

***Once you become fearless – life becomes limitless***

- **Unknown**

A special thanks to my wonderful family, husband, in-laws and those generous with their time to have so kindly reviewed this book for me, Lynn Clerkin, Muireann Cullen and my brother Wayne Hunt. To all who read this, happy reading and I hope you find some nuggets of useful information you can take away.

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**Every champion was once a contender that refused to give up - Rocky Balboa**

## **Chapter 1 - Feeling fit**

*With courage you will dare to take risks, have the strength to be compassionate, and the wisdom to be humble. Courage is the foundation of integrity – Mark Twain*

For my ebook introduction I have decided to keep things brief. Why? I feel it is essential to get to the core of what is actually important. For anyone new to getting fit (not thin), and unsure where you should start training, I hope you will find some helpful takeaways (of the learning kind) inside.

Having been a sports enthusiast in my youth and a gym goer in more recent years ((basically going by myself and trying to figure things out, then using a personal trainer (to look good getting hitched to subsequently qualifying as one), I am aware of the pitfalls I have made along the way. I hope my words will help set you on a quicker path to success, without any diversions or detours!

Throughout this book I will focus on some key areas which will be discussed in the chapters within. All are hugely essential to learn about if you are looking to become fit and healthy.

- Interval training
- Strength training
- Nutrition

Remember it won't be easy but it will be worth it.

PS. Don't think you have to have this all figured out before you set foot in a gym. Go for it. Don't ever be put off by anyone else. Everyone comes in different sized packaged gifts, from different backgrounds with different goals in mind that have both psychologically and physically shaped where they are today. One thing to bear in mind is that as your zest for fitness improves recovery becomes just as important to your nutrition and workouts.

*A negative mind will never give you a positive life - Ziad K. Abdelnour*

**It's ok to lose to your opponent- must not lose to fear – Mr Mygai  
-The Karate Kid – Part iii**

**Chapter 2 – Set some goals and demolish them**

Once you have made the decision to make some positive changes then go for it, set yourself some goals. There is no better feeling than smashing through your goals. However, what tends to happen is you get all fired up at the start, all guns blazing, then after some time and a few initial changes time passes by and your original goal still seems all too distant. Negativity can start to seep in and you begin to wonder what's it's all for?

The surest way to go about reaching that future goal is to break it down into manageable chunks. Focus on the next 24 hours ahead and try to achieve mini goals to get you there. One thing is for sure, whether you try or not time is always going to pass by, so you have nothing to lose by giving it a go.

Once you have decided you want to set a goal, you then have to think what type of goal you want to achieve. Goals always require purpose and direction. For example don't set yourself a goal of losing fat from one area of your body. Our bodies unfortunately don't work this way. Spot reduction in one particular area just doesn't happen, the same as you can't choose where the weight gets added too. The only way to get rid of fat from problem areas is to decrease your overall body fat percentage. Ultimately, the ideal goal is to decrease body fat and increase muscle tone. Where you lose it first or last really comes down to your genetics.

Goal setting needs to be more specific than just using general health and well-being as your goals if you want to stay motivated. So when beginning your journey make sure you consider the points below. If you want to check where your current physical activity level is at you could take a short survey such as this Physical Activity survey on this website – [www.indi.ie](http://www.indi.ie). Link [here](#)

**Commitment**

You will have to be committed to see results. There will be times when you feel dejected but commitment means staying loyal to trying to reach your goals. Considering you are reading this ebook, then this means you already have or are well on your way. Some things I would suggest doing on Day 1 of the beginning of the rest of your life:

1. Snap some selfies. Take three: a front, back and a side view. It will give you a visual guide to your current shape.
2. Most beginners will start to see results in one way, shape, or form after the first 6 to 8 weeks of exercise. However, to keep achieving, set weekly goals first, then monthly. You could also consider signing up for an event and then training for it. There is nothing like paying for something to make you stick to your commitments. I personally know this to be true. Or how about making strength a goal or testing how many push-ups you can get to, or how much you can weight lift? If you have decided to focus your sights on losing fat it is recommended that a goal loss of 1-2lbs (0.4/0.9 kilos) per week is probably a safe realistic target to aim for.

