DIY beach workouts

Try these easy workouts to boost your sand fitness.

- Perform 10x10 metre sprints, walking back to the start after each sprint and using the walk time as recovery.
- Perform three sets of 12-15 push-ups in the sand. In between sets, perform walking lunges for 10 metres.
- Grab some boxing gloves, team up with a friend and box it out on the sand. You will work your heart and tone your arms, back and leg muscles while having loads of fun.

sure to stand up straight, keep your abdominal muscles activated and stride from the hips.

Running on soft sand is definitely a step up from road running, but with the right preparation you'll be able to improve your fitness to become a competent soft sand runner.

You need a good aerobic fitness base to tackle soft sand. If you're able to run 5km on the road comfortably you're probably up to the task. If you're unsure of your endurance level, don't panic – a quick test run on the beach will help you make a decision. If you're finding the going extremely tough, consider improving your road running endurance before hitting the beach.

Beginners are likely to experience some soreness after running on sand for the first time, especially in the calves. You'll most likely get very tight and sore calves after your first sand run.

This emphasises the importance of building up your muscular endurance – something that can only be done with consistent training on the sand. It's also important to adapt your muscular, ligament and tendon system to run on sand. This means you'll need to start with shorter runs on firmer sand with your shoes on.

Other areas of concern are quads and lower back muscles. Be mindful of any muscle soreness or tightness and be sure to stretch your legs after each sand running session.

As your muscular endurance develops, ditch your shoes and run barefoot on the sand. ✳

Q&A

with Personal trainer Bernadette Abraham

Q: *I'm training for my first 10k marathon. What should I eat before an early race?*

A: Defining what to eat before a race is tricky because tolerances vary greatly from person to person. Only trial and error during training can help determine what is best to eat before competition.

In general however, eat something that is predominantly carbohydrate, moderate in protein and low in fat at least one to four hours before the race. For example, eat a carbohydrate-rich dinner and drink extra fluid the night before. On the morning of the event, have a light 200 to 400 calorie meal such as a yogurt and banana with tea or coffee, and extra water. If you cannot handle breakfast before you exercise, have your breakfast the night before. A bowl of cereal, bagel with peanut butter, or oatmeal will help boost your liver glycogen stores and prevent low blood sugar the next morning. Just be sure to experiment during training to prevent gastrointestinal distress and optimize performance during competition.

Strengthening your body

Soft sand running is a great form of exercise, but before you start, it's a good idea to build up your muscle strength. Here's a set of exercises to work your main muscle groups that will have you ready to tackle the sand in no time.

Calf raise

- Stand straight with your feet hip-width apart, holding a barbell in front of your thighs.
- Keeping your back straight, slowly raise up on the toes of both feet, squeezing your calf muscles and raising your heels as high as you can.
- Pause at the top, then slowly lower your heels back down.

Squat

- Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, with a barbell placed on the 'meaty' part of your upper back.
- Keeping your head up and your trunk erect, slowly bend your legs and lower yourself down until your thighs are parallel to the ground, making sure your knees track over the middle of your foot.
- Straighten your legs by pushing through your heels until you return to the starting position, keeping your knees soft.

Good morning

- Stand with a barbell resting on your upper back, feet hip-width apart, bracing your abs to maintain an upright back.
- Leading with your bum, tip forward from the hips, bringing your chest forward as far as you can without it feeling uncomfortable.
- Press into your heels and glutes to return to the starting position.