

WORK OUT LIKE A PRO!

Want to know how the trainers train? Three top PTs reveal the secrets that keep them – and their clients – looking so good

WORDS: Joanna Ebsworth



Cecilia Harris

'Exercise is a non-negotiable part of my lifestyle, and as natural as brushing my teeth twice a day'

After suffering from post-natal depression 20 years ago, Cecilia Harris took up exercise as an alternative to anti-depressants. Soon after, she trained as a PT and went on a mission to help women find joy through exercise. Harris' RWL programme 'In Perfect Balance', a dedicated fitness and wellbeing programme for women in later life, is available on resultswellnesslifestyle.com now.

How do you stay in shape?

'My job is physical – it's as simple as that. Since the world went increasingly virtual, I've been filming more live content than ever because people want to train in real time, and I work out



alongside my clients and members because I believe they'll train harder. I also train for myself, doing four or five 30-minute resistance workouts a week without fail. Exercise is a non-negotiable part of my lifestyle and as natural as brushing my teeth twice a day.'

What's your favourite workout?

'Weight training has helped me become my fittest ever at the age of 50. When you hit 40, your hormones change and everything starts slowing down. You can't stop the ageing process but you can change the way you age. It's never too late for you to transform your body because the body reacts

TOP TIP

'If you're desperate for change, you need to find your "why" – but your "why" has to be HUGE! Ask yourself how you're feeling and what you want to achieve. Clients normally say heavy, powerful words such as "I'm fed up", "I hate myself" or "I can't stand looking like this anymore". These words should form your why. Write them down and, when you feel like eating something unhealthy or skipping a workout, go back to those words. When you have the "why" you will achieve your goals.'

well to weight training at any age. Plus, the more muscle you have, the more of a calorie-burning machine you become, which is essential when it becomes harder to lose weight as you get older. Resistance is where it's at – age is just a number: I know that now.'

Any diet advice?

'You can't out-train a bad diet, and you'll never lose weight if your "calories in" is higher than your "calories out". Yes, you can be strong and fit, but

if you're building muscle and adding body fat, you're going to look bigger in the mirror. While one pound of fat weighs the same as one pound of muscle, that one pound of muscle is less dense and takes less space in your body. So, if you want to lose weight, you need to consume fewer calories than you burn off.'

What's your fitness philosophy?

'If you want to be the best version of yourself,

age well and not require medical assistance when you're older, you need to make exercise a consistent part of your lifestyle forever, instead of only exercising when you need to look good for an event or holiday. If we've learnt one thing from the pandemic, it's that our health is our wealth. Because without your health, you won't be able to go to that party or on holiday or go on to do all the things you want to in life.'



'I train to make sure I can support my body in everything that I do'



Hannah spent her teens and early 20s as a triple jump athlete. After retiring from competition in 2013, she worked as a PT at Equinox for five years before becoming an instructor for Peloton (onpeloton.co.uk). She teaches live rides from the London studio and is passionate about making exercise fun for everyone through music, sweat and cycling.

How demanding is your job?

'I teach several live classes a day from the studio, five days a week, and I'll sometimes film pre-recorded content,

such as beginners' rides. I can do a 20-minute HIIT ride and a 20-minute Music ride back-to-back, but other rides can be up to 45 minutes long. It demands a lot of physical and mental energy, and some serious multi-tasking because you have to watch the clock, shout out leaderboard names and give training cues, while talking to the camera.'

How do you maintain your energy?

'I don't know! I can't lie, I couldn't start the day without a coffee. I try to eat healthily to keep myself fuelled, and I always eat a lot of fruit, even though my Instagram feed might suggest I only eat cake. It's also a habit for me now to always have a

protein shake after a workout.'

How do you train?

'I'm actually not a big cardio person and never have been. It wasn't an accident that I did the triple jump event, which involved short, sharp bursts of energy followed by long rests! When I discovered Spinning, it was a mind-blowing moment because it was everything I wanted and needed after being an athlete. I was like "where has this been all my life?". I ride my own Peloton bike in the morning and get lost in the music, so I don't pay attention to how long I've been riding for. I also lift weights four-to-five times a week, keeping it simple with the main lifts: squat variations,

deadlifts, shoulder presses, pull-ups and press-ups. I used to lift heavy weights, and I have lifted double my bodyweight, but I follow a kinder approach now. I train to make sure I can support my body in everything I do, be fit for life and still do what I love when I'm 50.'

Biggest exercise myth?

'That you have to go really hard to get results. Exercise has to be manageable and enjoyable or it won't be a consistent part of your life. Find what you enjoy and be prepared to go on a journey with it, because fitness is forever. You're training for life, and it's not a competition. I'm not here to compete against anyone, not even myself.'

