

SURF & 'SUP' YOURSELF FIT



Don't let your nutrition undo all your hard work in the surf. Here are some easy-to-prepare pre and post surf snacks for when hunger strikes:

- Apples – apparently apples wake you up as much as a cup of coffee and of course they're much better for you.
- Power bars and muesli bars – in moderation as they can be high in sugar and fat.
- Fresh fruit smoothie – add yogurt and protein powder.
- Hard-boiled eggs – easy to pack and perfect for a post-surf protein hit.
- Trail mix – mix nuts, seeds and dried fruit for a powerful protein hit.

Information from *Surf's Up: The girl's guide to surfing (2nd edition)*, by Louise Southerden.

EMBRACE A SUMMER ACTIVITY AND HAVE FUN IMPROVING YOUR FITNESS AND PHYSIQUE.

If you are looking to revamp your training schedule and add some zing to your summer, then why not top up on some vitamin D and give surfing or Stand Up Paddling (SUP) a try?

For those who have given surfing a whirl before, you'll know that it's terrific for all-round fitness as it not only gives your cardiovascular system a blow out, but also increases strength, stamina, and improves balance. Originating from the Hawaiian Islands, SUP is the king for developing killer abs, balance and steel-like core strength. So, make a date to hit the water and have some fun. Get ready to find your six-pack and train every facet of your fitness; it's gonna be the funnest way to spend your summer!

HANG TEN FOR A TOP FITNESS ALL-ROUNDER

Although having good cardiovascular fitness and some upper body strength helps, nothing will totally prepare you for being 'surfing fit' apart from surfing itself. 'The great thing with surfing is that you don't have to be really good at it to get the fitness benefits. In fact, when you're learning to surf, you get the best workout because you spend more time paddling out and getting thrashed in the whitewater, but that's all part of the fun!' says Louise Southerden, a longtime surfer and author of *Surf's Up: The girl's guide to surfing*.

Louise says that it's best to learn on a surfboard that's between 7 and 9 feet long (called a 'mini mal') and a little thicker and wider than the shortboards more experienced surfers ride (longer than 9 feet will typically be too hard to manoeuvre). 'The beauty of starting on a surfboard that's built for a beginner is that it's easier to paddle and stand up

on. You'll still get plenty of exercise paddling, but you'll be able to catch waves more easily than you would on a shorter, thinner board, and that means you'll have more fun out there.'

Ben Harper, managing director of McTavish Surf International agrees, saying 'Long boarding is



great for beginners as you're going to catch more waves because you have a bigger board, so you'll improve simply because you are catching more waves.' He also says it's important to look at age, height, weight, whether you are male or female, and where you do most of your surfing i.e., beach breaks, point breaks, small or big waves. Basically, you want a board that suits your situation.

Along with the right board, there's plenty of help at hand with learn-to-surf schools, surfing videos, and surfing guide books to help you along the way. Being out in the ocean, catching and standing up on your first wave, even if it is just for a second, is thrilling and highly addictive. There's no doubt about it, those first sessions in the white water are tiring, but don't give up and remember that the best training for surfing IS surfing.

SUP YOUR WAY TO ROCK HARD ABS

The Hawaiian translation for 'Stand Up Paddleboard (SUP)' is 'Ku Hoe He'e Nalu', which literally means 'to stand, to paddle, to surf a wave'. This relatively new sport hit the headlines in the early 2000s when Hawaiian surfers began using SUP as a training tool when the surf was flat. And there lies the beauty of SUP because, unlike surfing, you don't need an ocean with waves (or a wave pool). It can be done on any body of

water such as lakes, rivers, oceans, dams and canals, and, the best thing is that it's easy to learn. Within an hour on flat water you'll have a handle on how to get around on your board.

Mark Kelly, founder of Global Surf Industries (GSI), says that SUP is a fun way to get fit. Even though you are using a wide range of muscle groups, especially your abdominals, you don't realise that you are doing a workout. Standing on a board that's floating in water takes balance, which means a lot of core strength.

'Each stroke of the paddle, if done correctly, engages your abs. So an hour paddle might be the equivalent of doing 2,000 crunches. I doubt many people would be too excited to do that but they would be excited to paddle for an hour,' says Mark.

There are a variety of SUP boards available, including those specifically for racing and surfing waves, but beginners should aim for a board that's an all-rounder. 'I think the best SUPs are the all-rounders that can easily paddle in the flat water, but also have some rocker built into the design so that if you want to catch a wave you can,' Mark says. 'These boards are usually around 10 to 11'6 inches long and around 31 to 32 inches wide; any narrower and it will make it hard to balance. I always recommend the best paddle you can afford even if it means you pay less for your board.

SUMMER HYDRATION TIP

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Signs of mild dehydration can include fatigue, irritability and thirst. The human body is made of up to 75% water, which is regulated by the level of electrolytes (mineral salts) present in your body. Electrolytes, such as those occurring naturally in coconut water, aid the hydration process and are critical for maintaining athletic performance as they help create the electrical impulses essential to all aspects of physical activity.

Find out more at purecocobella.com

Before you hit the water always stretch:

- Arms, shoulders and upper back.
- Lower back (spinal twists).
- Hamstrings, quads and hips.
- Neck.

Yoga or Pilates is a great way to get your body 'surf' ready as it addresses:

- Flexibility and mobility to help prevent injuries and to create a more fluid style.
- Strength gains in the upper body that's necessary for paddling and develops powerful quads for jumping up on the board.
- Core strength. A strong torso gives you greater support and control through extreme ranges of movement and helps to get you quickly to your feet.

For more tips check out www.yogaforsurfers.com

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