

BODY BY BATMAN

He may lack superpowers, but the Caped Crusader is a model of fitness versatility, says exercise scientist E. Paul Zehr, Ph.D., whose 2011 research explores this theme. To dominate like the Dark Knight, don't be an exercise specialist. Instead, master the range of skills used by the fitness heroes below.



1
MARTIAL ARTIST
SKILL
Power

You don't throw 100 punches in a fight—you use forceful moves to end it quickly. **Master it:** Punch a bag, using short, explosive bursts with active recovery sessions in between.



2
RUNNING BACK
SKILL
Fearlessness

Yes, he knows he'll be pounded. But he acknowledges the reality and goes forth anyway. **Master it:** Push yourself: Add an extra circuit, or run another half mile. You get the idea.



3
POLICE OFFICER
SKILL
Awareness

When it comes to body control, mental skills are as crucial as agility. **Master it:** Next run, ditch your iPod. Listen to nature and your footfalls, and focus on the way your body moves.



4
FIREFIGHTER
SKILL
Perseverance

Fighting fires in heavy gear requires pushing past discomfort. **Master it:** Complete cardio work before weights. If you're tired but can maintain form with an exercise, you've mastered it.



5
RACE-CAR DRIVER
SKILL
Focus

Nascar drivers have to ignore the G-forces, noise, smells, plus exhaustion. **Master it:** Basketball. Playing requires constant attention as opponents try to interfere.



6
GYMNAST
SKILL
Agility

Balance and control are key when things go wrong—you swerve or trip, for example. **Master it:** Playground obstacle course. Climb the pole, do chinups on the monkey bars, and balance on beams.

ON OUR RADAR

Trail of no tears

Endurance athletes' emotions often run on high, as races can trigger anger or even depression. But athletes who have high emotional intelligence—a self-perceived ability to manage emotions—respond positively to strenuous exercise, a 2011 study of ultramarathoners found. They may see body stress as a sign of effort, while others think it's a failure. Future research may assess ways to boost emotional intelligence.

Zap your workout boredom by mixing new sports and exercises into your regimen.

POTTY TRAINING

If you keep moving, so will your bowels. **Running keeps you regular**, new Swedish research confirms. The scientists found that during training, runners hit the can more often and had looser stools than they did in an off week. Your body bumps up and down as you run—a possible explanation for food moving more quickly through your bowels, says study author Hans Strid, M.D., Ph.D. Also, running may raise secretions of intestinal fluid, loosening stools, he says. Staying hydrated may also ease constipation.

BURN YOUR TOAST

Hate eating before your 6 a.m. workout? Fuel up anyway: **Eating before morning exercise can boost your burn**. Italian researchers found that runners who ate breakfast consumed more oxygen than breakfast skippers did. "Consuming more oxygen fuels metabolism—the more you inhale, the more calories and fat you burn," says study author Antonio Paoli, M.D. If you don't want to cook at the crack of dawn, just make the superquick and simple study meal: buttered toast with jam, a banana, and milk.

30 SPF

LEVEL OF SUN PROTECTION OFFERED BY A WHITE COTTON T-SHIRT

Source: Journal of the German Society of Dermatology