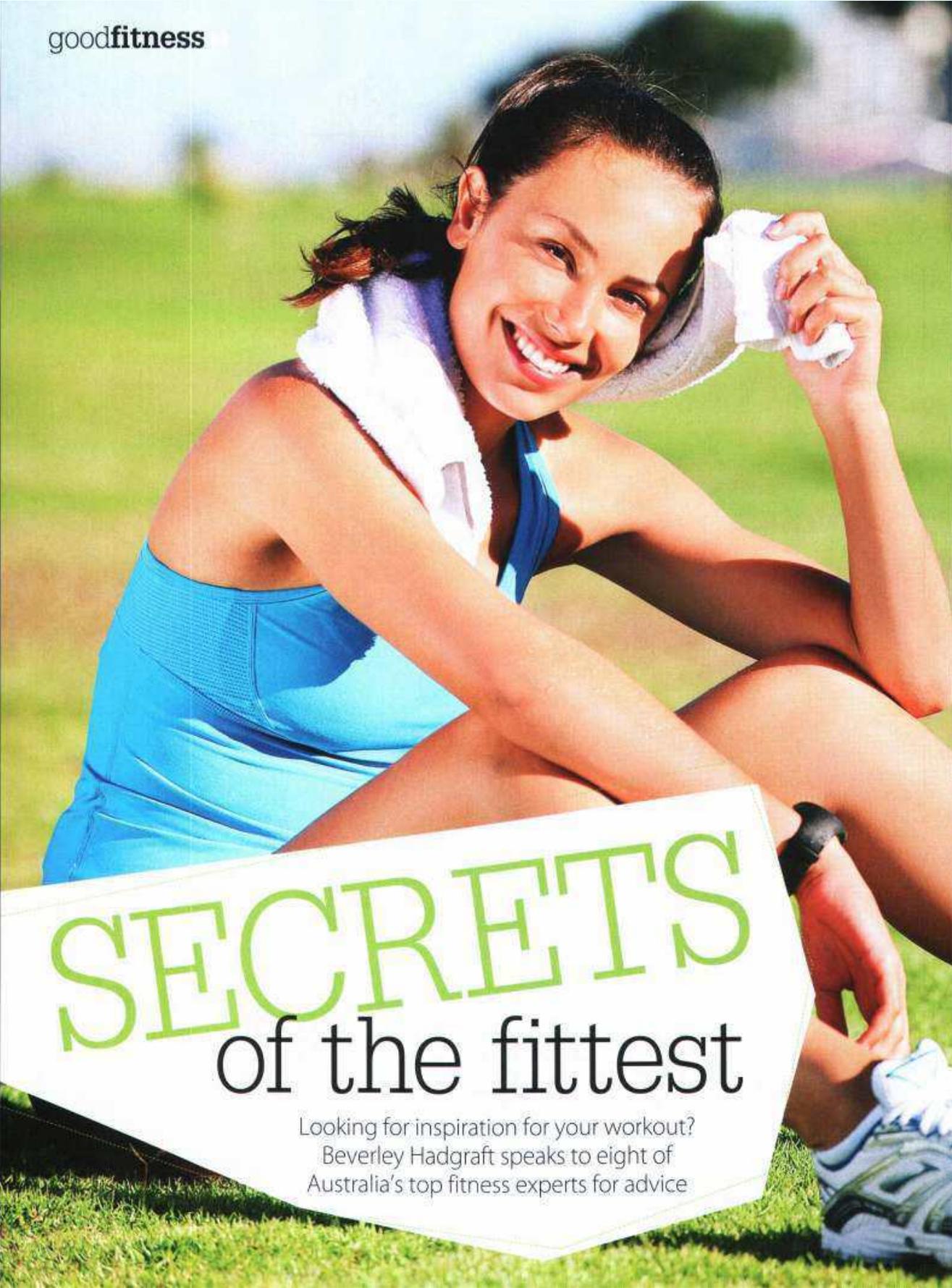


good**fitness**



# SECRETS of the fittest

Looking for inspiration for your workout?  
Beverley Hadgraft speaks to eight of  
Australia's top fitness experts for advice

# TOP 8

- 1 **Mirielle Ryan** runs Busy Mums Fitness Club and is Queensland Fitness Professional of the Year 2010.
- 2 **Nardia Norman** is a senior coach at the Australian Institute of Fitness.
- 3 **Andrew Simmons** is the founder of the fitness chain Vision Personal Training.
- 4 **Justine Guest** is the managing director of Perth-based Babes on the Run, which specialises in fitness for women.
- 5 **Paul Taylor** is the director of Fix Australia, which offers career training for fitness professionals and fitness services.
- 6 **Tanya Lewis** is director of Life Personal Trainers based in Adelaide.
- 7 **Ryan Gambin** is a personal trainer, Olympian and Busy Mums Fitness Club expert.
- 8 **Sally Symonds** is a health and fitness mentor from Brisbane.

