

Jumping for joy

Getting into shape for your wedding will have you looking and feeling fab, writes personal trainer *Claire Church*



Photo: Shutterstock.com

As a personal trainer, I know how important fitness is. As a woman, I know how easily life's challenges can lead to 'accidental' weight gain – and the dip in confidence this can bring. That's why I aim to be with my clients every step of the way, supporting, encouraging and pushing them to work their hardest, because I understand what their own personal fitness goals mean to them, just as it means the same to me. Having a healthy lifestyle and a positive outlook are both incredibly important and valuable, but it's easy to fall into a rut when you are unhappy and feeling low.

But once you take that first step, you'll be surprised at how easily the rest falls into place.

BIG DAY BURN

With a client who is trying to get in shape for her wedding, I tailor each workout very specifically. Some brides want to focus on the upper body, as that's usually going to be on show in their wedding dress. Others might lack self-confidence and need a boost to help them to feel confident walking down the aisle with their head held high. I've done

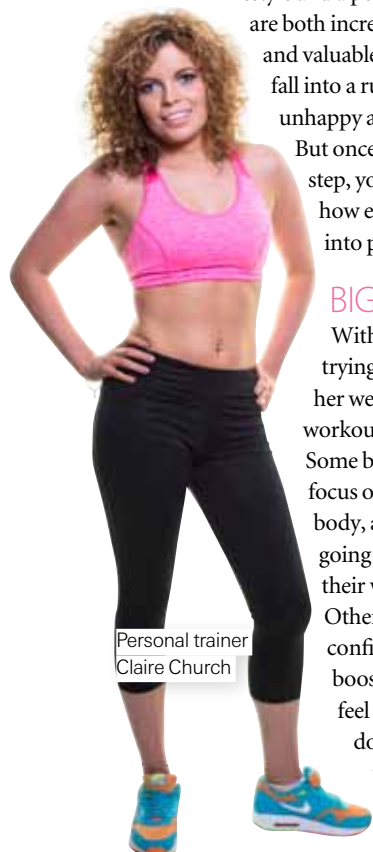
photoshoots before, so I know how nerve-racking it can be to stand in front of people with all eyes on you. But that's all part of being a bride, so it's my job to make sure you're excited about this, not dreading it!

MIND AND BODY

From a personal point of view, I know how important it is to have a healthy lifestyle, and that's something I try to impress upon my clients. When I have a bride-to-be, or any client, who is very nervous about her appearance or her body, I always start by asking why. Answers range from 'I hate that these bits wobble' and 'I don't like my stomach, it's too fat' to 'I have no idea, I just don't like it.' The last response is a lot more common than you'd think, and it doesn't get any easier to hear – nobody should feel like that! Women have a tendency to be very self-critical, so I always make sure my clients understand that to be happy in front of others, you need to be happy in yourself.

I plan programmes for them over a four, eight and 12-week timeframe. As a general rule, after four weeks, they should feel and start to see a difference. After eight weeks, someone close, like their partner or parents, should start noticing a change. And after 12 weeks, someone they see on an intermittent basis should be able to say, 'Wow, you look fantastic!'

It shouldn't be all hard work, though. I love that the health club I work in, Virgin Active (virginactive.co.uk), has a spa, so my clients can treat themselves to some relaxing, beautifying time after their exercise sessions! ▶



Personal trainer
Claire Church

Fit fashion

Treat yourself to a seriously stylish workout wardrobe



High Impact print
crop top, £18,
Marks & Spencer



Run bottle,
£2.99, Karrimar

Gym Slim cropped
leggings, £19.50,
Marks & Spencer



Gaiam No-Slip
yoga socks, £7.99,
John Lewis



Garden Ditsy
foldaway barrel bag,
£28, Cath Kidston



Nike Dual Fusion TR2
print trainers, £49.99,
Get The Label

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CUT SOME SHAPES

BSW's resident exercise-phobe Sarah Gillespie tries out some fun ways to get fit... glowsticks at the ready!