3. Next up create a Myfitnesspal account. Get used to filling out what you have been eating for the first evening before you start training. Be honest in filling it out, include everything you have had – this is the only way to know what and how much you are really eating. The great thing is that no one else can see what you have written. Throughout the course of the next few weeks it will become habitual to log on and fill out your food diary. I stuck with it religiously for eight months. It is not necessarily a routine you will need to keep up for the rest of your life. It is something you should dip in and out of, especially if you feel yourself slipping. It will help to kick start you and support you to get back on track. In trying to reach your mini or main goals, don't look to weigh yourself every day. Weight tends to fluctuate between 2-4lbs throughout any one day. You are far better to measure yourself weekly (ideally at the same time on the same day), test how your clothes fit and see how much your endurance (endurance?) has improved over time.

### Obstacles

Food is without a doubt the biggest obstacle. Ever heard the phrase 70% of abs are made in the kitchen? Well it's true. You can exercise 24/7 but unless you get your eating habits under control forget about seeing the results you want. You cannot out train a poor diet nutrition is key. For me this is without a doubt my toughest challenge. Chocolate is my weakness. Three things to mention here:

1. A cheat meal once a week isn't a bad thing, once it doesn't start to turn into a cheat day. When it comes to fat loss, a cheat meal can help kickstart your metabolism into action.
2. Oftentimes hunger is masked by dehydration. Drinking about 2 litres (68 ounces, or 8 glasses) of water per day can make you burn about 96 more calories per day. As an indication to know if you are sufficiently hydrated, your pee should be a light yellow colour.
3. When it comes to losing weight, increasing protein intake can boost metabolism, fight cravings and significantly reduce appetite.

For more information about nutrition check out this booklet from the Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute which might be of help. Check out this short booklet called Food For Fitness. Link [here](#)

### Ride it Out

Everyone has heard it takes 21 days to break a habit so it is very important in the initial stages of making a change to hold out until you have reached these 21 days. The human brain is a very adaptive piece of machinery and so by hard coding a new habit into it for three weeks you will have a good chance of it becoming a regular occurrence.

### Energise Yourself

Keep going and stay motivated. Don't rely on the scales. Your clothing should be your best guide – as long as you haven't gone out and bought a new wardrobe! As the first few weeks pass by you may not begin to see any immediate physical changes, but remember that if you are starting to use your body weight or free weights for exercises, putting on muscle (although muscle weighs the same as fat) will help to improve your 'toned' appearance as it takes up less space in the body. Always try to keep your workouts interesting and varied. Don't get stuck, keep looking to improve and changing up your workouts say every 4-6 weeks.

Have you considered the waist circumference test? For a woman's best health a waist should be no more than 35 inches and for men no greater than 40.

Did You Know? One pound of fat contains 3500 calories; to burn the fat off means creating a caloric deficit. To do this you need to consume fewer calories than your body burns. For healthy and sustainable weight loss, consuming 250 – 500 fewer calories than your body burns a day is recommended.

**Success trains, failure complains - Avinash Wandre****Chapter 3 - Getting started. What should a workout include?**

## Dynamic Stretching /Active Warm Up (5-10 mins)

In an age of wanting to just get things done and everyone pressed for time there are people out there who don't think it is necessary to warm up. These are the people who are likely to suffer injury faster. Warm ups are important. I'm not saying you have to warm yourself up for half an hour, no more than 10 mins max will do - just enough to break into a light sweat.

Why bother you may ask as you will be working out later anyway? Well, warm ups start getting the body in gear ensuring the heart and blood vessels are given enough time to adjust to the oxygen demands placed on the body. It also raises body temperature; lubricates joints, fires up muscles and wakes up nerve impulses to help improve co-ordination

In short, think of your muscles and joints like rubber bands, if they aren't warmed up properly they could snap.

