


Alinah wears:
Top, £20, Asos 4505
(asos.com); leggings,
£65, Nike (nike.com);
earrings, £79, Cornelia
Webb (corneliawebb.
com); other jewellery,
Alinah's own; socks,
£4.50, Calzedonia
(calzedonia.com);
trainers, £109.95,
Reebok x Gigi Hadid
(reebok.co.uk)

brie

BRIE SAYS: I want to
see fashion on real women;
it's so important to broaden the
concept of what it means to be
a woman. I want to shine a light
on brands breaking barriers
around body image, brands
that aren't one-size-fits-all.



Bernita (far left) wears: Top, £59.95, leggings, £104.95, and trainers, £100, all Nike ([nike.com](https://www.nike.com))
Matilda (left) wears: Jacket, £500, and joggers, £295, both Koché ([koche.fr](https://www.koche.fr)); trainers, £74.95, Reebok ([reebok.co.uk](https://www.reebok.co.uk))
Addy (right) wears: Top, £270, Kenzo ([kenzo.com](https://www.kenzo.com)); leggings, £88, Lululemon ([lululemon.com](https://www.lululemon.com)); trainers, £100, Nike ([nike.com](https://www.nike.com))
Alinah (far right) wears: Top, £299, and leggings, £400, both Artica Arbox ([articaarbox.com](https://www.articaarbox.com)); trainers, £119.95, Nike ([nike.com](https://www.nike.com))

setting

the pace

With the sportswear trend here to stay, running group Fly Girl Collective showcase the brands that cater for everyone, from size 0 up to size 30. On your marks...

Ava (left) wears:
Top, £55, and leggings,
£75, both Sweaty Betty
(sweatybetty.com);
watch, £149.99, Fitbit
(fitbit.com); trainers,
£74.95, Reebok
(reebok.co.uk)

Matilda (right) wears:
coat, £99, Patternity +
John Lewis (johnlewis.
com); jacket (worn
underneath), £245,
Matthew Miller
(matthewmiller.eu); top,
£64.95, and leggings,
£84.95, both Adidas
By Stella McCartney
(adidas.co.uk); earrings,
£98, Maria Black
(maria-black.com);
trainers, £515,
Stella McCartney
(stellamccartney.com)





Matilda wears:
Bodysuit, £42.95, and
joggers, £59.95, both
Reebok x Gigi Hadid
(reebok.co.uk)