CLUBBERCISE

It's generally agreed that once you start exercising, it becomes much easier (must remember that one for our inevitable post-Chrimbo health kick). But it doesn't stop you lumbering around your first class hating yourself, the instructor and everyone there. Clubbercise, happily, couldn't feel further from this fear and loathing. It's held in a dark room with loads of disco lights, which beautifully hides your inexperience. Even better, if (like me) you've ever lost the plot on the dancefloor to anything by 2 Unlimited, you'll already have most of the moves down. The sequences are easy to pick up so it's fun from the get-go. You're having such rave-related revelry (complete with rainbow glowsticks!) that you hardly feel you're exercising and burning loads of calories.

My first class certainly won't be my last!

I attended the Glasgow South Side class with Sharon (£4). To find a class near you, visit www.clubbercise.com



BOOGIE BOUNCE

As someone who loves to jump around to mental happy hardcore every now and then, I was beyond excited to try out Boogie Bounce, where I could, quite literally, jump about to songs like *Bits + Pieces* and *Put Your Hands Up (In The Air)*. It's great for beginners because it's easy to pick up, the rotation of moves isn't taxing or intimidating – and loads are logical (like actually putting your hands in the air for the aforementioned tune). There was a wide range of ages and sizes at the class – it's ideal if you've had knee or joint problems because jumping on the trampoline has less impact than pounding the ground. Whereas most exercise classes have different moves for different fitness and flexibility levels, with Boogie Bounce you could adjust your body while doing the same moves (kicking knees up higher and sticking your backside out more, for example), which is a big plus if you're the kind of person that 'shames' yourself into going full throttle and then hobbles about in pain for a week afterwards. You'll be jumping for joy after this class.

I attended Michelle's class at MAD Studios, Coatbridge (£5 per class or three classes for £10). To find a class near you, visit www.boogiebounce.co.uk



GLOWGA

Yoga is famed for being extremely calming, so I was fascinated when I heard a studio in Glasgow was sprinkling a liberal dose of fun onto this typically serene pursuit. Cue the monthly 'Glowga' class at Bikram Yoga Southside, which is done to a soundtrack of Ibiza-esque chillout music. I took along my yoga-bunny best friend, as I was definitely a novice, (I didn't even know 'bikram' meant 'hot yoga'. I found out soon enough.) After loading up on glowsticks – and making our charitable donation (the classes raise money for Glasgow charity Spirit Aid) – we settled on our mats and enjoyed 90 minutes of yoga in the dark. The heat takes a little getting used to, but power through it and you'll get such an intense sense of achievement inside and out that you'll have a giant rush of happiness at the end. The studio is lovely, co-owner Linda is so sweet and the class was fantastic (oh, and my skin felt amazing after!). Two chilled-out thumbs-up from us!

Bikram Yoga Southside, Glasgow (Studio introductory offer 20 days of classes for £20). 0141 258 1919, www.bikramsouthside.com



EXTRA TIME

Three more options for laughing while you're losing pounds

1 ZOMBIE SURVIVAL CAMP

Prepare for the apocalypse and your wedding at the same time with this fun bootcamp. The sessions use toning and cardio-style exercises such as circuits and core work, but mix it with games like 'alive or undead' and 'zombieball'. One for you and H2B to enjoy.

First session free then ten-week blocks for £50 (1 class) or £80 (2 classes), www.zombiesc.com

2 GLASGOW HULA HOOP

Hula-hooping might seem like a childish pastime, but it can actually burn a mind-boggling 600 calories per hour! If you don't believe us, ask Beyoncé – she has been a fan ever since her hula-tastic *Work It Out* video. Choose from skills or fitness classes at the Glasgow sessions, but keep an eye out for Aberdeen masterclasses too.

£7 per class, block booking and free taster sessions available, www.glasgowhulahoop.co.uk

3 AERIAL EDGE

If you've ever threatened to run away and join the circus, here's a chance to brush up on your skills! Aerial Edge offers classes in flying trapeze and trampolining (among others). Don't worry if you don't have Cirque du Soleil-worthy skills just yet – the classes have a 'zero to hero' philosophy.

For pricing please check the website, www.aerialedge.co.uk