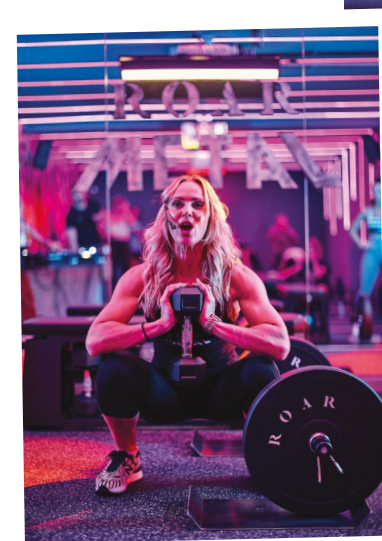


FAVOURITE KIT

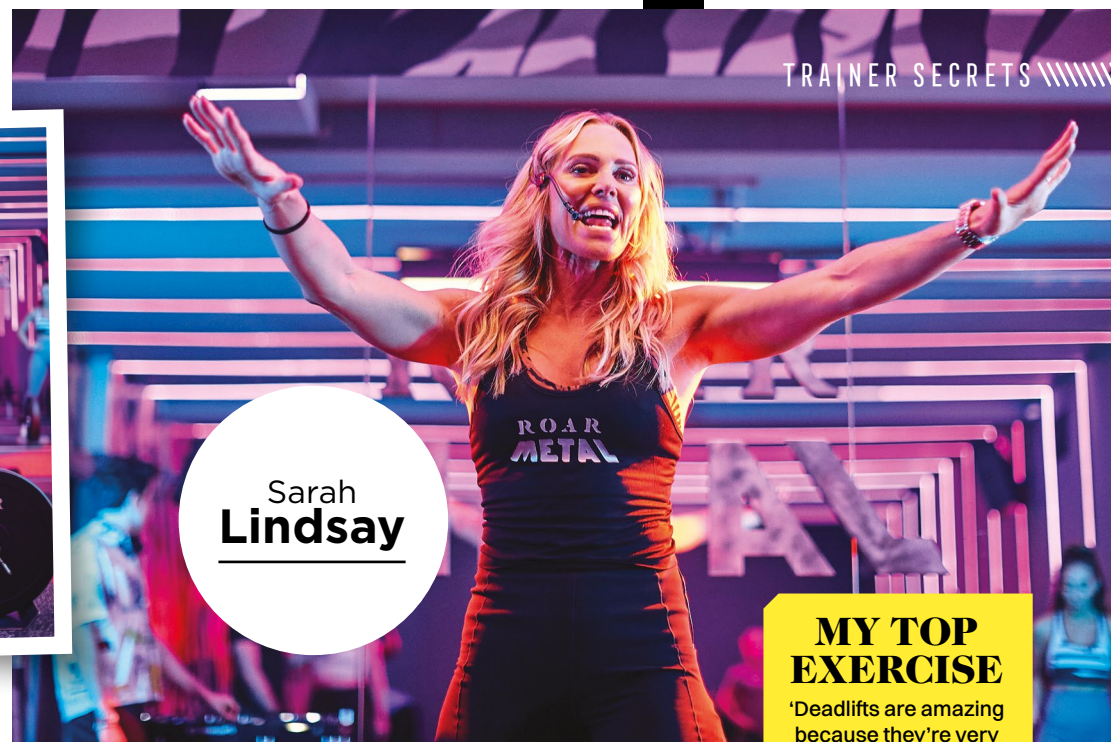


'The Peloton Show Up Printed Leggings, (£90, apparel.onpeloton.co.uk) look amazing and feel amazing. I love a stylish pair of "leggings in disguise" that you can wear on the street and in the gym.'

'For gym workouts, I wear Vivobarefoot Geo Racer Knit Shoes, (£130, vivobarefoot.com). We have lots of nerve endings in our feet and I think it's so important that we connect with the ground to strengthen them.'



Sarah Lindsay



MY TOP EXERCISE

'Deadlifts are amazing because they're very "full body" and work your posterior chain to hit your back, core, glutes and hamstrings in one hit. They essentially involve picking a bar up and down, which mimics picking things up in real life, and I think this movement's translation from the gym floor into everyday life is everything and very important. When you're strong at deadlifts, you're pretty much strong at everything else.'

'I want to be as physically strong and capable as possible, for as long as possible'

Three-time Olympian, Sarah gained her PT qualification before retiring in 2010. As one of London's most recognised celebrity personal trainers, her three London-based Roar Fitness gyms (roar-fitness.com) are famed for transforming bodies through one-to-one PT sessions. Roar Metal, her new small-group, full-body metabolic training class is also available in studio and online.

How do you stay fit?

'I don't ever negotiate on lifting: I do three weight training sessions a week (my client's only do three workouts a week, too) and I make sure to hit every muscle, even if the workout is only 30-minutes long. It's important to me that

I maintain my muscle mass, especially now I'm a bit older. I want to be as physically strong and capable as possible, because that's more anti-aging than anything else. Apart from that, I do a bit of walking to get some vitamin D, and I run a class on a Friday which is quite the cardio workout because I'm yelling so much and moving around quickly to demonstrate the moves.'

What is your fitness philosophy?

'Finding an activity that you enjoy is key because if you don't enjoy exercise, you won't keep doing it. It doesn't matter whether you're playing a sport because it's fun or competitive or sociable, or simply walking to enjoy the fresh air, so long as you

enjoy it and feel the benefits. It's all about compliance and sticking to a regular routine.'

What should we never train without?

'A smile. You should be enjoying what you do! Forcing a smile onto your face makes you feel happier, so it's harder to feel grumpy.'

What's the secret of your success?

'My approach is there's no one-size-fits-all method. Everybody has things getting in the way and stopping them from achieving what they want to achieve. So, I look at a person's entire life – what they're doing now; why they feel the way they are feeling; what their goal is – and how I'm going to facilitate those changes to help them reach their goal. I look at

everything to do with how their body is functioning because, if it isn't functioning well, for whatever reason, they won't be able to lose body fat or gain muscle. I'll examine someone's age, weight, body composition, diet, digestion, sleep, inflammation, hydration, recovery – all those things that help us achieve optimal health, including the "one per centers" that add up to help us feel well, strong, fit and able to exercise properly.'