

WEIGHT TRAINING



STRENGTH TRAINING PROGRAM 101

STRENGTH TRAINING NUTRITION 101

MARC McLEAN

**Strength Training Program 101:
Build Muscle & Burn Fat...**

In Less Than 3 Hours Per Week

&

**Strength Training Nutrition 101:
Build Muscle & Burn Fat Easily...**

**A Healthy Way Of Eating You Can
Actually Maintain**

By

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These books were written to help you become a leaner, stronger, healthier, better version of yourself.

Let's get into it...!

Introduction

Strength Training Is THE Way to a better body, optimal health and improved fitness.

This book promises the way to more muscle and less fat – and the strategies included here deliver. But there's so much more to gain from going down the path laid out in these pages.

Looking great. Feeling amazing. Increased confidence. Achieving what you thought you never could have before in the gym – and seeing that success have a positive knock-on effect in other areas of your life.

Lifting weights (heavy please), strengthening and sculpting your body goes way beyond the physical. It has an incredible impact on your mental health and wellbeing, and your whole outlook and approach to life.

May sound a bit over the top, but I've experienced it personally and witnessed it with plenty of clients and friends time and again over the years.

The discipline, dedication and personal enjoyment you gain from all your achievements in the gym can help change your entire vibe! Don't be surprised if you then start seeing unexpected changes in your relationships, career, or other areas of your life.

I've been lifting weights since I was a seriously skinny 16-year-old and made countless mistakes along the way. There's no need for you to make the same errors because I've crammed in 18 years' worth of knowledge and experience into these pages.

Building a Strong, Athletic, Lean Physique...

Let's be clear straight away: this book is all about creating a lean, athletic, awesome physique. I'm talking fitness magazine cover model material...NOT a huge, unnatural looking, can-barely-walk-through-the-door type of body. I'm 5ft 8ins and only weigh between 71kg-73kg, and so there are much bigger

guys strolling around gyms where I live. But I'm not interested in their biceps measurements, their muscle vests, or their annoying grunting noises in the gym.

What's more important for me is that...

I'm in better shape now at 34 than I was at 20, I'm strong as hell, and I maintain lean muscle, low body fat levels and six pack abs easily. All through training for less than three hours per week.

You can achieve the same, no matter what shape you're in just now. In this book I share with you the same healthy, sustainable approach to training and diet that you can really enjoy and maintain.

Lifting heavy weights in intense training sessions, supported with proper nutrition, decent rest and stress management is the way to more muscle, less fat and the body you've probably only dreamed of.

This is the way for both men and women. No sexism here, women should be doing the same weightlifting exercises and going as heavy as they can too.

As for cardio – it's cancelled.

Apart from burning calories inefficiently, jogging, running, fitness classes etc have virtually no impact on muscle tone and overall body composition. I'm very much biased here but... cardio is pretty much a waste of time.

I think we all secretly know this, but persevere anyway thinking noticeable changes are just around the corner.

Let's be honest, looking in the mirror after weeks and months of trekking on the treadmill is proof that it's literally getting us nowhere. And swishing about on the elliptical machine feels like it's sucking out your soul.

Yet so many people carry with this type of mind-numbing, ineffective training – despite the lack of exercise excitement and obvious lack of results in their physique.

Strength training/weight training/barbell training...whatever you choose to call it...is a different story. It can: transform

your physique in a matter of months, increase your strength, burn fat more efficiently, improve your mental health, strengthen your heart, lower your risk of disease, boost your self-esteem, prevent against injuries, improve your posture, the list goes on...

Why then do too many men and women avoid lifting weights like they should? Here's the problem:

#1 They fear they'll create a 'bulky' over-developed look.

#2 They think it involves training 5, 6 or 7 days per week.

#3 They worry it means a super strict regimented diet for the rest of their days.

#4 They're put off lifting heavy weights by the muscle vest wearing, loud grunting, selfie-taking, pill-popping, ego-maniacs they see in the gym (...and every gym in the world has their share).

Ultimately these people don't want to become a MEATHEAD.

'Meathead'? C'mon, you know what I mean. Every gym has its share of resident meatheads. Inflated bodies, inflated egos, and they reckon their training and diet way is the only way.

It's all about being better than everyone else rather *bettering themselves*.

I genuinely believe this kind of attitude and approach is what turns most people off when it comes to weight training. It's frustrating because thousands upon thousands of people across the world are missing out on the huge benefits strength training can bring.

The meathead approach to exercise and diet is fuelled by a multi-billion dollar sports supplements industry. This spews out all sorts of misinformation in fitness magazines and advertisements about what it takes to build the great body you've always wanted.

This results in another huge turn-off for people who are given the wrong impression that they must...

- Train 5,6,7 days per week.
- Guzzle whey protein shakes every day (...and feel like a bloated balloon).
- Meal prep every day (...until they become the most miserable people they know).
- Become some sort of macronutrients/micronutrients mathematician (...counting every calorie like crazy).
- Spend a fortune on supplements (...that are really a waste of money).
- Spend half the day eating small, regular meals.

This is all rubbish. You don't have to listen to all the confusing advice out there. And you don't have to worry about what any gym meathead tells you anymore because this book cuts out all the crap.

It provides you with solid strategies for building muscle, burning fat and sculpting a fantastic physique.

You'll also learn about...

- The most effective exercises for more muscle, less fat.
- Proven training systems.
- A framework to not only perform at the right weights level, but to also make steady progress.
- A simplified formula for creating your own training programs easily.
- Why lifting weights more than just 3 days per week is not only unnecessary, but can be counter-productive.
- Top tactics to stay motivated and keep you on track until you get results.
- Laying a solid nutritional foundation to get the most out of your efforts in the gym.

