

# THE KIT

*Fast fashion detox: Our editor-in-chief swore off Zara. Here's what happened* PAGE 5

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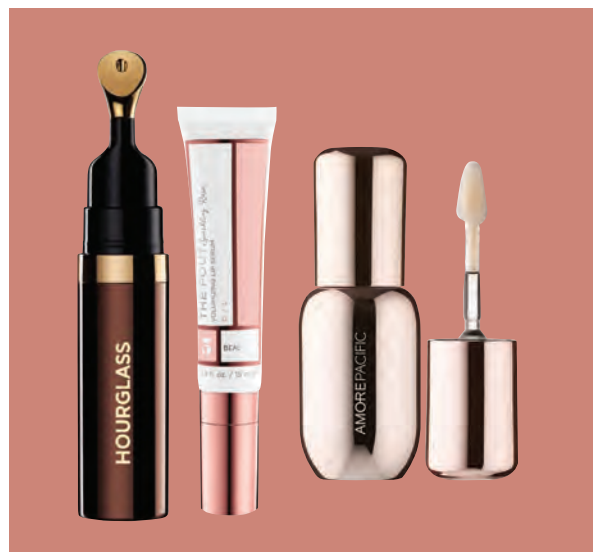
## The grown woman's guide to adulting

How to make your life better by doing less. (Hint: It starts with saying no, and learning to love it.)

PAGE 4

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RILEY STEWART

SMYTHE JACKET, \$935, SHOPSMYTHE.COM. UNIQLO TOP, \$30, UNIQLO



### Move over, balm

Lip serums have arrived—and promise to do it all PAGE 3



### Don't break your resolutions

Editor-tested sports bras for your fittest year yet PAGE 7



### The most perfect leather jacket

It does exist—and it's custom-made in Canada PAGE 3

# SKIN REVIVAL

Kick off the new year right: put your best face forward with these ultimate skin-perfecting products.

## CLEAN SWEEP

Matcha is every wellness guru's drink of choice, and now you can reap the perks in skincare, too. With its clever cooling applicator, a high-powered eye cream uses green tea to treat puffiness, wrinkles and dark circles. Leave skin pristine with a multi-talented cleansing stick, made with matcha and bamboo stalk extract.

**Teaology** Matcha Tea Ultra-Firming Eye Cream, 15 mL, \$49, and Matcha Pore Cleansing Stick, 12 g, \$29



## SILKY SMOOTH

Moisturizer is a beauty staple, but this nourishing cream is anything but basic: it's powered by a collagen-boosting Tri-Peptide Lift Complex. You'll see plumper, firmer, more supple skin that looks healthier than ever.

**Estée Lauder** Resilience Multi-Effect Tri-Peptide Face and Neck Creme SPF 15, 50 mL, \$115



## HELPING HANDS

Masking isn't just for your face and hair; let your hands soak up the same attention. Slip on these gloves for 10 minutes, and this coconut-rich hand and cuticle mask actually warms as it moisturizes.

**Patchology** Perfect Ten Self-Warming Hand and Cuticle Mask, \$14



## PEEL APPEAL

For a quick pre-party skin detox, reach for this pearly-red mask infused with red shiso. It's able to sneak deep into pores to draw out impurities. Then just peel and reveal for your freshest face.

**Shiseido** WASO Purifying Peel Off Mask, 100 mL, \$38



## COMING UP ROSES

From the lovely golden jar to the sumptuous cream inside, this moisturizer adds a little luxury to your day. The star ingredient is an exclusive blend of skin-regenerating grand rose extracts you'll find only in this line.

**Lancôme** Absolue Soft Cream, 50 mL, \$260



## PRIME TIME

To ensure your makeup is always ready for your close-up, prep with this next-level primer. The shea butter-based best-seller not only creates a smooth canvas, but also hydrates—a beauty boon in wintry weather.

**Bobbi Brown** Vitamin Enriched Face Base, 50 mL, \$77



## WAKE-UP CALL

This rejuvenating eye cream is the next best thing to actually getting your beauty sleep. Made with crystal resin, jade powder and sea emerald, it leaves your entire eye area looking firmer, smoother and more luminous.

