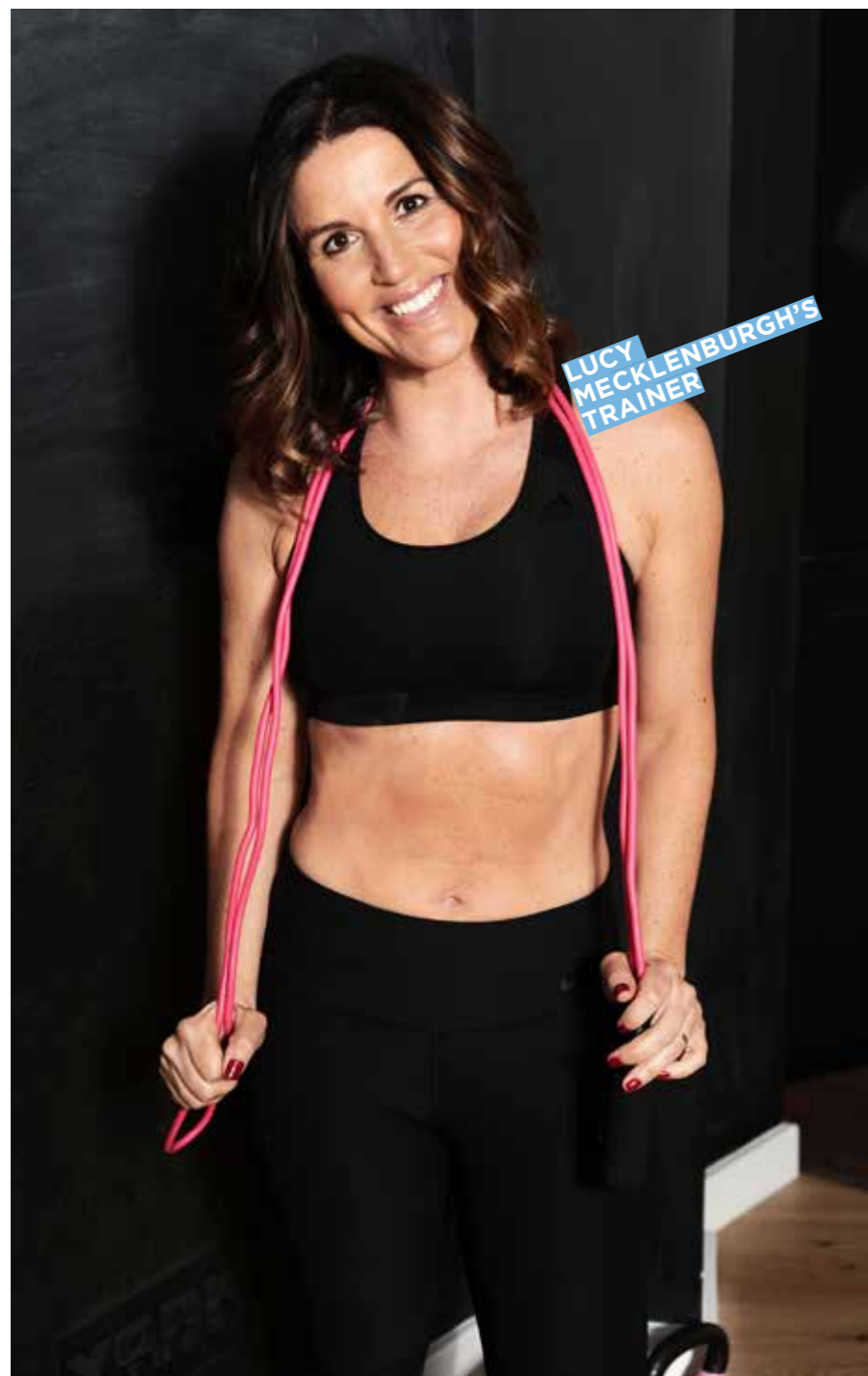


Star PT secrets



They're the women who keep some of the UK's top household stars in shape. And, all in their 40s, they're fitness successes in their own right. We find out the secrets that keep them – and their famous clients – looking so good

