

H&W QA

ASK THE EXPERTS

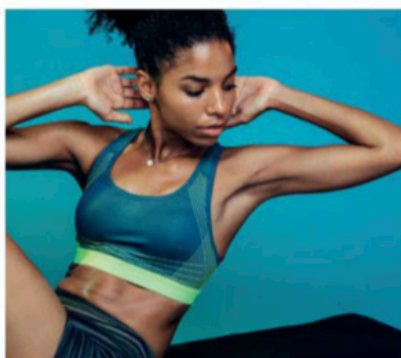
Q: *Do I need equipment to achieve a good workout?*

Katie Anderson, head of training at Fly LDN (flyldn.co.uk), says:

A: "Gyms and fitness studios have closed their doors to keep us safe at home, but the good news is body weight workouts are here to stay. You can still work your cardiovascular system, strength training, mobility and flexibility with exercises that use your body weight. If you're safe to do high-impact movements, think: plyometric training. These include high knees, jumping jacks, jump squats and lunges – anything that uses strength and speed together. It's also better to do this for short intervals, with maximum force for best results. When it comes to strength, play around with tempo training and high reps to make up for not having weights. For example, lower down into a chest press for two counts, holding for two and reverse to the start position for two. Aim for four or more sets. Mobility and flexibility exercises usually only use body weight, but if you need assistance, use a towel to help bring the leg in or use a book instead of a yoga block to stabilise in a movement."

THE INAPPROPRIATE INDUSTRY

This just in: according to a new survey, three in five women feel inappropriately looked at when they're training at the gym. It's going to be a long time before we set foot in fitness studios again, but that doesn't mean we can't share the latest stats around the subject. Mindbody also revealed that the majority of women 'buddy up' to help make them feel more secure in a fitness environment, so at times like these, working out from home and hosting a virtual class with friends could be the way to go.



TUNING OUT

When we're stressed and feeling overwhelmed, the chances are you'd rather stay at home and relax in front of the TV, as opposed to getting your workout kit on, but it turns out that the UK is actually turning to exercise as a way of winding down. Lucozade Sport has revealed that 64 percent of our health-conscious nation finds getting active – including running – an appealing way to de-stress. Another reason to make the most of your one hour of exercise a day.



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IF YOU DO ONE THING THIS MONTH...

...increase your aerobic exercise to enhance your brain health. If there's one thing us Brits won't be short of at the moment, it's boredom because, let's face it, there are only so many TikToks that the kids can persuade you to get involved with before you really start to lose your mind. So, to avoid this, new research has found that aerobic exercise may decrease the likelihood of Alzheimer's disease. The researchers examined individuals who were at risk, while they engaged in six months of aerobic training and discovered it improved their thinking abilities.

*research published in Brain Plasticity

KIT COMPARISON

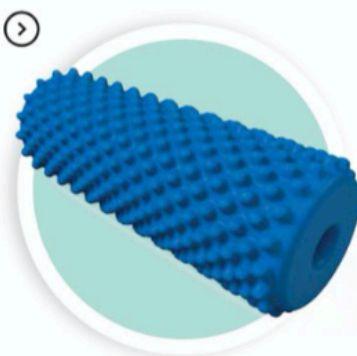
What's the difference between a foam roller and a massage ball?

Hollie Grant, award-winning Pilates instructor and founder of Pilates PT (pilatespt.co.uk), says:

"Foam rollers target large muscles and areas of fascia [a sheet of connective tissue], while massage balls can target a specific area or trigger point, and give direct access to a troublesome spot."

Foam roller >

"Foam rollers are like large rolling pins. They can be used to roll or massage large areas of muscle, such as the hamstrings and quads, and equally are great for stability exercises, as they act as an unstable surface. By rolling across the intended muscle, you can replicate the work of a masseuse and adapt the intensity by applying more pressure or less to the area."



< Massage ball

"These are obviously far smaller and allow you to loosen harder-to-reach muscles. Often used against a wall or the floor, they give more intense direct pressure to an area and can be incredibly uncomfortable. In my opinion, they are more effective than a foam roller and tend to target muscles, rather than muscle fascia."