A warm up can be a lower intensity version of the activity you're about to do (think 4 out of 10 difficulty rating in your head), or it can be something different. What's good to do? Equipment-wise - Treadmills, elliptical trainers, rowing machine, exercise bikes, skipping ropes are all fine. If you don't have any equipment to hand do a few minutes of the following:

## Warm Up Exercises

Complete 10 reps of each exercise below for 1-2 rounds

- Cross toe touches
- Bodyweight squats
- Bodyweight lunges
- Jumping Jacks
- Arm swings
- High Knees
- Jog on spot
- Boxer Shuffles
- Full Torso Circles
- Alternating Toe Touch kicks

Main Cardio – Interval training –HIIT (High Intensity Interval Training) it up! or call Tabata

Some like to incorporate their main cardio piece after their strength training/weights workout. Personally, I like to do my cardio before my weight training. There is no right or wrong way, just a personal preference.

HIIT: What's it all about?

Basically, it means you will have more energy. It works by going all out for a short period then resting for a short time and repeating that activity for a couple of minutes. The more you get used to HIIT, the shorter the rest period you give yourself. During the high intensity interval, your goal should be to

have your heart pumping at 85 percent of its maximum rate, or in simple terms on a scale of 1-10 of difficulty of breathing, you want to be at 8-9. This training method is a great way to help boost your metabolism while also encouraging your body to burn body calories as fuel.

You might ask how is this better than doing steady state cardio exercises instead?

HIIT requires you to use your anaerobic (there are two types – aerobic being the other. Anaerobic means in the absence of oxygen) pathways, which in turn makes you breathe harder and helps to burn more fat for longer. The ‘after-burn’ effect *i.e.* (when the metabolism remains elevated for hours — and sometimes even days) — after an intense workout can help shed those pounds. One of the earliest studies documented from 1994 at Laval University in Quebec, Canada, found HIIT was nine times more effective for losing fat than steady-state cardio<sup>1</sup>. A more recent study by Florida State University (Tallahassee) conducted in 2007 found that subjects who performed HIIT cardio burned almost 10% more calories during the 24 hours following exercise than a steady-state group, despite the fact that the total calories burned during each workout were the same<sup>2</sup>.

One word of caution here, keep mixing things up, otherwise the more you load your body up on one area the more likely you will get injured. From time to time do some steady state cardio workouts (that is a continuous, steady effort, as opposed to an interval cardio workout where you vary your energy output). This sort of workout has great benefits too. The aerobic energy pathway (a pathway that uses oxygen) helps build a solid foundation for every sort of other activity.

So recommendations are as follows:

1. If you are a beginner look to do steady state cardio first, to build up aerobic capacity
  - a. 2-3 sessions a week for 2-3 months; looking to aim for 30-45mins a session
2. How do I know when I’m ready to move to HIIT?
  - a. Take your pulse for one minute. If your resting heart rate is below 60, feel free to experiment with HIIT.
3. Aim to do HIIT for 3 months then change it up for another activity.

Some exercises to try:

1. Rowing: Set the distance at 2,000 metres. Row for 200 metres fast, 100 slow 200 fast, 100 again at a slow pace and so on all the way down to 0.
2. Elliptical trainer(10 mins):Set the level to 3 to begin with for 1 minute, then 10 for 1 min, back to 4 for 1 min, then for the next min take it back up 12, then back down to 4 for 1 min, then back up to 13 and down to 4 for the next. Aim to reach 14 as your highest level.
3. Treadmill(10 mins): Do 1 min at 8.5km incline 0, then 1 min at 10km at incline 0, then 3 min at 8.5km incline 0, fourth min at 11km at incline 0, then back down to 8.5km incline 0. If you are starting out look to try and run faster as you progress, then some weeks down the line, work on introducing the incline into the mix. It will help you not to get stuck at a certain level.

## TABATA

- 4 mins total.
- Workout hard for 20 seconds
- Rest for 10 seconds
- Complete eight rounds

<sup>1</sup> <https://experiencelife.com/article/steady-state-cardio-vs-high-intensity-interval-training/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.simplyshredded.com/fit-with-hiit-science-is-dropping-the-hammer-on-endless-bouts-of-steady-state-cardio.html>

Another style of calorie burning exercise is called Tabata. This is really a great workout to do, especially because it is like having your own personal trainer right there in front of you. There are loads of free Tabata apps including ones where music alternates between fast and slow tempos. I use Tabata HIIT Time (Ad Free) by Xquadro on my phone. It's just a stop watch really set up for Tabata training.