WORDS: Joanna Ebsworth

Cecilia Harris, 48

After giving birth to her son 17 years ago and suffering from post-natal depression – for which she was prescribed Prozac for six months – French-born Harris first fell in love with exercise while seeking out alternative treatments. She credits the 30-minute personal training sessions she did for transforming her energy, confidence and mental health. When she was 35 and her son had reached school-age, she decided to train as a PT, opening her own high-street studio in Southend, Essex, a year later. It was after she opened her second Essex studio in Brentwood in 2011, that she met reality star Lucy Mecklenburgh and became her trainer. Together, they went on to co-found and launch the successful online fitness, nutrition and wellbeing platform Results With Lucy (sign up for an all-access, 10 day trial at resultswithlucy.com).

Fitness philosophy:

'Exercise has got to be a lifestyle choice that's forever – never a chore, and not just a six-week thing before a holiday. Also, you have to enjoy it. Don't work out just to tick a box, or feel you should be trying something just because it's the latest trend on Instagram. Find what works for you and stick with it. Then you'll stay consistent.'

'MY DIET ADVICE'

'When I turned 40, I noticed my tummy started to grow, so I reduced portion sizes and cut out alcohol. But last March, I followed our 30-day, Get Lean programme and it completely changed my body composition, stripping fat and giving me muscle definition. Essentially, it was a carb-free diet consisting of protein and vegetables, and I never touch bread or pasta now. But if you need carbs in your life, just reduce the amount of them or choose healthier ones.'



WORKOUT ESSENTIALS



'I believe a kettlebell and resistance bands are all you need for a really effective workout. I prefer fabric bands, like these Teknifit Premium Glute Bands (£16.99; amazon.co.uk)

'I love seamless leggings like these Gym Shark Flawless Knit Tights (£45; gymshark.com) because they stay in place and don't give you a camel toe!'



'I prefer to exercise bare foot to give my feet a workout, but if I need a little extra support, I'll wear Nike's Air Zoom Elevate trainers (£94.95; nike.com)



'WHY I LOVE LUCY'

'Lucy was unhappy and extremely stressed when we first met. She needed fitness in her life to give her some positivity and self-confidence, and I think she fell in love with it and felt the benefits in our first session like I did all those years ago. She loves working her glutes and waist. Her favourite move is the Fire Hydrant, although I call it the Peeing Dog, ha ha!'

'MY FITNESS METHOD'

'I make sure every workout is diverse so clients never get bored. No two are ever the same, so you'll never remember the workout we've done, even if we've trained three times that week. I never do 'leg days' and 'upper-body days' – I'm bored just at the thought of it!'



STAY-YOUNG SECRET

'It's fitness, 110 per cent. It's my happy pill and keeps me young at heart. But you also have to accept your age, or you'll never be happy. Yes, I have wrinkles and my boobs are starting to go south, but I don't care! Embrace it!'

