

My Top Triathlon Tips for Newbies!

#passiton #youcandoit #theowensway



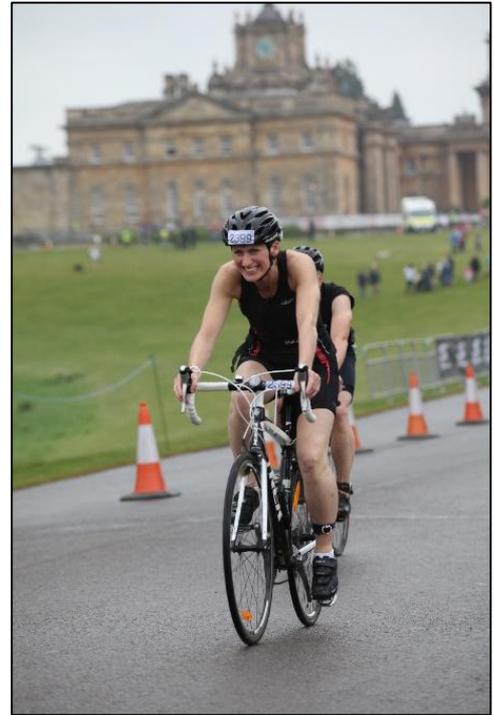
Swim

- Train with a pull buoy in the pool so you just use your arms and build up your upper body strength – when swimming in open water, your wetsuit will keep you buoyant and you need only use your arms if necessary, just leaving your legs to float behind you! Quad muscles are the largest muscles in the body and demand the most oxygen when using your legs during front crawl, so if you can keep your leg use to a minimum, you'll save your breath and leg energy for the bike and run. Useful YouTube clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kn2pabGsCOc>
- Wear 2 swim hats to protect against the cold – your own one and your “wave” one. Invest in a Tri suit – padded cycling shorts look like a baggy nappy when wet. Use lube when putting your wetsuit on, around ankles, wrists and neck and let some water into the neck of your wetsuit as you come out of the water to make it easier to take your wetsuit off. DO go for a wee in your wetsuit at the start!
- The nerves in your cheeks are responsible for adjusting your body to the initial cold water on entry so keep dipping your face in the open water before you start to get used to the cold – YouTube clip explains this well: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-AafJaWv-2A>
- Practice bilateral breathing so you can adjust sides in the water if necessary (helps you to swim in a straight line), although swimmers often swim just on one side in a race. In the pool you can swim one length breathing on one side and change for alternate lengths – you don't have to alternate for every stroke. The most important thing is to get the right amount of oxygen in your body – see YouTube Tricoach: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gBGQ7U9XucM>
- Do at least one open water swim before the race – I'd highly recommend signing up for the Triathlon training day a month before Blenheim! Warm up before the actual race by rotating your whole arms and opening them out behind you to stretch. Invest in well fitting, tinted, mist free goggles and use a nose clip if it helps you to focus on your breathing.



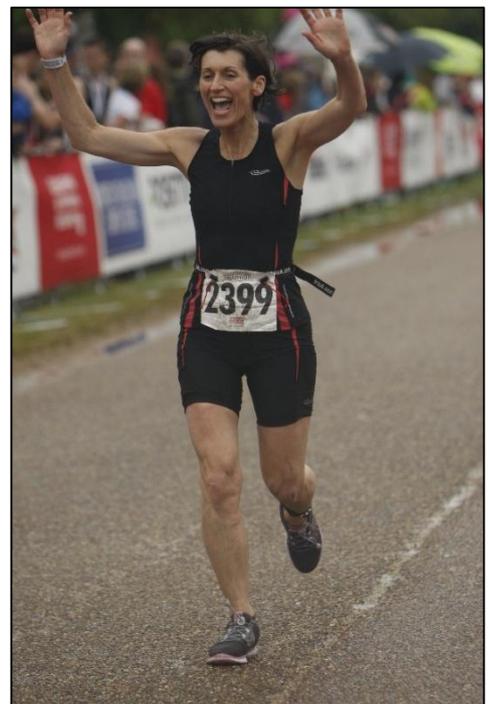
Bike

- Invest in a road bike - consider Evans Cycles as they take Tesco Vouchers and check the Cycle to Work Scheme with your employer to help minimise costs. Use clip shoes and practice to get used to them on local roads and at junctions before a long ride – I fell off twice before I really got it - great YouTube clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=28IdOvbK7Us>
- Have a service a couple of weeks before race to make sure all is OK. Remember if you pump your tyres up too much just before the race and it's really hot, you could cause a puncture. Keep left when racing so others can pass easily if needed. Leave your bike in a low gear in transition so you can get off easily. Do wear a snug fitting helmet and practise with sunglasses to stop flies getting in your eyes. Drink fluids on the go – always quicker than drinking in transition – if your bottle has a lock, make sure it's open before you ride out.
- Training means time in the saddle – do sportives, skyrides and/or cycle to work. When training learn to increase your cadence and use low gears to avoid muscle and joint pain. On long rides, move head from side to side occasionally to prevent neck ache, freewheel downhill to save energy, change hand position on bike occasionally to stop joints locking up, get in the right gear before stopping at junctions and lean over after clipping out one pedal so you don't fall over! If it rains on the day, put your race number on your bike just before the race and use a reusable cable tie to secure, otherwise it'll wash off.



Run

- Invest in lightweight trainers. Do get elastic laces. Do your race distance and a bit more in training. Put energy gels in your racebelt and suck them on the go – better than taking them in transition. If using running machine in gym, use a small incline for extra challenge.
- Yoga helps to stretch and build core and overall strength as well as learning controlled breathing.
- Increase your cadence and run on the balls of your feet – heel first acts as a break – good YouTube clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=entUXhcgt3c> – how to run and prevent pain in muscles and joints.
- Slow to a jog and take deep breaths if you get a stitch and put your arms above your head before getting back into the run when the stitch eventually subsides – for cramps you just have to stop and massage.



General

- Plan nutrition carefully – replace one meal per day the week before the race with a pasta meal – M&S do great deals on pasta meals for one! Have porridge and bananas on race morning and if your race is at midday, have a roll and an energy gel a couple of hours before
- Do brick sessions in training a few weeks before the race (two disciplines back to back), especially to experience jelly legs – bike then run is good!
- Do an organised training day – YOU WILL LEARN SO MUCH about all 3 sports and theory too!
- Remember to taper (ease off completely the week before the race)
- Think carefully about transition – you really will save minutes off your time
- Fund raise – it's a great incentive and will add to your sense of achievement – do your research on <http://www.moneysavingexpert.com/family/charity-fundraising-sites> for best sites to sign up to which will give the most money to your chosen charity and remember to encourage people to use give aid - a £10 donation becomes £12.50
- Have goals – estimated times for each discipline and overall time or just to finish the event! If you just want to finish, make sure you know how to change a puncture – just in case!
- Most fun to take part in a team event and tell people what you're doing
- Ignore the doubters
- Smile for the Event Photographers!
- Enjoy the race!