Just like HIIT, you are working out for short 20 sec bursts (against a timer), counting you in for your rounds and counting your rest period (10 secs) too for four minutes in total. This training system taps into both the aerobic and the anaerobic systems. If done correctly it can be very demanding during those four minutes, pushing you to the point of exhaustion. You should really be finding it difficult to complete exercises by round 7 or 8.

For your exercises make sure to pick good alternating exercises that work out the entire body. Kettle bells, dumbbells and weights are great to use. You could for example pick

- an upper and then a lower body exercise or,
- an upper body with a core exercise or,
- a lower body and a core exercise.

Check out AlexaJeanFitness on Instagram for some good video examples.

Here's what an example Tabata workout could look like:

- 20 seconds burpees
- 10 seconds rest
- 20 seconds plank
- 10 seconds rest
- 20 seconds burpees
- 10 seconds rest
- 20 seconds plank
- 10 seconds rest

## STRENGTH TRAINING

The perception of who can lift weights has seen a dramatic shift these days. Long gone are the days where it was once an all male dominated activity. Besides building muscle, helping you develop a 'toned' appearance and trimming fat, there are tons more physical and mental health benefits<sup>3</sup>. One thing I would say here for the ladies is fear not about bulking up. Men have ten times the testosterone level of females. To do this you would have to be following specific plans, lifting heavy, eating large amounts of calories and taking supplements on a daily basis.

These is however some good news for beginners just starting out on their journey- being new to strength training means you are likely to get stronger quicker. Your body begins adjusting to new pressures and grows new neurons for about 16 weeks to support new body movements. Afterwards your muscles will start to grow tougher and larger.

So here are examples of different exercises to get you started. Remember you want to keep mixing things up to keep progressing

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<sup>3</sup> Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/growingstronger/why/>



Examples for each include:

1. Push exercises
  - a. Kettle-bell swings, push press or bench press or push-ups,
2. Pull exercises
  - a. Bent-over row, pull-ups, pull-down
3. Core exercises
  - a. Planks (all variations), mountain climbers, knee-bos
4. Lunge exercises
  - a. All sorts (Walking lunges, reverse lunges, lunges with dumbbells(5kg in each hand))
5. Squat exercises
  - a. Squats using body weight, pistol squats, barbell squat, goblet squat

More to follow on all this later on.

Did you know as you get older you lose 1% of muscle mass per year?

### CORE EXERCISES:

Just like an apple core that lies in the centre. Your body's core acts in a very similar way stabilising your body and providing you with the support and stability you need for everyday movements. Your core area is so much more than just your abs. Your core region is made up of several muscles (rectus abdominis, external & internal obliques and those transverse abdominis). In fact, core strength training aims to target all the muscles groups that stabilise the spine and pelvis. It's these muscle groups that are critical for the transfer of energy from large to small body parts during many sporting activities. So bye bye 2,000 fast-paced ab crunches and hello some interesting controlled quality core moves!

In fact you already have a six-pack – you just can't see it at the moment. Body weight exercises are a really good way to develop your core. You don't need to spend hours a day working out your core, 2- 4 sets of a few core exercises can be most effective.

Here are some core exercises to do with just you body weight:

<b>Bicycle Crunch</b>	<b>V-ups</b>	<b>Superman's</b>
<b>Vertical Leg Crunch</b>	V-tucks	Scissors
<b>Planks to forearm raises</b>	Side Plank	Flutter kicks
<b>Raised knee-ins</b>	Spiderman Plank	Crunch

### Core Strength Training with equipment:

There are several pieces of exercise equipment that are genuinely useful for strengthening the core region. They include:

- Medicine Balls
- Stability Balls
  - Stability ball tuck, stir the pot,
- Balance Boards
- TRX ropes

**COOL DOWN: (5-7mins)**

How many people rush off after their workout and completely forget about cooling down? People incorrectly assume it has no real tangible benefit to the body. Wrong. Cooling down helps prevent excessive blood pooling, encourages increased circulation in muscles and aids super-compensation (*i.e.* helping shuttle nutrients to the stressed areas). So the next time you train remember to cool down afterwards. In a nutshell by doing a proper cool down there will be potentially more energy available to you the next time you train and you won't be as sore as you would have been otherwise.