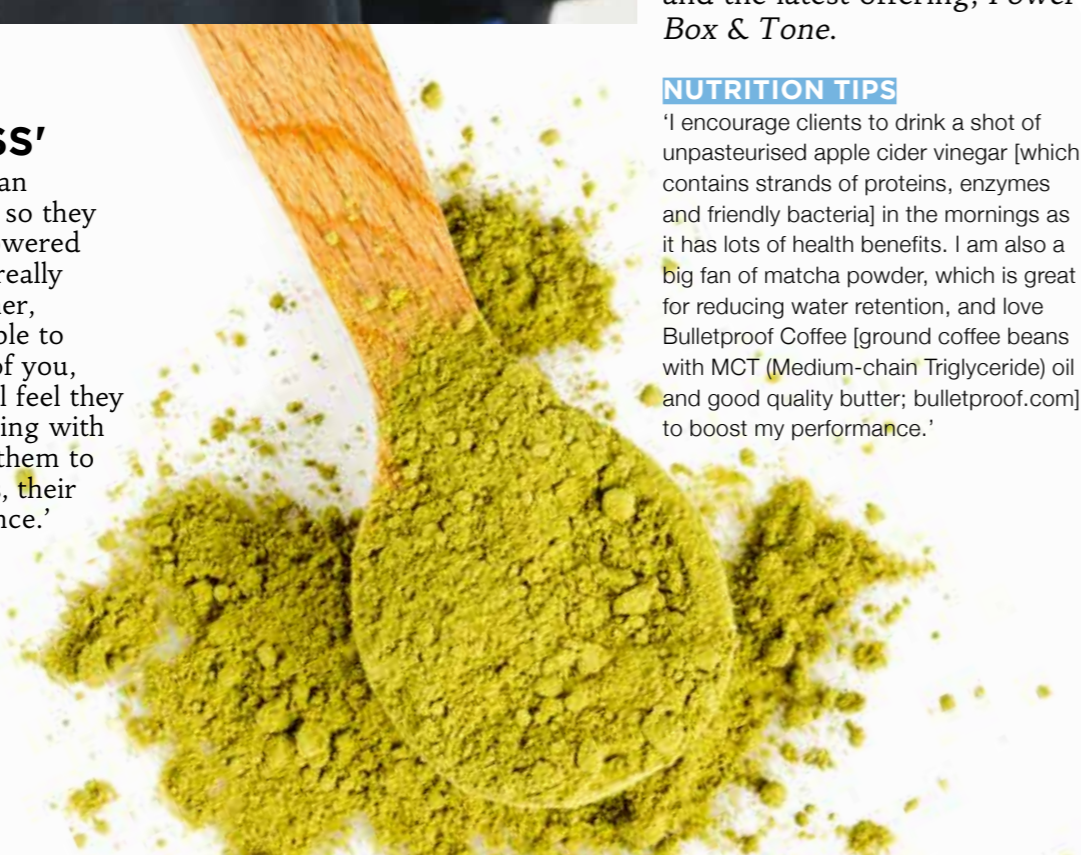


Sarah Gorman, 43

A former professional actor and dancer, Gorman's fitness career took off after qualifying as a Pilates instructor and moving to LA, where she trained with influential fitness gurus such as Tracey Mallet (BootyBarre) and Viveca Jensen (Piloxing). After years spent getting top actresses, including Neve Campbell and Kate Mara, into shape for roles, she returned to the UK where she met Canadian former ice skater Jaime Cooke, and opened exercise studio SPN (Soul Power Nutrition; spn.fit) in Tunbridge Wells, Kent, in 2018, offering a multitude of classes including Barre, Boxing, Dance and TRX; plus Power and Soul Retreats in Mallorca. She became TV presenter Davina McCall's trainer two years ago, and has since appeared in two of McCall's DVDs: *Toned in 10*, and the latest offering, *Power Box & Tone*.

'THE SECRET OF MY SUCCESS'

'I aim to give my clients an experience in every class so they come away feeling empowered and happy. You have to really listen to people as a trainer, connect with them, be able to read the group in front of you, and make each individual feel they are important. I enjoy being with people and love helping them to improve their techniques, their bodies and their confidence.'



NUTRITION TIPS

'I encourage clients to drink a shot of unpasteurised apple cider vinegar [which contains strands of proteins, enzymes and friendly bacteria] in the mornings as it has lots of health benefits. I am also a big fan of matcha powder, which is great for reducing water retention, and love Bulletproof Coffee [ground coffee beans with MCT (Medium-chain Triglyceride) oil and good quality butter; bulletproof.com] to boost my performance.'

Fitness philosophy:

'Exercise should be fun. Yes, you need to work hard to get results but, for me, it has to come with an amount of joy. I have danced all my life and I gain such a pleasure from moving and dancing, using music to boost all of that.'