**Darphin** Stimulskin Plus Multi-Corrective Divine Eye Cream, 15 mL, \$176

## BESPOKE BEAUTY

Creating a custom moisturizer for your skin's individual needs is now as easy as mixing and matching. With the revolutionary Clinique iD, you first pick your favourite base from three Dramatically Different options—the Hydrating Jelly Base, Moisturizing Lotion+ Base or Oil Control Gel Base—then add in your choice of five concentrates.

Each offers unique solutions, whether you want to address uneven skin texture, uneven tone, signs of fatigue, lines and wrinkles, or irritation.

**Clinique** iD Base, 115 mL, \$29 each, and **Clinique** iD Active Cartridge Concentrate, 10 mL, \$18 each



## STARTER KIT

If your New Year's goal is to get your skin in tip-top shape in one month flat, consider this your beauty boot-camp. This four-week course of serums, meant to be used in order, promises to make skin stronger, more resilient and age-defying.

**StriVectin** Skin Reset 4-Week Intensive Rejuvenation System, 4 x 9 mL, \$149



## BRIGHT IDEA

Many anti-aging products feature a hero ingredient or two, but this one calls on no less than nine powerhouses. The water-light essence, full of encapsulated retinol, a tri-peptide complex and potent plant extracts, gives you the dewy skin of your dreams.

**Eve Lom** Time Retreat Radiance Essence, 150 mL, \$124



## CRYSTAL CLEAR

Makeup is no match for this pampering balm-to-oil cleanser, which melts away every last trace while leaving skin super soft and nourished. One of the most luxurious cleansers you can find, it's infused with real diamond powder to maximize your glow.

**Rodial** Pink Diamond Cleansing Balm, 100 mL, \$59

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VANCOUVER OAKRIDGE MALL

Murale  
by SHOPPERS DRUG MART

# Custom cool

Searching for the ultimate leather jacket? Get it made-to-order

BY JILLIAN VIERA | PHOTOGRAPHY BY RILEY STEWART

My search for a forever jacket had been fruitless. I'd scoured vintage stores and lusted after pieces from high-end labels, but there always seemed to be a snag: It fit too snugly around my slightly wide shoulders, the leather had a less-than-ideal hand feel, the bells and whistles didn't meet my aesthetic needs. Short of splurging on major alterations or conceding on some of my must-have elements, the options felt limited.

There are reasons it's worth trying to find your perfect leather jacket: Closets are built around these kinds of iconic pieces; a good one transcends trends, living eternally and getting better with age; the right jacket grants you entry into the Assured Women's Club by equipping you with don't-mess-with-me confidence.

This was the impetus for Toronto-based leather brand Namesake's new Try-at-Home method, which brings an atelier-like experience to you. Launched last month, the complimentary service results in a completely custom leather jacket, from fit and style to all the accoutrements your heart desires.

The easy-peasy process begins with selecting one of its eight base styles—options include a cropped moto and a lengthier, streamlined jacket—all fittingly named after trailblazing women in history, like Yoko Ono, Maud Wagner and Grace Jones. Then you're delivered a sleek box equipped with canvas versions of your pick ready to

be made your own. Swatches of real leather samples let you touch and feel before making the big decision. More than 100 colours of lining allow you to nail down the optimal shade of vintage russet. If you're hoping to veer outside silver hardware, there are gunmetal and rose gold alternatives to appease you. You can even go wild with extra embellishment like lacing, fringe or a detachable fur collar, if you so choose.

But the real benefit of going custom is getting that specially tailored fit. "For a piece to withstand the march of time, rather than a 'wear once' trend, a jacket must fit perfectly," says Namesake's founder, Rosa Halpern. "We embrace the fact our customers are sometimes not 'off the rack' sizes." A straight-forward, step-by-step video takes you through the precise adjustments, marking up the canvas jacket to your exact measurements.

