

Livewell

your lifestyle, health & fitness guide

Helpful tips on how to get the day off to an ideal start

A good morning routine can set you up for the day – but where to start? Liz Connor finds out how the wellness pros approach it

Mornings can be the best of times, but when it feels as though the days all roll into one – with no weekend plans or evenings out to break things up – it can be too easy to nudge your alarm later and later and drift through the weeks in a unproductive haze. That's where having a strategy is helpful. "Wellbeing pros say mornings are our 'power hour', when we can harness our energy to get the most out of the day. But where to start? Here, wellness experts share their tips for making the most of the start to the day."

1. HOLLIE GRANT, FOUNDER OF PILATES PT (PILATESPT.CO.UK)

"I've had years of experience of working from home, so my best advice for a productive start is to get out side each morning for a walk. Even if you just walk around the block or put your sneakers on and go for a jog, try to get some daylight on your face. It's amazing how moving, to get some much-needed Vitamin D from the sunlight and it blows away the cobwebs of the previous day. I take my dog out for a gentle stroll, whether rain or shine, and I've never regretted it."

2. DR MEGAN ROSSI, REGISTERED DIETITIAN AND NUTRITIONIST WITH A PhD IN GUT HEALTH (THEBODYSOUP.COM)

"My tip is to get your exercise done first thing in the morning. Barn is a good time to start the day with movement, which is when I've been streaming my daily PE With Joe workouts on YouTube. Early-morning exercise gives you a bit of a boost for the day and you're doing. The consistency for me is important. I feel better for exercising in the morning. Once you've done a workout and you've physically pushed your body, I think everything seems like you can physically take it in your stride a bit more."

just started to catch on to, but we've been doing it for a while. It's really helpful for overall good health. Foods like leafy greens and kimchi are great, too, and I think we should all be trying to add them into our diet. Not only could they have health benefits but they're really tasty, too."

3. ALICE LIVINGE, PERSONAL TRAINER, AUTHOR AND GIVE ME STRENGTH PODCAST HOST (ALICE-LIVINGE.CO.UK)

"My mornings are my favourite time of the day for doing things. I keep to a fairly structured routine. I get up every day at 6am and sit catching up on the news with my coffee. Once I've had my coffee hit I then get ready to train (I do an hour of exercise, four days a week) and this helps me to properly wake up and ready myself for the day ahead. I then teach a live class on Instagram at 8.30am, before sitting down to breakfast and emails at 9.30am. It might be a bit regimented for some but I feel setting time goals gives me the structure and the productive whilst working from home."

4. JOE WICKS, PERSONAL TRAINER, PRESENTER AND AUTHOR (THEBODYSOUP.COM)

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5. SASHA SABAPATHY, FOUNDER OF GLOW BAR (GLOWBARLON.COM)

"Prioritising yourself is starting in the morning is so important. We wake up most mornings with a purpose and a goal. I think we should all be trying to add purpose to our day. Not only could they have health benefits but they're really tasty, too."

6. RHIANNON LAMBERT, AUTHOR AND REGISTERED NUTRITIONIST (RHITRITION.COM)

"I start my day off with a nutritionally balanced breakfast, which helps keep me going until lunchtime. I'm loving yogurt with nut butter, berries and oats. I think we should all be trying to add in a bit of protein to our breakfast to keep our motivation high. Mid-morning try to get half an hour or so of exercise – post-birth I need to be careful – but I love going for a walk. The movement really does lift your mood."

Offering their take on how to get your day off to a flying start clockwise, from top left: Pilates PT founder Hollie Grant; Glow Bar founder Sasha Sabapathy; author and nutritionist Rhiannon Lambert; and personal trainer Alice Livinge; dietitian and nutritionist Dr Megan Rossi; and personal trainer, presenter and author Joe Wicks. Pictures: PA

Cooped up with the kids

with Mary-Jane Duncan



When the walls are closing in they can at least be painted

It's taken 20 minutes to locate the smallest barn. We do not live in a mansion or a castle, but I consider a barn to be any building that has a bed made from what was supposed to be my office/study under the stairs.

