

'HOW I BUILD MY BODY'

Eilish McColgan
Middle-distance runner

Credentials: Two-time Olympic champion; won silver in the European Championships 2018. Currently training for both the 5,000m and 10,000m events in the 2021 Olympic games. Co-founder of online coaching business, Running Made Easy (runningmadeeasy.co.uk).

CARDIO

'I train twice a day, six days a week. Most professional runners run twice a day but, with my previous injuries, I only run once every morning to reduce the impact on my body. Two mornings a week, I head to the track for my hard interval training sessions, which are specifically geared towards my racing, so if I have a 5k coming up, I'll be running at a 5k pace. The other four mornings, I'll do easier recovery runs of around seven miles on a soft woodland trail near my house to flush out my legs. Evening sessions involve steady state cross training on a bike or elliptical machine for 45-60 minutes to work my cardio fitness without the impact, which again aids recovery.'

STRENGTH

'I've got a Smith machine at home and I use it in the evening on my two hard interval days to work my core, glutes, and legs. Good core stability is vital for helping me to maintain my running form even when I'm tired, and building strength is crucial for injury prevention.'



NUTRITION

'With all the hours I train, it's very important that I take in enough fuel, so I eat three main meals a day and snacks if I need them. Breakfast is always the same: porridge with milk, loads of berries, and a banana. It works for me because I can eat it and go running straightaway, plus it's easy to travel with. My evening meal is very large: something like fresh red meat or chicken with a carbohydrate such as pasta, rice, or sweet potatoes. I cook everything from fresh, but I don't like to overthink my food. If I'm hungry, I'll eat, and if I want a bit of chocolate or cake, I will have it.'

SUPPORT

'My mum, Liz McColgan, has been coaching me since I was 12 years old, so she knows me better than anyone in the world. She lives in Qatar and coaches me remotely, but she knows she can set me a programme and I'll be very driven to complete it. After every session, I report back to her on each detail, including my times, splits, how I felt, and what the weather was like so she can plan the rest of my week.'

'Good core stability is essential for helping me to maintain my running form even when I'm tired'



WHY TRY RUNNING?

- 'It's one of the easiest and cheapest sports to try. You only need a pair of trainers and the great outdoors to get involved; you can do it at any time that's convenient to you; and you don't need to pay sign-up fees or have a membership card to be a runner.'
- 'It doesn't matter if you enter a running event and you come first or last – every single person who takes part has their own personal best. You don't need to compare yourself to anyone else. If you run two seconds faster than your last run, then that's an improvement.'
- 'Running gives women the opportunity to focus on themselves and not worry about others, and it provides one of the simplest ways to improve your fitness, health, and mental wellbeing – the endorphin rush you get after a run is like nothing else!'

VITAL KIT

'I wear the Polar Vantage V2 Multisport Watch, £449 (polar.com), as it provides me with accurate and valuable data to give me an insight into how I'm operating. As well as tracking my pace, speed and heart rate, it also monitors my central nervous system and the length and quality of my sleep; if my body hasn't fully recovered overnight, or my heart rate is higher (which could be a sign that I'm getting ill), I can adjust my programme accordingly, so I don't push myself too hard.'