Three weeks after returning my completed box, I received a bespoke jacket that felt positively mine, like nothing I'd tried before: a classic moto in a medium-weight, high-stretch leather that's like butter and built to my particular dimensions. There's even a subtle monogram spelling out my initials on the tag. It already felt lived-in when I tried it on for the first time and suddenly I found myself standing with a devil-may-care attitude. "A great leather jacket can be one of the most empowering pieces," says Halpern. "You slip it on and become the fiercest, bravest version of yourself."

Fashion director Jillian Vieira models her minimalist custom-made jacket.

NAMESAKE JACKET, FROM \$1,125, BY THENAMESAKE.COM. HORSES ATELIER DRESS, \$415, HORSESATELIER.COM



## Why it works

Fashion director **Jillian Vieira** breaks down the beauty of an on-point street-style look. This week: a vacation-ready look featuring malted layers and perfectly piled-on gold

When you imagine a Mexico City holiday, where sunny mornings spent touring 18th-century cathedrals give way to cool nights and plenty of mezcal, this undeniably chic look, as seen on Italian fashion editor Giovanna Battaglia Engelbert, is likely what you're wearing. It starts with what might just be the breeziest shirt dress we've ever encountered: the ideal shade of almond in an inflated trapeze shape, with a collar that's effortlessly perked up. Knotted cashmere in a similar hue adds warmth and texture, while her bevy of gold jewels, stacked from the neck down, glint in the magic-hour light. Finally, a couple subtle accessories—namely a curvaceous top-handle bag and dainty mules—bring an element of modernity to a carry-on friendly outfit.



BEN-AMUN NECKLACE, \$295, BEN-AMUN.COM



ACNE STUDIOS TOP, \$560, ACNESTUDIOS.COM



COS DRESS, \$155, COSSTORES.COM



STAUD BAG, \$500, STAUD.CLOTHING



MICHAEL KORS WATCH, \$295, MICHAELKORS.CA



ALBERTA FERRETTI SHOES, \$1,340, FARFETCH.COM



## Game changers

Meet your next skincare saviour: the suddenly everywhere lip serum

BY KATHERINE LALANCETTE

If your go-to balm isn't meeting all your needs, it may be time to bring out the big guns. Whereas balms, like face creams, are designed to form a barrier over skin and lock in moisture, serums are formulated to penetrate deeper. Their smaller molecules (hence their thinner consistency) allow them to deliver high concentrations of active ingredients and target specific concerns like dryness or loss of volume. So beyond proving wonderful for curbing chapping, a lip serum can address a slew of issues like minimizing the look of fine lines around the mouth and plumping your lips from the inside.

When shopping for a lip serum, seek out a formula tailored to your particular goals. If you're on the hunt for hydration, nourishing oils and vitamin E are your best bet. Want to tackle wrinkles? Look for youth-preserving peptides and antioxidants. And if you're after fuller-looking lips, reach for a serum containing hyaluronic acid, an ingredient that attracts moisture and swells up, therefore adding volume.

How to use it? Apply a thin layer of the product over clean, dry or freshly exfoliated lips and allow it to fully absorb. You can then smooth a balm on top, slick on some lipstick or follow up with an overnight mask if you're heading for bed. Some formulas can also be reapplied over your lip colour throughout the day to provide a hit of moisture and shine.

### TOOL KIT

You can use this multi-tasking tube as a volumizing treatment, a lip primer or a high-shine gloss.

BEAUTYBIO THE POUT SPARKLING ROSE VOLUMIZING LIP SERUM, \$57, HOLTRENFREW.COM



This K-beauty offering pays homage to green tea with oil from the plant's seed and a fermented version of the ingredient.

AMOREPACIFIC DUAL NOURISHING LIP SERUM, \$42, SEPHORA.CA



A decadent blend of botanical oils drenches lips in deep hydration to banish all signs of dryness and chapping.