**STRETCH: (5-7mins)**

Finally, just before you get ready to grab your protein shake and take that all important post workout selfie; stretch out for a few minutes. This is something I must admit I need to get better at doing. Stretching (either statically (stretching and holding for 15-20 secs) or dynamically (moving your joints and muscles through a full range of motion for 30-60 secs))) lengthen muscles, helps break down the by-products of aerobic and anaerobic exercise and enhances muscle tone, giving your muscles that all important defined look. All told it helps you recover faster.

Did You Know solid foods take more time to digest with a shake only taking 30 mins to reach the muscles after ingestion.

**I didn't come here to be average – Michael Jordan**

**Chapter 4 - Different Workout Stages**

This chapter is here to provide you with some insight into different methods trainers and athletes use to know to figure out optimal trainings levels.

Don't worry you won't need to be equipped with this knowledge to get started in your fitness quest. It is not meant to scare you. It is just to provide you with some background knowledge. If nothing else you can impress your friends with it!

What Stage Am I currently at?

If you aren't sure how to classify yourself, place yourself in the stage you currently do today. If you used to work out 2 years ago 4-7 times a week but now don't, you would not be eligible to place yourself in the advanced category. However, the training you previously did is not all lost. In fact it will allow you to possibly excel through the stages a lot quicker than someone who has never trained.

Stage	Training Frequency
Beginner – training less than 2 months	2-3 workouts a week
Intermediate- training between 2 - 6 months	3-4 workouts a week
Advanced - training more than one year	4-7 workouts a week

Choosing the correct zone is important in helping to reach your goals. There are several other popular methods out there to work out ideal training zones but I think that this one is pretty useful.

To figure out your zone there's just one calculation you will need to do and that is to figure out your Maximum Heart Rate (MHR). Your MHR is the fastest your heart can beat in a minute when working out. To calculate your MHR do the following;

$$220 \text{ minus your age} = \text{MHR}$$

Workout Zones<sup>4</sup>

Fitness Zone	Moderate Aerobic Zone	Effort	Benefits
<b>Absolute gym newbie</b>	50% of MHR	Walking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decrease body fat</li> <li>• Lowered blood pressure</li> <li>• Lowered cholesterol levels</li> </ul>
<b>Fat Loss</b>	60%- 70% of MHR	Jogging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Endurance capacity increases</li> <li>• Fat burn</li> <li>• Increase muscle mass</li> <li>• Potential weight lose</li> </ul>
<b>Aerobic – improving cardio-respiratory</b>	70%- 80% of MHR	Running	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthier heart</li> <li>• Increased lung capacity</li> <li>• RHR(Resting heart rate) will decrease</li> <li>• Burning fat</li> <li>• Burning glycogen</li> </ul>
<b>Aerobic- athletic individual</b>	80%- 90% of MHR	Running	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthier heart</li> <li>• Increased lung capacity</li> <li>• RHR(Resting heart rate) will decrease</li> <li>• Burning fat</li> <li>• Burning glycogen</li> <li>• Develop your lactic acid system(<i>i.e.</i> when your body begins to tap into its anaerobic pathway)</li> </ul>

Useful Tip: Best way to take your pulse

Use either a clock or watch with a second hand, then find your pulse. A pulse is usually taken in your radial artery on your wrist or at your carotid artery in your neck. Choose the spot that works best for you. Don't use your thumb as it has a light pulse. It's best to use your index finger and middle finger together. Count the number of beats in 10 seconds, and then to multiply that number by 6. This method gives you a 60-second count.