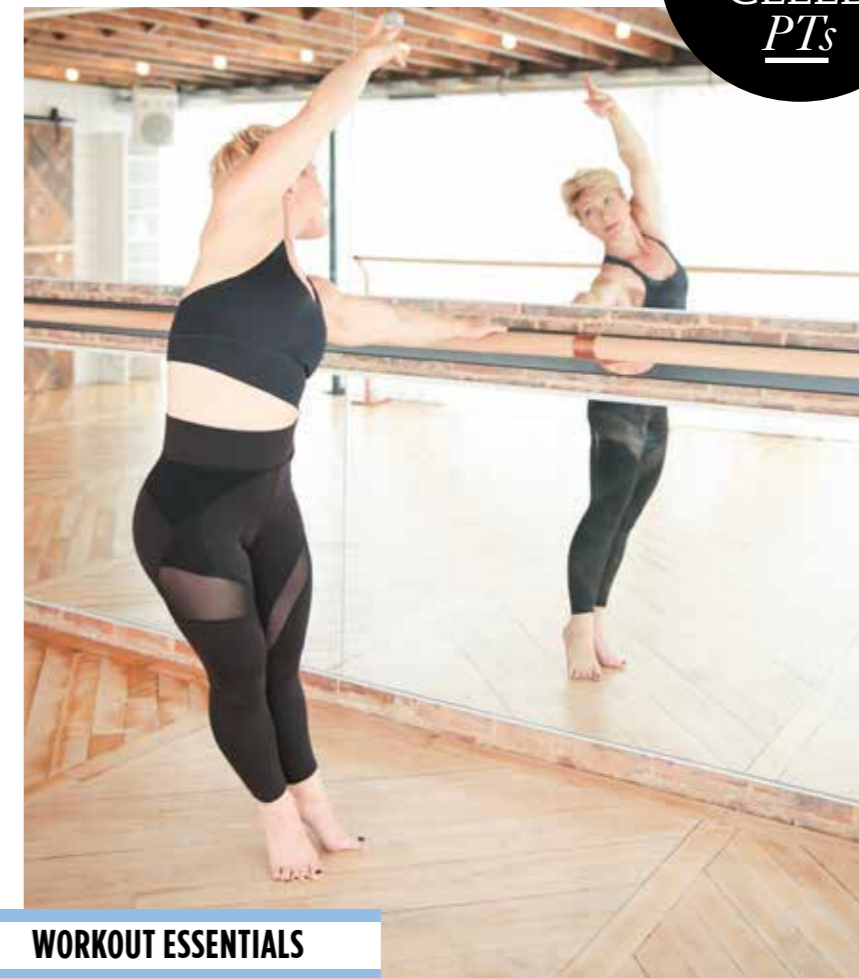
* STAY-YOUNG SECRET

'Laugh and dance whenever you possibly can! I genuinely believe in finding the fun in life - being able to laugh at yourself and keeping active is what keeps you young. Dance like everyone's watching!'



'WHY I LOVE DAVINA'

'I met Davina while we were both out having lunch with our families. My daughter, Nell, who was seven at the time, insisted I give her a business card, warning me I'd regret it if I didn't. So I did, and thank goodness! Davina came to one of my classes and that was that. She's a positive force and such fun to have in class (she tends to 'whoop' quite a bit!). I have such an admiration for how Davina has made fitness accessible to everyone. She's a joy to work with and when we're on set together we laugh... a lot! Her favourite move is definitely the pelvic thrust!'



WORKOUT ESSENTIALS

'I always carry Better You Magnesium Oil Original Spray (£12.20; betteryou.com) to sooth tired, aching muscles.'



'I love wearing leggings by Born Nouli, like these Havana Palm High Waisted Leggings (£65; bornnouli.com) because they fit like a second skin and never fall down.'



'When I have back-to-back classes, I spray on Davina's Hair Refresher Dry Shampoo (£24 for 150ml; amazon.co.uk) to boost my hair in between.'

'HOW I STAY IN SHAPE'

'I lead all my classes, which is quite a workout in itself, but as I'm constantly checking participants' form and tweaking their positions, I don't always get the full experience. Therefore, I often go to other SPN trainer's sessions, doing weekly TRX and yoga sessions, and doing a Spin class every so often. I also see Tommy Kotrla, an incredible boxing coach, for one session a week. My son started seeing him first, but I've infiltrated his sessions! I also like to fit in a run when I can. It's hard with three children, but I'm a happier person and better mum when I get my own training in.'