HOURLASS NO. 28 LIP TREATMENT OIL, \$61, NORDSTROM.COM





# How to be a boss— from women who win

We recently launched The Kit Connect Leaders Live, a monthly round table with inspiring, successful, amazing Canadian women. Here, four entrepreneurs—Kristen Gale, Tahnee Lloyd-Smith, Sharon Zohar, Shemina Jiwani—talk to editor-in-chief **Laura deCarufel** about first impressions, failure and how to enjoy success

## Women often battle perceptions that we're too nice at work. What can women do to be taken seriously in the office?

**Sharon:** “You have to put yourself out there and be the first person to say, ‘Let me take that on.’”

**Shemina:** “People will take you seriously when you take on hard projects and become more assertive than you might naturally be. I work in the tech industry, which is very male-dominated, so being taken seriously is about having a voice. In meetings, people will often speak over you, and it can be easy to give up. Always make sure you say your point.”

**Kristen:** “I don't know if I actually am taken seriously so I'm going to go off the premise that I am! [laughs] I try to be as well read as I can, especially as an entrepreneur, so that when I'm speaking about something outside of my immediate wheelhouse, I have the relevant info and vocabulary. It makes a big difference when people feel like you're speaking their language.”

**Tahnee:** “Fashion and beauty can be like your armour. As soon as you walk into a room, you're making an impression. You say your point, you say it clearly, and then you're just a powerhouse. Like, ‘Damn, you look like *that* and you sound like *this*. You are a force.’”

**Kristen:** “You also show respect for other people by showing that you made an effort. I love to wear a power lipstick—there's something about makeup that makes me feel more put together.”

**Shemina:** “The other piece to being taken seriously is knowing your worth. I've read so many things about how women accept the offer given to us—men negotiate 75 per cent of the time, and women only do it 25 per cent of the time. We need to ask for what we want.”

## The idea of success—and how to achieve it—often gets a lot of ink, but not succeeding is also important to foster growth.

### How do you deal with failure?

**Shemina:** “I don't like the idea of, ‘Oh, just move on.’ You need to give yourself time to mourn your failure—sit in it, wallow, and then maybe you'll see the teachings in it.”

**Sharon:** “As an entrepreneur, you come up against failure all the time. I had a particularly hard time a few years ago, when staff were leaving,

investors were saying no, and it felt like the whole thing was crashing down. I decided to walk away and sit somewhere else for a second, and out [of that choice] came a whole new company, direction and purpose. But I needed space to get there.”

**Tahnee:** “Recently, I was sitting on the bathroom floor weeping, and then I stopped and went, ‘Wait, who am I to think that there's never going to be a problem?’ Failure is part of life.”

**Shemina:** “My biggest failure was not being able to have a second child, but that's what led me to adopting my son. I had options—a lot of people don't. Now I have this amazing, squishy child! So I get that, the crying on the floor. In the moment, I felt despair, but I needed to get through that to understand what the next step could be.”

**Kristen:** “When I'm feeling sorry for myself, I'll think, ‘Hold on, I live in Canada, my kids aren't sick, everything's actually pretty great.’ I don't always succeed, but I try to think of failures as something I can learn from and ask myself, ‘What can I do differently next time?’”

**Tahnee:** “I was at a dinner party recently and one woman was going on and on about all these horrible

things happening to her. I think she couldn't get the wheels up on her private jet—those kind of problems. [laughs] I said to her, ‘You could have been one of those girls that got kidnapped by Boko Haram. Perspective!’ She looked at me and she goes, ‘We're getting them back now.’”

**Kristen:** “What?!”

**Tahnee:** “Right? I was adopted. I could have stayed in St. Vincent, which is basically a third world country, and I think, ‘Wow, that could've been different.’”

## Anyone who manages people will say that it's the most rewarding and most challenging part of any job. What's your advice for being a good leader?

**Sharon:** “Learning to listen. The truth is, we may be bosses, but we're still learning all the time. You have to have people around you who are smarter than you—and you have to listen to them. Take their advice but also have your own passion and vision—the fire that drives you. Being a leader is never a straight line, but navigating it is a fun ride.”

**Kristen:** “When you start something, it means that you're a doer. It's a weird transition when you have to stop being the doer because you have a team whose job is to do it better than you. I've consciously had to step back and say, ‘I'm in charge of strategy and relationships. I have amazing people to do the rest.’”

**Shemina:** “Inclusion is important, too—making sure everyone on the team is heard. You might have a timid person in a meeting who is the most intelligent person in the room. It's important to give people platforms to share their ideas in ways that make sense for them.”

