

'HOW I BUILD MY BODY'

Lucy Charles-Barclay
IRONMAN competitor

Credentials: Lucy finished second in the IRONMAN World Championships in 2017, 2018 and 2019. Her overall time of 8:36:24 is the second fastest in race history.

CARDIO

'I clock up between 25 and 40 training hours a week, increasing in volume as the IRONMAN World Championships near. I train every day – even my rest day once a fortnight involves a swim and strength session. As a former elite-level swimmer, I only swim three or four hours a week, but I run around 60-100K and cycle 15 hours a week, mostly indoors as it's safer and more time efficient. I upload my workouts to the Zwift platform, which is linked to my Wahoo KICKR Bike [an indoor bike trainer – visit uk.wahoofitness.com], to move interactively over the courses. I do a lot of racing on there too to keep things fun.'

STRENGTH

'Because swimming is a non-impact sport, I was very injury-prone when I started running, so strength training

plays a big part in warding off injuries. I do five strength sessions a week but they're quite short and involve working specific muscle groups on different days, so I don't fatigue myself for my cardio. My go-to moves include squats and deadlifts, and we do power lifting even though I'm an endurance athlete. Cycling involves a single-leg action, so I also follow a sequence of single-leg exercises on a BOSU [a balance ball] to work on coordination, balance and strength, plus plyometric work with single-leg landings.'

FUEL

'I use a company called Fresh Fitness Food (freshfitnessfood.com) for all of my meals from Monday to Friday to replace the calories I use up in training. During peak training, I have five meals and a snack a day. My diet is pretty balanced, but as I burn around 60 grams of carbs for every hour of training, I'm always trying to replace them. Hydration is key and we often monitor my sweat in training to see if I'm replacing water and electrolytes fast enough, and I also rely on Red Bull for a caffeine hit. It really gives me the boost I need when I'm starting to fade towards the end of a six-hour bike ride.'

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VITAL KIT

'If you're going to spend money on anything, you should invest in a good-quality race suit because aerodynamics on the bike are everything. My suit by Endura (endurasport.com) has been wind tunnel tested and is the fastest I've found. My suit is tailored to accommodate my big shoulders from years of swimming, and I wear predominantly white kit to keep me cooler in hotter climates.'



For more details on how Lucy trains with Red Bull, visit her athlete page at redbull.com/athletes

SUPPORT

'I am very fortunate to have my pro-athlete husband Reece Barclay as my coach, training partner and supporter. I've always got him out in front to chase when we're training, so he helps push me on and I'm always working that bit harder just to keep up with him. I can't imagine training without him and having to put in all those long miles on my own. We're also part of a local running club and swim squad. Having those people to train with and talk to really helps with motivation and focus.'

www.womensfitness.co.uk

WHY TRY TRIATHLON?

Variety: 'The variety of training keeps things interesting and it's a great way to train with others if you have friends who only swim, run or cycle. Train with them in their individual discipline and put everything together later.'

Suitable for everyone: 'Triathlon is a very inclusive sport and open to all abilities with various distances on offer. It also has a great social scene. Check out

British Triathlon (britishtriathlon.org) to find your local club, and receive support and advice on getting started.'

A new challenge: 'If you want something different or feel the need to challenge yourself more, triathlon is for you. Most swimmers only swim in a pool while triathlon is done in open water, so it pushes you out of your comfort zone.'

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