The study, which can only fit a single bed and wardrobe, houses middle kid and my long-coveted Orla Kiely wallpaper. A treat to myself which is neither admired nor adored by said squatter who moved into my office to get away from sharing with her sister.

I refuse to redecorate, counting down the minutes until the eldest moves. She'll be the one to tear the wallpaper down.

Anyway, the smallest one. Where is she? What did I even need her for? Why did I start looking for her in the first place? Panic hasn't yet set in. She can't have gone far.

Under the dining table. Of course she is. Silly me. Complete with pillow and beloved Brooklyn Nine-Nine for the 800th time.

She has her own room. She is indeed named Orla. O.S. I don't know why the room upstairs is opposed to under the stairs. I'm not sure if it's a signal reaches it. Welcome to the 21st Century. My kids, who don't believe there used to be a number to call just so someone could tell you the time, don't know how good they've got it.

Her being under the dining table probably stems from my great idea to redecorate the living room. I decided while I still love the wallpaper, I decided the colour of the 'bare' walls. A silent nod to the room the eldest and I shared when she was a toddler.

Knowing full well, I'd do the majority of the actual painting while I supervise in a 'cup of tea making' capacity.

The colour is chosen and I embark on the usual need to gut and clean the entire room before painting commences. This involves directing the children to become pack horses to newly painted walls.

remove things from the living room, including my extensive collection of cook books. The eldest suggests that I should be painting the walls. The kids know better. They exchange worried looks; not because it's about to kick off between Mum and Dad but because they're not daft. They know I am more likely to call one of them than one of my precious cookbooks.

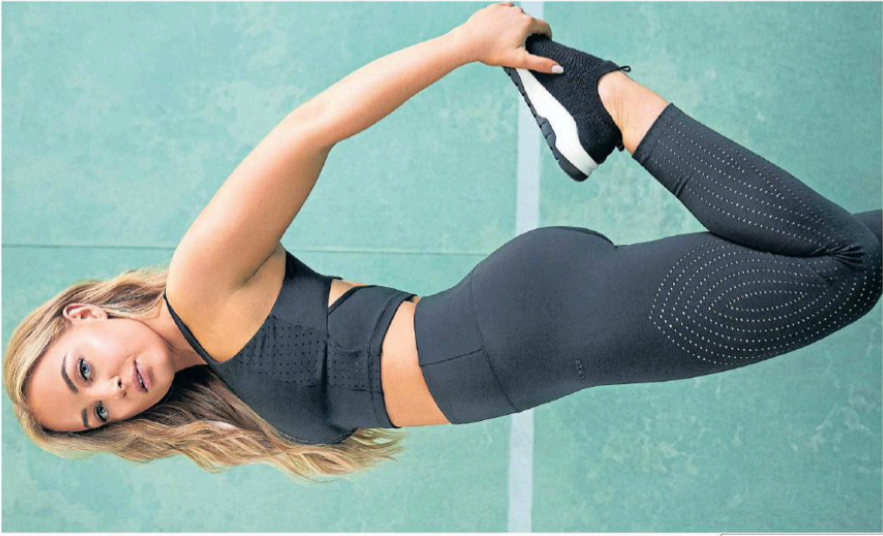
A collection starting more than 20 years ago. Nigella and Mary got me through good times, Nigel and old blue eyes Michael helped me through the bad times. Loss a coin dies, who's moving out to make space for my new library? She'll be the one to tear the wallpaper down. Under the dining table is now apparent. She's either hiding from

A. Covid-19
B. Me swearing at the TV because of Boris' overuse of the word "unprecedented".
C. The fun of decorating... I coax her out by sending in the dogs. She doesn't stand a chance against two hairy halfwits who will demand attention, giving her no peace. I also need the space under there to store coats and shoes.

But now I'm enjoying this as is. Hate cocoon. I might leave it as is. Hate actually clean it, but at least I can give it a really disgusted stare from my new 'couchnest' while admiring my two newly painted walls.



The cookery book collection, which was started more than 20 years ago.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY JONATHAN HARRIS