**Tahnee:** “Every day, I ask my team, ‘Is there anything I could've done to make your day better?’ I thank them every day. As an entrepreneur, you're doing everything and sometimes, in the frenzy of doing, you don't listen. In the restaurant industry, they call it ‘touching the table’—checking in regularly so you don't need to have weird conversations a month later.”

**When life and work is so busy, how do you take time to enjoy your success?**

**Sharon:** “For me, it's about spending time with family. I have two great daughters who are teenagers now and when I'm with them, I'm with them.”

**Kristen:** “One of our franchise partners had a staff party recently: 250 people in the ballroom of the Ritz-Carlton. I was like, ‘What?!’ Certain moments or celebrations stand out, but I think it's probably a better idea to have that gratitude on the day to day.”

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**Shemina:** “I try to scale back and look at the daily successes that can get lost. We're a new tech company and we said we were going to do these things, and we did them, and that is so amazing! Highlighting achievements to be proud of on a regular basis is key.”

**Tahnee:** “My husband is an entrepreneur, so we control our own schedules and work four days a week. We consciously try to work as many hours we can in four days. We're not Instagrammers or Facebookers; I don't spend 15 minutes



AMERICAN APPAREL BRA TOP, \$36, AMERICANAPPAREL.COM. WILFRED TOP, \$138, ARITZIA.COM

“Crying on the floor, I felt despair, but I needed to get through that to understand what the next step could be.”

## Meet the round table



**Kristen Gale**, founder and CEO of Ten Spot beauty bars



**Tahnee Lloyd-Smith**, founder and creative director of fashion label Pretty Denim



**Sharon Zohar**, founding partner at The Big Push, a business accelerator for women-founded tech startups



**Shemina Jiwani**, senior vice-president at global tech firm AscendantFX

walking to a coffee shop—when I'm at work, I'm at work. When I'm done, then I'm done. I had to teach myself that. I want to sit on the couch, eat popcorn and watch Netflix. I tell my staff if it's after 6 p.m., you don't need to email me back. I don't want to create that culture in our company. Unless we start saving lives, then we can start replying to emails after 6 p.m. But if I'm stressed about fringe on denim, [laughs], well, that can wait.”

*This interview has been condensed and edited.*

# Look the part

Anything-but-ordinary investment pieces to build your work wardrobe around

**1.** Amp up your collection of white blouses with a version that's tastefully embellished with a fringed scarf.  
**VANESSA SEWARD TOP**, \$665, VANESSASEWARD.COM

**2.** A to-the-floor cashmere coat brings a sense of polish to any outfit you're wearing beneath it.  
**JOSEPH COAT**, \$3,470, JOSEPH-FASHION.COM

**3.** When a big meeting calls for some cool confidence, consider these orbit-like earrings that are a total conversation starter.  
**JENNIFER FISHER EARRINGS**, \$660, JENNIFERFISHERJEWELRY.COM

**4.** Confirmed: This rich, dark olive hue acts as a neutral, so don't even think about purchasing another black bag.  
**MULBERRY BAG**, \$1,650, MULBERRY.COM

**5.** A ribbed trouser decked out with a high waist and wide leg has “regular rotation” written all over it.  
**SOLACE LONDON PANTS**, \$540, SOLACELONDON.COM

**6.** Switch to a sleek, stainless steel timepiece that wows with a café-au-lait-coloured face.  
**OMEGA WATCH**, \$4,950, OMEGAWATCHES.COM

**7.** Reasons you need a grown-up glass slipper: It's elegant, architectural and let's you live out that princess fantasy at the office.  
**CULT GAIA SHOES**, \$460, CULTGAIA.COM





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## WE PUT THE VERY BEST SPORTS BRAS TO THE TEST

Just in time to support you through your New Year's resolutions, we wrapped our wind sprints and dead lifts to bring you the top picks

BY JILLIAN VIERA



### THE BEST FOR RUNNING

The tester  
Jillian Vieira, fashion director

#### The big ask

"Ever since I took up running with some actual dedication, it's become a priority to find a sports bra that supports me (literally and figuratively) while training. While clocking all those kilometres, I've learned what my prerequisites are: anti-bounce cuppage, a locked-in feel and enough coverage up top so there's no chance of spilling out. Oh, and a little design flair doesn't hurt either."