<sup>4</sup> Source: About Health.com [http://walking.about.com/cs/fitnesswalking/a/hearttraining\\_2.htm](http://walking.about.com/cs/fitnesswalking/a/hearttraining_2.htm)

**Be strong, you never know who you are inspiring****Chapter 5 – Strength Training**

Building muscle and toning up is a matter of time and consistency. As you are just starting out on your fitness journey there are some factors you need to consider. There are many more but here are some common ones.

- Rep range [Rep range refers to the specific amount of repetitions you perform in a set]
- Sets –[Sets refers to a group of exercise repetitions done consecutively. 4 sets is good for beginners]
- Tempo – [The rate or pace at which an activity is performed] Everyone should use a tempo style when training. Beginners should utilise a slower and more controlled eccentric (lowering) and a faster but still controlled concentric (lifting) movement. To keep things simple you could begin using a 3-0-1 tempo. What the heck is this you ask?
- All this means is count to 3 for the lowering part of the movement, zero secs for a break and finally the 1 means the amount of time you pause at the top of the movement.
- Rest period between sets –[for beginners 60 secs]
- Progressive overload – Gradually increasing the exercise demand placed on the body. This can be done in one of four ways (1. Use a heavier weight, 2. Increase the reps, 3. Decrease the rest time, or Change up the exercise to make it more difficult)

Rep Range	Weight	Target
Low (1-6)	Heavy	Strength
Medium (8-12)	Moderate	Muscle Growth
High (12+)	Light	Endurance

If you plan on working out your entire body during a gym visit then you need to do things in this order. In general, the basic rule is that the largest muscle groups should be exercised first, and compound movements (multiple joints being worked) completed before isolation moves(a single joint being worked). So remember,

1. Largest muscles worked first (Legs, back and chest are considered the largest)  
Here are some sample exercises to consider:
  - a. Legs: Leg Press, Leg Extension, Dumbbell Lunges, Seated Calf Raises, Romanian Deadlift,
  - b. Back: Pull-ups, Lat-pull down, Seated Cable rows, Bent Over Barbell or Dumbbell Rows,
  - c. Chest: Dumbbell (Regular, Incline or Decline), Pec Deck machine, Push-ups.

Ok what equipment should I use as a beginner? When starting off in the gym, this order of use might be useful to get you started.

Machines – Barbells – Dumbbells

Why? As a beginner aim to use the machines first. They help prevent injuries, are great for allowing the user to control the movements and give the user a full range of motion. One thing you don't want to do is use the same machines for weeks on end. By performing the same movement over and over again for many weeks at a time could lead to overuse and injury.

Did You Know that the largest muscle in the body is the gluteus maximus.

#### Types of Barbells:

- Standard - This type of barbell is used in exercises such as front raises, seated triceps extensions and lying triceps extensions.
- Olympic - This type of barbell is used in compound exercises such as the bench press, squat and deadlift.
- EZ-Curl - This type of barbell has a zigzag grip, which reduces stress on the wrists in exercises such as the bicep curl.

What are the benefits of barbells I hear you ask? Here's my top 3.

- Using a barbell is very good at exercising stabilising muscles. This simply means working your smaller muscles to make sure they don't get left behind on top of the main muscle groups.
- Strengthen your core.
- Increase strength and muscle mass.

And finally the dumbbell weights – not so dumb at all – quite smart in fact!

Using dumbbells improves coordination<sup>5</sup>, brain power and activates more muscle fibres overall as well as helping to even out strength imbalances between limbs (this is a problem especially common in beginners).

If you are looking for exercises to do look no further than

Barbell: <http://www.barbell-exercises.com/>

Dumbbell: <http://www.dumbbell-exercises.com/exercises/index.html>

Also, check out Fitness Blender on Facebook, tons of exercises for free too!

I hear you say that is all well and good, but how do I figure out what weight is best to start off with? In general, if you can do 12 reps, up the weight. Can't do 12? Lower the reps never decrease the weight. As you begin improving you will want to be adding about 5kg extra at a time.