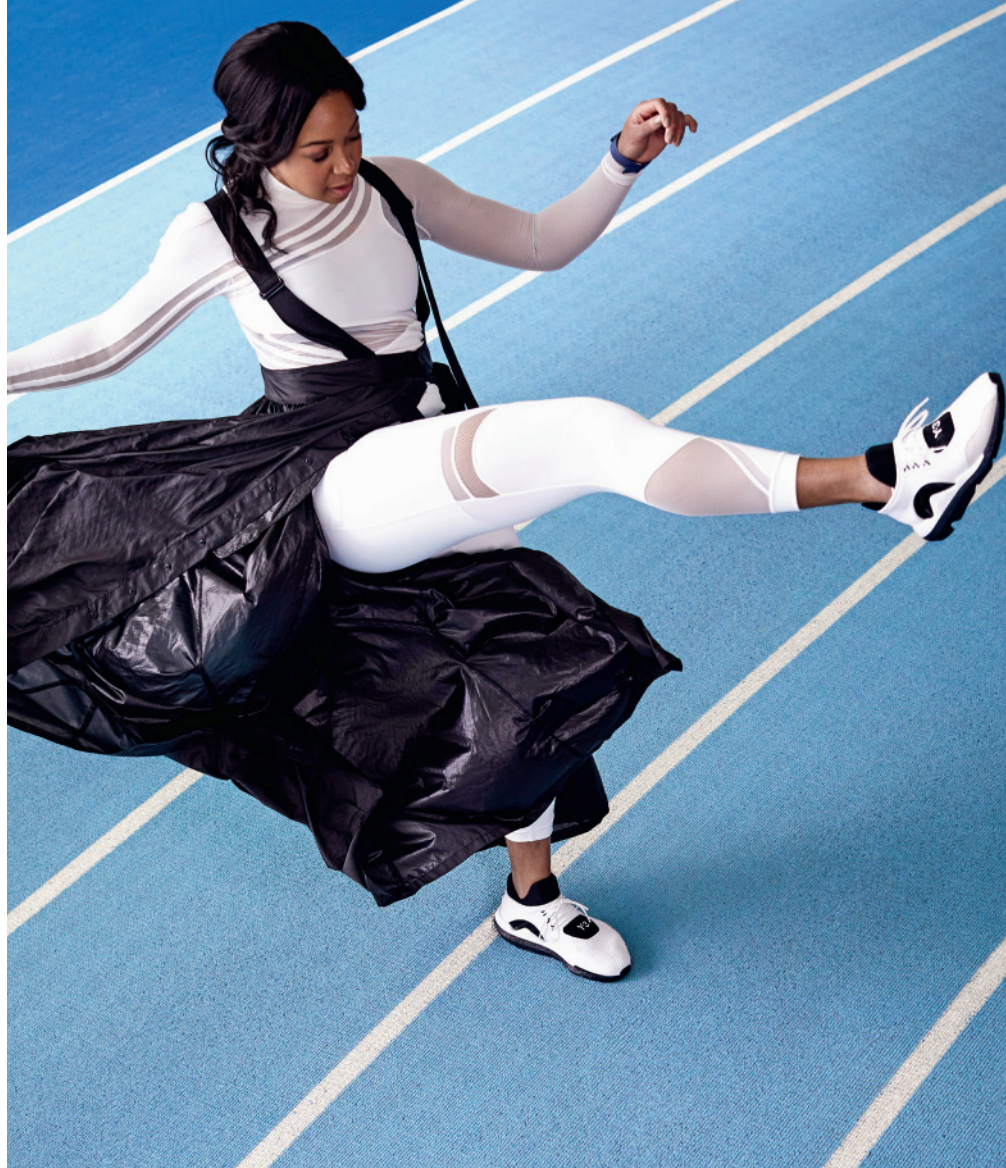
ABOUT FLY GIRL COLLECTIVE

Fly Girl Collective was founded in 2015 by Matilda Egere-Cooper to champion the fitness achievements of women of colour. It's grown into a movement that celebrates and promotes diversity in fitness, seeking to inspire women to challenge the status quo and live their best and healthiest lives through meet-ups and running groups (flygirlcollective.co).



Bernita (above) wears:
Bodysuit, £95, Nike
(nike.com); jewellery,
Bernita's own

Addy (right) wears:
Crop top, £22, and shorts,
£20, both Asos 4505
(asos.com); socks, stylist's
own; trainers, £100, Nike
(nike.com); jewellery,
Addy's own



Ava (above) wears:
Top, £170, skirt, £500,
and trainers, £300, all Y-3
(adidas.co.uk); leggings,
£88, Lululemon
(lululemon.com); watch,
£149.99, Fitbit (fitbit.com)



Bernita (left) wears:
Top, £59.95, leggings,
£104.95, and trainers,
£100, all Nike (nike.com)

Addy (right) wears:
Top, £270, Kenzo
(kenzo.com); leggings,
£108, Lululemon
(lululemon.com); trainers,
£100, Nike (nike.com)

Alinah wears:

Jacket, £600, Mashama (masha-ma.com); leggings, £108, Lululemon (lululemon.com); earrings, £79, Cornelia Webb (corneliawebb.com); socks, £4.50, Calzedonia (calzedonia.com); trainers, £119.95, Nike (nike.com)

Photographer: Kate Davis-

Macleod at One Represents

Fashion: Michelle Duguid

Models: Matilda Egere-Cooper,

Bernita Boxill, Alinah Roberts,

Ava Charles and Addy Frederick

Hair: Lorraine Dublin using

Keracare and Dyson Blow Dry

Make-up: Julie Jacobs at

David Artists using Ark

Skincare and Cover FX

Production: KO Productions

Photography assistant:

Neal Jackson

Digital operator: Nic Bezzina

Fashion assistant:

Florrie Alexander

Location: Lee Valley

Athletics Centre



STYLIST'S PLEDGE

Inspired by our work with Brie, and as part of our ongoing commitment to uplift women, in 2019 *Stylist* makes a commitment to increase diversity in all its forms within our fashion and beauty shoots – representing women as they really are, regardless of age, race or body shape. *Stylist* will become a mirror to the women who read it.

"All bodies deserve kit that fits"

Stylist's fashion news editor Billie Bhatia hails the new plus-size performance wear

"Billie tries very hard." Term after term, those were the only remarks left in my primary school report by my ballet teacher.