#### 1. The top pick: Under Armour Crossback Clutch Print

"After a couple clicks on the treadmill, this second-skin bra earned its top spot. There was no sweat pooling; in fact it was nearly dry (sweat-wicking material will do that). And the removable cups let me adjust the fit to my preference. Did I mention the built-in mesh panel that lets you stash your keys or a credit card for those outdoor runs?"

\$65, UNDERARMOUR.COM

#### 2. The runner-up: Nike FE/NOM Flyknit

"When I was going through some interval training, I swore I wasn't wearing this sports bra at all. The ultra-technical Flyknit fabric it's made with catapulted Nike's running shoes to fame. My only complaint is about the too-roomy fit: The extra space in the chest area is probably a plus for more well-endowed women, but in my case, the gape-y fit left me feeling a bit self-conscious."

\$100, NIKE.COM

#### 3. The third-place finish: Lululemon Enlite Bra

"If you're familiar with the struggle of peeling off a sports bra post-sweat, this back-clasped piece is a blessing. Slipping it on and off with the extra room was a cinch, but fastening the hooks behind my back took some getting used to. And while the fabric was some of the smoothest I've ever worn, its structure had a tendency to cut in, which was a bit irritating after a couple laps."

\$98, LULULEMON.COM



### THE BEST FOR LARGER BREASTS

The tester  
Oana Cazan, associate art director

#### The big ask

"You'll always catch me going all out at the gym; high-intensity workouts, like TRX, sprints and spinning, are my thing. The only issue? My C-cup boobs are a bit too eager to participate along with me. I needed to find a sports bra that could tame them into submission without the suffocating feeling that usually comes with a compact fit. Why can't we bigger-chested women have both?"

#### 1. The top pick: Adidas Stronger For It Bra

"This bra had practicality—and aesthetics—in spades. The stabilizer cut-out on the front did an ace job of keeping everything in place, even when I really put it to the test while running laps and doing dead lifts. I usually leave the gym with a sore chest and shoulders after working out, but the straps offered the perfect amount of padding. No post-cardio pain here!"

\$85, ADIDAS.CA

#### 2. The runner-up: New Balance Power Bra

"This might look like a no-frills sports bra, but don't be fooled: With a lengthier below-bust band for added support, gel-padded shoulder straps, a sleek, compressed fit, plus separated, moulded cups for each breast, I didn't have to think twice about going all out during a cardio circuit. The only reason it didn't make number one was its not-so-current appearance."

\$65, NEWBALANCE.CA

#### 3. The third-place finish: Victoria's Secret Incredible Knockout Ultra Max

"I definitely felt confident walking into the gym sporting this flashier piece. I liked being able to zip it up in front, but the point at which the straps met in the back became a bit of a distraction when I got to my weight routine. Even still, I'll be adding it into the mix for those days when I want to bring a bit more of an athleisure vibe to my look."

\$60, VICTORIASSECRET.CA



### THE BEST FOR EVERYDAY WEAR

The tester  
Caitlin Kenny, digital director

#### The big ask

"At the risk of sounding completely ridiculous, I'll admit that I own more than 30 sports bras. Despite the storage issues, it's great—I've got bras for any workout, colour scheme, mood. But I'm still looking for something comfy enough to wear on the daily. My requirements: snug support that doesn't make my chest feel girdled, a neckline that's undetectable under sweaters, and a bottom elastic band that won't curl up."

#### 1. The top pick: Girlfriend Collective Paloma Bra

"This bra delivers medium support while also feeling like I'm not wearing anything at all. The slightly longer silhouette sits flat on my ribs, the elastic band has a bit of fuzz on the inside for extra comfort, and the fabric (made from recycled water bottles!) is so soft. I want to live in it."

