

‘I’m building a FITNESS EMPIRE!’

From reality star to sportswear designer, Gabby Allen is on a mission to help you look and feel fab

WORDS: Joanna Ebsworth

Gabby Allen is continuing her takeover of the fitness world. Since leaving the third series of *Love Island* in 2017, the Liverpoolian professional dancer, fitness instructor and personal trainer has released her first book, *Shape Up with Gabby Allen* (Ebury Press, £15.99),

become a key trainer for mobile app FiiT; and is now launching her first activewear range in collaboration with sportswear, skincare and sweat-resistant make-up brand SportFX – the reason why we’re talking to her today. But ask Gabby if she is on a mission to become the UK’s next queen of fitness, and she goes all shy, before finally shouting, ‘Yes! I’m gonna build a fitness empire!’ with a hearty laugh. ‘But seriously’, she adds, ‘yes, I’ve done my book and am working with FiiT, and I’m now doing a clothing line, but it’s all been a very organic process. They’ve been milestones in my career, and I’m very proud of them. But there’s no rush to push things out. I’d rather take my time and choose my projects carefully to make sure they’re perfect. I want to be the best of the best!’

36 Health & Fitness

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It's Gabby's experience of the fitness world that has made her stand out from the rest of the reality TV crowd, and she's drawn on her knowledge of what women need from their gym kit to create her gorgeous new SportFX x Gabby Allen collection. But what is the inspiration behind her motivational slogan tees, functional seamless styles and cute cover-ups? Read on to find out more, and hear about the other exciting projects Gabby's got planned in the future.

Q WHY DID YOU CREATE YOUR COLLECTION WITH SPORTFX?

'I'd been thinking about doing my own merchandise for a while but, while I know what I want from my activewear, I didn't know how to start designing a range. So, when the opportunity came up to work with SportFX, it seemed like the perfect collaboration. SportFX has always been one of my favourite brands – their style is my type of style, and they do amazing sweat-resistant make-up I actually wear, so it made sense. The creative process was better than I could have imagined. I was in their offices every week to go through designs, say what I did and didn't like, and choose the fabrics and colours. There's so much that goes into creating a clothing line.'



SportFX x Gabby Allen
Sweatshirt, £19.99,
and shorts, £15.99;
sportfx.com

Q WHAT DID YOU WANT YOUR COLLECTION TO FEATURE?

'Having trained women one-on-one and in classes for 50+ hours a week before *Love Island*, I know what women do and don't like in activewear. The worst thing is when your leggings are falling down while you're doing squat jumps, or when they aren't quite high enough and you feel like you've got a bit of muffin top over your waistband. Women like to feel secure in their kit and look good, so I kept that in mind. I've used my favourite colours – teals, lilacs, blues – and there's some cool graphic prints as well as a basic black set.'

Q WHAT INSPIRED YOUR SLOGAN TEES?

'When I first started teaching fitness, if people got tired, I'd be like, 'Find your fire! Find something within you that's going to push that extra 30 seconds', and, over time, Find Your Fire and Ignite Your Spark became my personal slogans, because they're about finding the inner strength to keep going, not just in fitness but in all aspects of life. I wanted my collection to be inspiring, which is why I've included these messages. Strength isn't just about how many abs you've got, or how strong you look on the outside.'

Q WHY DO YOU THINK SPORTFX CHOSE TO WORK WITH YOU?

'The feedback I get about my fitness work and the messages I try to put across in general, is that I'm always positive. I'm not a Victoria's Secret model. I'm not really thin and I don't have a big bust – I'm just normal, and a lot of people relate to me in that way.'

Q IS IT IMPORTANT TO YOU TO LOOK GOOD WHILE YOU WORK OUT?

'It depends where I am. When I'm at home, I work out in my pants and a sports bra, and I love it, heh heh! I don't believe in having to do full, glam make-up to go the gym or classes, but I do think it makes a big difference to your training if you feel confident in how you look. Wearing good kit definitely does boost your confidence. If your leggings aren't see-through when you squat, you're gonna squat lower.'

Gabby's hero pieces

'I love all my seamless crop top and leggings sets because, well, who doesn't love a seamless style? They're so great for holding you in and smoothing out any lumps and bumps while being so comfy to wear. And the high-waisted leggings really stay in place while you're working out.'

Q WHAT'S IT LIKE TO SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT HEALTHY LIVING?

'It's everything to me! I get such a buzz from working out with people and seeing them progress. Right now, I don't get to teach regularly, which I really miss, because I'm away so much. But I feel very privileged to work with the Fiit app, creating content for them every week and reaching so many people – and we have many more amazing projects coming up!'

Q HOW DO YOU LIKE TO RELAX?

'I like working out for myself as, when I don't get to go to the gym, it really affects me – I've just been for a run before this interview as I haven't had a chance to train all day. I'm very close to my mum and brother, so it's nice to see them a lot. They're my biggest fans, but they're also my biggest critics! They ground me and put me in my place if they believe I'm not on the right path, which I really appreciate. And, I like to go on holiday with friends!'

Q SO, WHAT'S THE NEXT BIG PROJECT?

'I'm looking at doing my own fitness retreats and day bootcamps where people can workout with me. The beauty of having a bit of a following is that I can reach a wider range of people and listen to what they want and need – the main reason for writing my book was because so many people were asking me about what good, healthy food I ate and how I trained. So, I'd like to do a UK Shape Up tour eventually to help educate and inspire people. And the ultimate dream is to do a retreat abroad. Every time I take on a new project, I want it to be different but still fitness-related. Fitness is my biggest passion, so I'm very lucky to be in a job that I love doing every single day.'



SportFX x Gabby Allen Laser Cut Sports Bra, £21.99, and Side Panel Leggings, £24.99, sportfx.com

'I get such a buzz from working out with people and seeing them progress'

3 MOVES GABBY LOVES



ONE ARM KETTLEBELL SWING
'A total-body move that builds strength and burns serious calories. Swinging with one hand instead of two works your core, back and shoulders hard as you try to maintain balance.'



KETTLEBELL PLANK ROW
'Planks done correctly are a full-body workout but can get boring, so adding variations challenges your body to adapt and grow stronger.'



MEDICINE BALL SLAM
'This simple but amazing move conditions your whole body, gets your heart racing and clears your mind.'

SportFX x Gabby Allen
Ruch Sports Bra £19.99,
and Mesh Leggings
£27.99; sportfx.com