## GETTING STARTED

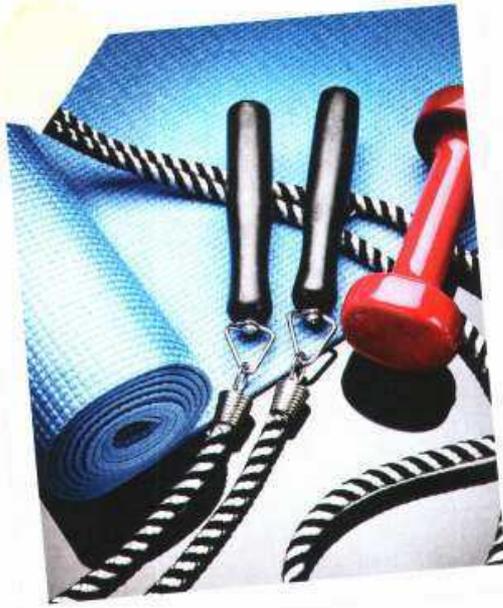
- If you've had little experience of training and fear looking silly, you're not alone. Get help from one of the many women-friendly gyms, boot camps, running groups and training groups that can teach you anything from how to run properly to how to work out training schedules and achievable goals. **JUSTINE GUEST**
- Don't let anyone convince you to do exercise you don't enjoy. Textbooks always told me the best way to burn fat was to run, so I'd make my clients run then wonder why they would drop out. The fact was that I was making them do stuff they didn't like and that's where programs go astray. Most people don't like gyms. If that's you, choose something else and remember to start slowly. **ANDREW SIMMONS**
- Tracking your progress will improve your results. Good online diaries such as [www.myfitnesspal.com](http://www.myfitnesspal.com) store food and exercise information, while [www.mapmyrun.com](http://www.mapmyrun.com) or [www.mapmywalk.com](http://www.mapmywalk.com) have free iPhone apps with GPS to track time and distance so you can monitor improvements. **JUSTINE GUEST**
- Schedule fitness sessions into your diary and count them as valuable appointments. **TANYA LEWIS**



## ALL IN THE MIND

- When you're doing reps in training, the most important rep is the one you think you can't do – that's the one that will give you results and change your body. So if you get to 10 reps of a weight and think you can't possibly manage another one, give it a go. **ANDREW SIMMONS**
- Aim for a win at every session to keep you motivated. Do one more rep than you've ever done before, increase a weight or go further or faster than you've gone before. That way you're an achiever every time. **JUSTINE GUEST**
- If you use a variety of aerobic machines (treadmill, bike, rower, cross trainer), you're less likely to plateau and get bored. Using different aerobic machines will also exercise different muscle groups, which may help you adapt to new activities and avoid overuse injuries. **PAUL TAYLOR**
- Try the five-minute principle, which is particularly useful for people who have unused exercise equipment at home. Tell yourself you'll work out for five minutes. That's achievable even if you have the busiest schedule, and chances are you'll turn it into 10 or 20. **TANYA LEWIS**
- Get yourself a motivation T-shirt for those days when it's hard to get out of the house. My favourite is my 'Toughen Up Princess' T-shirt. **SALLY SYMONDS** ▶

**"IF YOU DON'T DO ANY EXERCISE, ASK YOURSELF IF YOU'RE HIDING BEHIND EXCUSES. TRY LEAVING YOUR RUNNERS AT WORK TO WALK AT LUNCHTIME OR HAVE A PERSONAL TRAINER COME TO YOU SO ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS BE PRESENT."** *Justine Guest*



## FASTER FAT BURNING

■ Want the best type of exercise to burn fat? Try performing long, slow cardio (30 minutes to an hour with a heart rate around 70 beats below your maximum heart rate) either on an empty stomach when you wake up in the morning or after a weights workout. That's because to use fat as energy, we must have low glycogen levels, which is the case after a sleep or a weights session. However, when your glycogen is low you must keep your heart rate well below your maximum heart rate (220 minus your age) to avoid burning muscle. **RYAN GAMBIN**