Remember if you are starting off weight lifting training use barbells first. These are considerably lighter than the Olympic bar. An Olympic bar without any weight on it is typically 7 foot in length and weighs 20kg. Best practice is to always perform at least 1 light warm up set per muscle group before the main event. For deadlifts, front, back squats or the military press it is advisable to do a set of 10 reps only using half the weight you are going to be training with. Or if you feel that you are at that stage of using the Olympic bar, just warm up with the bar by itself. It is good to get an idea of what you are dealing with before you begin to load on any weights. Also, it warms the muscles and joints up too.

So let's recap. What are you looking to get right at this stage?

Here are my 5 Key Tips for starting out:

1. Always work to a plan – For beginners follow a strength training programme; a full body routine done three times a week is best. For a beginner frequency of training is more important than high volume.

<sup>5</sup><http://drmirkin.com/fitness/9274.html>

2. Keep track of your progress – there are loads of online workout charts you can use
3. Proper form – so many people lunge, squat and deadlift incorrectly. Google people like Scott Herman for proper technique. A couple of tips:
  - a. Never look down,
  - b. Always point you heart to heaven as my husband says
  - c. Engage your core
  - d. Squeeze your shoulder blade muscles together
  - e. Keep a slight bend in your knees
  - f. And don't lock out your arms(all that means is keep a slight bend in them)
4. Breathing – Don't hold your breath when strength training. Remember to breathe out as you exert force. You may feel stupid doing this, but it does help.
5. Speed of lifting - Control your movements to give you the best result

Here are some exercises to get you started:

- Chest: bench press, chest press machine, push ups, pec deck machine
- Back: one-armed row, seated row machine, back extensions, lat pull downs
- Shoulders: overhead press, lateral raise, front raise
- Biceps: bicep curls, hammer curls, concentration curls
- Triceps: tricep extensions, dips, kickbacks
- Quadriceps: Squats, lunges, leg extension and leg press machines
- Hamstrings: deadlifts, lunges, leg curl machine
- Abs: crunches, reverse crunches, oblique twists, pelvic tilts

What ways can I train?

There are plenty. People tend to do either full body workouts or split workouts. Splitting a workout simply means working different body parts on different days of the week. For beginners with any goal, by far the most highly proven and often recommended workout schedule is to do 3 days of full body workouts. The exact days you workout is not important just so long as there are rest periods of anywhere from 48-72hrs in between each session before working the same muscle groups again.

Here is a sample:

Week 1

1. Monday: Workout A
2. Tuesday: off
3. Wednesday: Workout B
4. Thursday: off
5. Friday: Workout A
6. Saturday: off
7. Sunday: off

Week 2

1. Monday: Workout B
2. Tuesday: off
3. Wednesday: Workout A
4. Thursday: off
5. Friday: Workout B
6. Saturday: off
7. Sunday: off

How can I split my training out?

If you did want to split it out. You could do this:

Day 1: Full Body

Day 2: Upper Body

Day 3: Lower Body

\*there should be a 1 day rest between each workout

Pay attention to your bones and joints, because they typically won't advance as fast as your muscles, so make sure that you progress slowly in order to have a much better long-term training effect.

## **Never give up**

### **Chapter 6– Fix Your Form (Lunge, Squat, Deadlift)**

It doesn't matter if you are a beginner or have been practicing weight training for ten years, proper form is so important. You see people of all shapes, sizes, ripping through sets, looking all professional, but then if you look closer, sometimes, all you see is them rushing through sets, to prove they can lift heavy weights and do not have their body in the best alignment for that exercise, in fact, they could be damaging their bodies.

Here are some simple pointers to consider when doing these all-rounder exercises.

Lunge:

What to make sure you do right:

- Depending on your height take a step forward with one foot somewhere between 2 or 3 feet (0.6 or 0.9 m) in a central direction.
- Lower your hips and bend your knees until they both form 90 degree angles.
- The front knee should not come forward over your toes, and you should be able to draw a straight line from your knee to your ankle.
- Your back knee should not touch the ground.