My classmates leapt into the air, visions of pink froth, politely landing on the gym floor in faultless pliés. Sporting considerably more chunk, my feet would fly all of an inch above the floor, before me and my home-made tutu thumped unceremoniously to the ground. All while involuntarily boasting what can only be described as side-boob. At age seven.

Aged eight, I was encouraged to no longer attend ballet. Honestly, the humiliation of not looking like, dressing like, or dancing like the other girls meant this came as sweet relief. Wipe those tears, this was not the end of my sporting career.

Turns out those who can't jump, hit. Squash balls, rounders balls, hockey balls, tennis balls, netballs – there wasn't a hand-to-eye sport that I couldn't do. Granted, I was over-zealous – "In the lines please, Billie" was a frequent warning – but I was no longer presumed useless at sport because I was fat.

Heed my words: never underestimate the fat kid, for they have the most to prove.

Yes, my sports skirt rose above my gym knickers and on more than one occasion I felt as if the waistband was cutting off my circulation. But there is nothing more spectacular than when someone expects zero from you – in fact is mystified as to why you are even on a sports pitch – and then you blow them out of the water. Sometimes, though, I wish I could go back and tell that 10-year-old girl the fashion world would catch up eventually.

Skip forward several years and the gym uniform at high school hadn't got any better, but my drop shots had. I was preparing for a squash match against my oldest rival. She was lithe and naturally athletic. We both played number one on the team and this was the showdown. A drop shot here, a forehand down the line there and a supercharged sprint: game, set, match, Billie. It no longer mattered what I looked like, I was good and the crowd was shocked.

Though I was crowned Leicestershire's under-19 squash champion, I didn't take the sport seriously at university. To be on the first team I had to look the part, and I didn't fit the kit. Instead, I wore the only pair of leggings I could



"FEELING PART OF THE TEAM HAS A HUGE IMPACT"

find in my size (Primark, baggy at the knees and almost transparent on the bum) with a plain T-shirt and robed the Leeds University jacket over my shoulders.

Let's skip a few more years. It's 2012 and team sports aren't an option in the rural area I now live. It's time to tackle the gym. But what to wear? The brands everyone else is sporting don't go above a size 14 – because fat people don't work out, obviously. How will a pair of crap, performance-lacking leggings and a non-branded, non-breathable T-shirt aid me in my quest for fitness? Why is my sports bra so deeply uncomfortable that it rolls up at the sides,

and why doesn't it reduce bounce at all? And worse, what will people think when they see me in it? I was back to being a ballerina misfit. I threw in the towel to avoid ridicule.

And yet, while I sat on the metaphorical bench, a plus-sized athleisure revolution had began to grow on social media. People like yoga teacher and author Jessamyn Stanley (@mynameisjessamyn) and athlete Louise Green (@louisegreen_bigfitgirl) prove you can do sport at any size. What's more, Nike, Adidas, Puma, Reebok et al finally realised exercise is for everyone and everyone deserves to look and feel good doing it.

Why? Firstly, it's capitalism: brands can sell more products. Secondly, it's practical: the natural stretch of the fabric makes it easy to extend their sizing range. Thirdly, brand messaging: encouraging more people to exercise is a good ethos for sports brands.

Who knew a swoosh could make you feel so proud? Exercising in kit that truly fits gives me a sense of validation. I feel like I belong in a dance studio, a spin class, a gym. The emotional impact of feeling comfortable, supported and part of the same team as everyone else is huge. I'm no longer worried my top will ride up or that when I squat everyone will be able to see my underwear.

We need only look at New York Fashion Week to see that this

inclusive ethos is making its way onto the catwalk and into conversations. Chromat, a New York insider favourite, is a brand specialising in swimwear and bodywear for all bodies, sizes and abilities, because they, along with the likes of Good American, Superfit Hero and Active Truth, have realised that all bodies are capable of being active. Asos 4505 Curve goes up to size 30. The fact that athleisure is styled up outside the gym proves to me that there's a huge appetite for plus-size fashion. It makes me wonder why there are still fashion brands beyond the athleisure set that aren't getting in on the revolution, too.

Meanwhile, don't be shocked that a plus-size woman can lift into a yoga crow, or that women without washboard stomachs and thigh gaps are able to run marathons – just look at Bryony Gordon and Jada Sezer. Just because you can't see someone's strength, dedication, discipline and skill doesn't mean it isn't there. And don't be surprised when I beat you at squash in my Nike leggings.