\$50, GIRLFRIEND.COM

#### 2. The runner-up: RYU Versa Bra

"I love this bra's streamlined design: the way the scoop neck comes to a gentle V, the extra-slim straps and the ring that connects them at the back. It's great on the bod, too, with slick, stretchy fabric, a fine mesh lining that feels cool to the touch and light (removeable) cups inside for a bit of shape. My only complaint is that the top layer of the fabric tends to bunch up along the neckline, making it too lumpy to wear discreetly under a fitted shirt."

\$57, RYU.COM

#### 3. The third-place finish: Michi Lotus Bra

"This made-in-Canada bra is soft on a whole other level. Made with what the brand calls 'cashmere feel tech fabric,' it reminds me of the plushiest of jersey cottons. In keeping with the cozy vibe, the bra has an extra-wide chest band, but I found that it was riding up over the bottom of my boobs. If I sized up, I could wear this to yoga and feel very om about my chichness level, but it's a bit too thick for my day-to-day vibe."

\$105, MICHINY.CA

## THE KIT

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## HOW TO RUN FASTER

Five tricks that worked for these  
Kit editors

BY CAITLIN KENNY AND JILLIAN VIERA

Adulthood doesn't offer us many opportunities to take home a medal. It was that yearning that led us to take on a new challenge: completing our quickest 5-km race ever. We turned to Toronto-based Nike running coach Brittany Moran for guidance on how to run faster.

#### 1. TAKE BREAKS

"You can't start off by completing all of your training runs at a very fast pace or you'll risk getting injured," says Moran. Instead, she recommends interval training to help increase running speed and stamina over time. Every week, we hit the track, where we cranked up our speed for a set of shorter distances, such as five 800-metre laps (two loops of a standard track) at our goal pace, with a minute's rest in between each. We won't lie: The first time we ever finished a speed session, we thought we were absolutely about to keel over. But over time, it became easier, and we noticed our long runs were also getting easier as a result.

#### 2. DON'T PUSH THROUGH PAIN

Despite our most conscious efforts to avoid injury, we both found ourselves with knee pain as we approached race time. With help from Moran, who is also a chiropractor at the Runner's Academy in Toronto, we assessed whether it was safe to keep running. While she recommends getting a doctor to weigh in, if you're tight for time before a race, you can do this simple test: "Jump on a single leg for one minute—if you can't do that, it's probably not a good idea to run, because running is basically jumping from one foot to the other." Because a lot of our strain was coming from imperfect form, we swapped a few distance sessions for shorter bursts of near-sprints. The speed causes your form to tighten up. This adjustment allowed us to keep building our fitness, while working on form without making the aches worse. The only pain that was

worth pushing through: foam-roller stretching sessions, which also played an important role in keeping injuries at bay.

#### 3. HAVE A MANTRA

The mental battle is often the biggest obstacle most runners face on race day. Moran's best advice? Come up with a mantra. "Why did you sign up for the race? Why did you spend all of that time training? Use that to come up with a mantra and have it ready for when it gets tough out there."

#### 4. EAT RIGHT, DRINK LOTS

We've all heard that "food is to the body what gas is to a car" analogy enough times to know that fueling is important. As for the best foods to eat before a run? It's all about having a nutritious breakfast—think one packet of instant oatmeal, half a banana and a cup of fruit juice—about 1.5 to 2 hours before you hit the course. Skip out on high-fat or -fibre meals beforehand, too; all the bouncing and sloshing can produce, well, less than ideal digestive conditions. Once you reach a hydration station, reach for water (pinch the cup while you sip to avoid mid-running spillage). Even if you're not particularly thirsty, a swish-and-spit of an electrolyte-packed drink can give you a mental boost.

#### 5. FIND A BUDDY

Ninety-nine per cent of training runs that we skipped were ones that we had planned to do on our own. Having a running partner—or team!—will give you the push to show up on days when you don't feel like it. On race day, that partner can motivate you, recite the mantra, call you out when you want to quit. Plus, it makes the whole thing a lot more fun and gives you someone to celebrate with at the finish line when you achieve your goal (which, P.S., we did, both shaving minutes off our previous personal bests!)



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