'MY FITNESS METHOD'

'It's all about blending styles, techniques and genres together, such as adding some power boxing into a barre class. I constantly work on my method, trying out new moves and styles and introducing them into sessions. All my classes flow from beginning to end to develop strength and tone throughout the body, and aid cognitive function for mental fulfilment. My classes are known for being intense, but that's what gets results.'

Maxine Jones, 49

A dedicated follower of the underground acid house movement in the 80s, Maxine Jones raved by night while working in banking for 20 years, until a bullying boss drove her to walk away from her career at 40 years old. Shortly afterwards, Maxine discovered Zumba and found her calling in life, training to be an instructor and setting up her own classes. TV presenter Lorraine Kelly walked in to one of Jones' London-based classes unannounced in 2013, and the pair have been firm friends ever since. Together they've presented various fitness features and campaigns on morning television, and made two workout DVDs – *Living to the Max*, and *Brand New You*. Two years ago, Jones moved away from Zumba to create her own dance workout, Maxercise, and streams her Wednesday night class via Maxercise TV (visit maxine-jones.com).



'MY DIET ADVICE'

'Write a food diary without lying. Identify one problem and set about fixing or cutting it out for the next three weeks, because that's how long it takes to get rid of an old habit and embrace a new one. I advise you nail breakfast first with a high-protein meal to satisfy the body and brain, then look at lunch, dinner and snacks.'



'THE SECRET OF MY SUCCESS'

'I'm very personable, real, and accessible. I'm not beautiful and stylish – I'm a "roll your sleeves up and get stuck in" woman! I want you to work hard in class and look good after. That's why I promote the #sweatselfie, because, even if you think you look awful at the time, it's your pass to getting red-carpet ready. Working with real women is what really drives me, and my mission is to show them how much fun exercise is.'

Fitness philosophy:

'When you look in the mirror, are you happy with what you see? If you are, great. If you're not, do something about it. It breaks my heart when people aren't bothered with themselves. I don't care if you have no rhythm and two left feet, as long as you're moving.'

'MY FITNESS METHOD'

'My dance-based, hour-long classes feature a warm-up and cool down, with 14-15 songs in between, each with their own routine of various intensities. Music is the best distraction, so I love using urban, clubby, hardcore high-energy tunes because the more fun you have, the more effort you put in, and the more you'll sweat! I'm a qualified PT, but at the end of the day, I love group exercise. I need the chaos and amazing energy you get from 60 people dancing together in the same room.'



STAY-YOUNG SECRET

'Laughter is my secret to youth. And being happy with myself. I still see my body as 20 years old, and feel that way in my mind and heart, too. My body isn't perfect, but it helps me do the job I love.'

WORKOUT ESSENTIALS



'I insist on wearing Shock Absorber Active Multi bras (£37; debenhams.com) because they're like scaffolding.'



'I love brightly coloured, happy leggings, preferably pink, like these Yoga Leggs Some Like It Hot leggings (£45; yogaleggs.com).'

'I wear Asics Gel Nimbus 21 Lite Show trainers (£160; asics.com) because they cope with all my twists, turns and jumping.'



'WHY I LOVE LORRAINE'

'A year after we met, Lorraine asked me to do a 24-hour Zumbathon charity appeal for STV in Scotland. By the end of it, we were delirious and in stitches, but that's when we really bonded. She's one of the most down-to-earth celebs I've met and, like me, she just wants to help as many women as possible. She still comes to classes at least once a week and loves twisting moves that work her waist. She's not great at swivelling her hips, but it doesn't matter, as long as she's moving.'

'HOW I STAY IN SHAPE'

'I fling myself around like a mad woman in classes four times a week, so I have to keep myself in good nick. I see a personal trainer/physio twice a week for strengthening and lengthening work – my muscles are fine but my ligaments and tendons need help.'