that you're mimicking a boxer with their guard up. Slowly curl your shoulder blades off the floor and then twist to the right and 'jab' right with your left fist before returning to the centre (don't roll back down at this point) and then repeat to the left. Then relax back down to your starting position and repeat. Do 2 sets of 20.



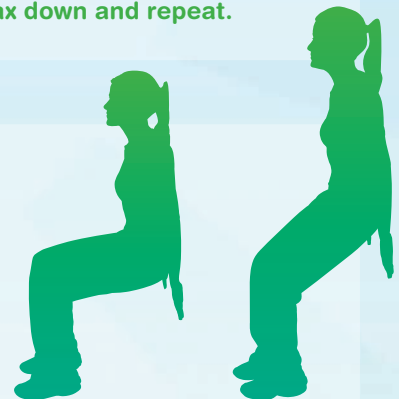
### Abs flutter with extended arms – a fave of the US Navy Seals... do it and find out why!

From a seated position, bring your legs off the floor and extend them out in front of you at a 45° angle from the floor. Extend your arms out in front of you in line with your shoulders. Try not to let your body collapse – your body should be forming a 'V' shape between stomach and thighs. Keeping your stomach tightly pulled in, 'scissor' your feet together by crossing them over at the ankle. Try for 30 'scissors', relax down and repeat.



### Wall slide – get toned thighs in no time with this easy move

Lean against a solid wall with your feet approximately 12 inches in front of you positioned shoulder width apart. Keeping your back flat against the wall, slowly bend your knees and lower yourself down towards the floor until your knees reach a 90° bend. Hold for 5 seconds then slowly push yourself back up to your starting position without arching your back. Do 10 of these.



### Front lunge with rotation – work core, bottom and thighs with this variation on the lunge

Hold a medicine ball or a 2kg object at chest height. From a standing position take a stride forward with your right leg keeping your feet hip width apart. Slowly lower yourself down to the floor keeping your torso as still and straight as possible. When both knees are at ninety degree angles (ensure that your front knee doesn't come over your toes), slowly rotate your torso to the side until the ball/object is next to your right hip. Then twist back to the centre and rotate to the left. Return to the centre, push yourself back up to your starting position and repeat on the other leg. Continue for a minute, relax and repeat.

# Top Fitness Tips From The Pros

## Tips from the Pros

They may be in a different league but these celeb athletes definitely have a few gems to pass onto us mere mortals...

**“If you’re struggling to find the motivation to get out and exercise, try teaming up with a friend or training buddy so you can encourage each other, it’s fantastic for motivation and makes training more fun too!”**

*Perri Shakes Drayton.*

**On being a busy working Mum.. “I know all about the pressures that parents face in getting their children to eat healthily and get active, and I find being active and fit myself helps motivate my children to do the same, and I love to get them involved in things that I’m doing.”**

*Sally Gunnell*

**Paula Radcliffe’s take on pain is this, “If you are struggling, use disassociation techniques to take your mind off the pain. Slowly count to 100 three times.”**

## Eat Like a Pro

You need to know what and when, when it comes to workout fuel.

- **Keep your carbs.** Carbohydrates are the primary source of fuel for the human body. You’ve got plenty of options too – rice and pasta are good options, while potatoes in the form of low fat oven chips or wedges work well as tasty training fuel.
- **Eat within two hours of exercising.** This is when glycogen stores (stored carbohydrate that fuels your workouts) are most efficiently replaced.
- **Eat to appetite.** Eat too much and you’ll gain weight (regardless of how much you’re exercising); eat too little and you’ll lose (energy as well as weight if you’re not careful).

## Train Like a Pro

A change of venue or a few props can make all the difference to the results of your workout.

- **Head to the track**  
Lots of leisure centres have a running track attached to them which can add a whole new level to your workout. Vary distances on the track (do 400m intervals for one workout; 1600m the next), assemble a few hurdles or even use the stands to perform tricep dips and press ups.
- **Invest in some kit**  
You’ll find a few inexpensive pieces of kit will make a big difference: treat yourself to a medicine ball, an agility ladder or a few cones to have some fun in your back garden.
- **Participate in an event**  
There’s nothing like having an event in the diary to give your training some structure and to provide you with motivation. Whether you fancy a mini-triathlon, a charity 5K or a McCain Track and Field Roadshow to learn some new tips (visit [www.mccaintrackandfield.co.uk](http://www.mccaintrackandfield.co.uk) for more details on the roadshows) events are a great way to boost your motivation and have some fun!



## More on McCain, Principal Partner of UKA *McCain Track & Field Roadshows*

Take part in a McCain Track & Field Roadshow for a fun taster of athletics; test your agility, strength, speed and co-ordination. Running from May to September 2009 in different locations up and down the country, the free roadshows give everyone the opportunity to give athletics a go in a fun and relaxed environment as well as to meet inspiring Team GB athletics stars! Each event will have athletics coaches from local clubs on hand to offer friendly help and advice on how to get started and to spot potential athletics talent. Information will also be available on free taster sessions at local clubs following the roadshows, to encourage people to take up the sport. Whether you are a talented runner or if you've never won a race in your life, this is your chance to have a go with friends and family. Find out more about McCain Track & Field Roadshows at [www.mccaintrackandfield.co.uk](http://www.mccaintrackandfield.co.uk)



## The McCain Track & Field Show

Check out The McCain Track & Field Show on Channel 4 from 26th July. Hosted by T4 heart throb Rick Edwards, it's a world of all things athletics and is an exciting insight into the grassroots side of the sport. Watch celebrities pitted against young, inspiring champions of tomorrow and see how easy it is to give athletics a go.