■ Invest in a skipping rope. It uses your whole body, is easier on the joints than running and is an awesome fat-burner and cardio workout. Learn boxing/skipping, which involves jumping from foot to foot. Practise without a rope first, then add the rope once you've got the hang of it. **MIRIELLE RYAN**

■ One of the best workouts you can do is to find a good hill (or set of stairs) and run up it at least five times – aim for a 15- to 20-minute workout. It's a great cardio workout, is very good for your butt muscles and will keep your metabolism lifted for the rest of the day. **ANDREW SIMMONS**

■ To maintain cardiovascular health and burn fat, interval training is a must. Studies have found that programs involving high-intensity efforts interspersed with light activity produce the greatest fat loss, are the most time efficient and develop the body's neuromuscular ability to operate at faster speeds, which is very important for functional daily living such as chasing the kids or running for the bus! **PAUL TAYLOR**

*"Avoid the exercise-muffin trade off. Kilojoule counters on cardio machines can be misleading, and be careful that you're not eating more kilojoules than you can burn." Tanya Lewis*

## TRICKS AND TIME-SAVERS

■ Can't leave the kids? Don't have access to exercise equipment? Then head down to your local playground. Use park benches for step-ups and tricep dips, monkey bars for chin-ups, pull-ups or a hanging ab toner, or the platforms on the gym equipment for elevated push-ups or lunges. I'll often do Tabata training intervals when I'm at the playground with my kids – that's 20 seconds of maximum-intensity exercise followed by 10 seconds of rest. Repeat eight times for a total of four minutes. You can do anything, jog on the spot, squats, step-ups or crunches. **MIRIELLE RYAN**

■ Don't waste time on isolation exercises. Why do a tricep kickback, which engages just one muscle, when you can do a push-up that engages your whole upper body and core? Do slow, controlled push-ups until you can't do any more – it's one of the best exercises you can perform. **ANDREW SIMMONS**

■ To save time do full-body weight exercises, which are a combination of resistance and cardio training. This will sculpt your muscles and burn lots of kilojoules. Try burpees, squats with a shoulder press, or mountain climbers. **MIRIELLE RYAN**

■ Include circuit training in your schedule. Circuits can be done anywhere – in a class in the gym, outdoors, or in your home or workplace. Circuits should consist of a mix of muscular endurance, strength, cardiovascular, aerobic, agility and core stability activities. You'll get all the benefits of cross training and pack an intense session into a shorter space of time. Try shuttle runs; skipping, star jumps, step-ups, burpees, push-ups, walking lunges, squats, side-to-side jumps, crunches, planks. Move between activities as quickly as possible. **PAUL TAYLOR**

■ There are lots of exercises that you can do in a communal office – from wall squats while you're waiting for the kettle to boil to kicks and punches when the photocopier breaks down. **SALLY SYMONDS**

### IF YOU'RE DOING STRENGTH AND MUSCULAR ENDURANCE TRAINING, REMEMBER THE BASIC RULES.

- **Progressive overload** – as you gain strength and experience, you need to gradually increase the load, reps or sets.
- **Specificity** – the best gains will happen when exercises are specific to a sport you play or activity you want to improve such as lifting and carrying a child.
- **Variation** – you need to regularly change your training to keep stimulating the muscles.

**PAUL TAYLOR**

A woman with long brown hair in a ponytail, wearing a light blue tank top and black shorts, is seen from the back, stretching her arms upwards. She is wearing a black smartwatch on her left wrist. The background is a bright, sunny outdoor setting with green grass and trees.

*“Don’t forget to stretch and do mobility drills. If you don’t have flexibility and mobility, your performance will be limited.”*  
Mirielle Ryan

## FUN AND FRIENDSHIPS

■ **Make fitness dates.** Pick a walk route and do it with a group of girlfriends. Finish with coffee or tea. To make it more interesting, try exploring different areas. Let a different person pick the walk each week. **NARDIA NORMAN**

■ **Bring out your inner goddess** by attending a Zumba class, pole dance class, or belly dancing class. These are fun and burn plenty of kilojoules. **NARDIA NORMAN**

■ **Improve your circle of influence.** If you hang around with people who are into health and fitness, you’re more likely to adhere to a program. Lots of people try to fly solo then go home to negative influences that encourage them to sleep in, drink on Saturday nights or go for lunch instead of a walk. If you join a bushwalking club, running group or tennis club, you’ll be hanging out with friends who are also leading a healthy lifestyle. **ANDREW SIMMONS**

■ **Look for inspiration.** Talk to the people training around you and find out their stories. Learning about the dedication, persistence and hard work of others will help motivate you and keep you on track. **JUSTINE GUEST** 🍎