Squats:

What to make sure you do right:

- Make sure your feet are just a little wider than shoulder-width apart, slightly turned out.
- You want to keep your back straight, and your chest and shoulders up facing forward.
- When you are going to squat, plant your heels firmly on the floor.
- Then think that you are aiming to sit down on a chair behind you.
- Make sure your heels don't rise off the floor and really aim to be sitting back into the chair.

Deadlift:

Remember good form here reduces injury.

- Stand tall with your toes slightly sticking out under the bar.
- Take hold of the bar with your arms about shoulder-width apart.
- Pinch your shoulder blades together tight on your back.
- Bend your knees. Pull. Take a big breath, hold it and stand up.
- Eyes should always be gazing forward.

A one hour workout is only 4% of your day

### **Chapter 7– Fuelling your Workouts**

Your body is your most valued asset and with every asset you own you should always aim to make it appreciate over time. To do that you need to be using the best currency possible. Or to think of it in another way, your body is a furnace that needs to be constantly fuelled correctly to make it perform at its best. It isn't going to do that on an empty tank or one that contains an incorrect balance of foods and beverages. There are plenty of 'windows of opportunity' throughout a day to fuel it in the right way. So let's take a look at when are the best times to chow down.

Before Exercise: (2-4hrs before a workout)

If you fuel yourself correctly you will workout harder and also prevent low blood sugars levels. So what should you be looking to fuel up on? As a general rule of thumb the farther away the training session is the more complex the meal you can have. This means allowing you to fill up on proteins, fats and fibre, as these take longer to break down.

For best results here are some pre-out ideas:

- toast with peanut butter and banana,
- porridge with almonds
- fruit smoothies,
- bowl of cereal,
- cheese, wholemeal crackers
- greek yoghurt with dried fruits,
- brown rice, chicken/turkey, beans
- pasta
- sweet potatoes or yams

If like many of my friends you prefer to exercise very early in the morning before work and you only have 30mins from when you get up to when you workout the following carbs can be useful: bananas, apple, yoghurt.

What to drink

It is recommended to hydrate yourself throughout the day and at least 45mins before a workout.

Water,

Smoothie

Orange juice,

Coconut water



During the workout

For a workout lasting less than hour water is best. For anything over an hour, choose a high GI carbs as they will help delay fatigue and keep exercising for longer.

Post Workout (30 – 60 mins)

Post workout your muscles will still be working extra hard with your muscles starting to turn towards a catabolic (muscle-wasting) state. To prevent this from happening you will want to refuel within 30-60 mins post workout. After a workout you are mostly looking for a mixture of protein to help with muscle recovery and carbs to help replenish your energy stores  
Your body will thank you for it.

What will benefit?

- you will replenish your energy stores,
- you will repair any damage that was caused during a workout,
- you will increase your muscle size/and or quality,
- help prevent your body burning muscle.

What to eat

Grilled chicken and mixed vegetables	Sweet potato
Scrambled Eggs with avocado	Cheese
Protein pancakes with almonds	Oatmeal
Bagel with egg whites	Yogurt
Pita and hummus	Tuna and crackers
Salmon with avocado	Kefir
Spinach	Beans

What to drink will of course depend on the duration and intensity of the workout

Water	Orange juice
Milk	Sports drink – Chocolate milk
Protein shake	Smoothie

I personally like to drink chocolate milk versus a protein shake. However, the difference between the two is down to the rate of absorption. Milk protein contains casein and can take up to 7 hours to be absorbed by the body<sup>6</sup>. Whey protein, on the other hand takes 20-30mins is a faster absorbing solution.

One thing to note for any late night gym owls (if anyone out there like me prefers to workout later in the evening protein and good fats maybe sufficient as eating more carbs may sabotage any weight loss goals. However, if you want to eat some carbs try these:

- Protein smoothie,
- Chicken salad with avocado and nuts
- Pasta, sweet potato
- Brown rice, salmon

**Sweet as Sugar**

**4 grams of sugar is one teaspoon.**

<sup>6</sup><http://www.muscleandfitness.com/supplements/build-muscle/case-casein>

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