I lift weights three days per week – and each session rarely exceeds one hour. Despite what you may have been told, more is definitely not better when it comes to strength training.

It's all about training smarter, not harder. This book shows you how you can gain lean muscle, incinerate fat, and realistically get in the best shape of your life....training for less than three hours per week.

I don't want that to sound like hyped-up bullsh*t...and it also doesn't mean this book is a shortcut to success. Training hard and sticking with the plan is not always easy. Nothing worth achieving truly is.

But you CAN achieve your health and fitness goals if you push yourself, stay consistent, ignore all the confusing advice out there, and stick to the sensible, healthy, do-able approach in this book.

After nearly two decades of experimentation with countless training and dietary approaches, I have a formula that works. It has been proven in my own experience and time and again with my clients.

It's all laid out in this book. It's simply up to you to implement it.

Ready to transform your body and health?

Chapter 1 - Cutting Out the Confusion

One fitness magazine promises you “beach ready abs within three weeks”...

...while the one sitting on the shelf next to it has the “ultimate guide to bigger biceps”.

Your mate in work writes down his training routine and you give that a bash. Halfway through the workout your gym’s resident meathead kindly tells you it’s a waste of time – and then proceeds to show you what you “really should be doing”. Without you even asking.

Information overload.

When it comes to health and fitness, we’re bombarded from every corner with advice on what to do. There’s so much information and so many options that you probably don’t know where to start.

On the other hand, you may have fallen into the trap of trying everything – and mastering nothing.

It’s time to cut through the confusion and simplify weight training and diet for those looking to finally make some positive progress in changing their physique.

To do this, we’ll focus on four key areas in this chapter:

- **Compound exercises**
- **Training with the right volume and intensity**
- **Proper recovery**
- **Preparation and staying motivated**

Later in the book I’ll delve into these key areas even further and provide you with clear steps to take, meaning you can cut out all the confusion once and for all.

I bought the same fitness magazines you’ve probably picked up at some point. In fact I subscribed to two of them. In every issue there’s always pages and pages filled with demonstrations of some fancy new exercises/workout routines.

Some guy in a sleeveless shirt and shiny shorts doing 23 convoluted moves on medicine balls, using ropes, or lying on the floor.

I'd try to remember all these moves (because taking the magazine into the gym with me wouldn't have been a good look). Then I'd try them out, generally feeling pretty awkward, and usually with clumsy technique.

Most of the time I didn't really feel much benefit and, after two or three weeks, I forgot all about them. Then the next magazine came out and I was onto trying something else out.

I must've tried out over 100 different exercises I saw in these magazines and I'd say I only use just four or five of them these days. That's because most of them were a different variation on the same kind of muscle isolation exercises. Fact is: you don't really need to know 73 different ways to work your biceps.

A much better strategy is becoming great at the biggest and best exercises that have been around since the beginning. The ones that have stood the test of time. The exercises that deliver the best bang for your buck....I'm talking about **'compounds'**.

Compound Exercises

Compound exercises are the big, bold, buster moves such as barbell squats, deadlifts and chin-ups. They are so effective for two reasons:

1. They work several muscle groups at once.
2. They stimulate an anabolic environment in the body, which equals more muscle and less fat.

Problem is – way too many gym-goers avoid doing these ultra effective weight training exercises. Why? Because they're tough.

But we've all got to start somewhere. And compounds are the way to go for anyone looking to create a lean, athletic body with great overall body composition.

Therefore, the training advice in this book centres around all the key compound exercises. No matter what level you're starting at, you can become a master at these movements - and you'll make faster progress than most other gym-goers as a result.

To this day, compound exercises still make up the majority of my workouts. The ratio of compound to muscle isolation exercises is roughly 75:25. While there will also be some valuable muscle isolation exercises included, we'll mainly focus on the ultra effective compound movements.

It's all about efficiency and effectiveness.

Squats, for example, target your thighs, calves, butt, abs and lower back all in one movement, while chin-ups work your biceps, forearms, shoulders, and entire upper back.

An isolation exercise, like the leg curl machine for example, works only the quadriceps.

What would you rather do? Spend two hours in the gym, jumping from machine to machine, and doing around 20 different muscle isolation exercises in the hope you've worked your entire body?

Or – spend 45-60 minutes focusing intently on 6-7 big compound movements that force several muscle groups to work together...in a manner that leaves you in no doubt you've smashed your training session?

And no, it ain't just powerlifters or bodybuilders who do the likes of squats, deadlifts and bench pressing.

It's the clued-up men and women who realise that compounds can:

- Stimulate muscle growth AND fat loss more effectively than other exercises.
- Help them sculpt an athletic, well defined physique instead of a 'bulky' look.
- See their strength gains go through the roof.
- Make their training much more exciting than ever before.

From what I've seen in gyms over the years, a high percentage of people always miss out the squats, deadlifts etc. To me this is crazy.

This is where following the advice in this book you'll be ahead of the game.

In chapter three, we'll go into much more detail about compounds - and using them properly to your full advantage.

Training Volume and Intensity

You know that phrase, 'go hard or go home'? It sounds a bit cringey, but unless you're actually lifting heavy and hitting it hard in the gym you might as well be at home. It's time to turn the volume up when it comes to your training.

Lifting heavier weights with fewer reps targets the 'fast twitch' muscle fibres. These are required for power and strength. Progressively overloading the muscles with more weight also triggers myofibrillar hypertrophy – which is essentially your muscles developing in strength and size in response to this form of heavy training.

“But how heavy is heavy...?”

“How many reps are enough to kickstart muscle building...?”

“Am I doing enough sets of the exercises to actually get results...?”

Just some of the questions I hear from my online personal training clients. (I choose to do web-based personal training as it means I can work with people from all over the world – and it empowers them to get results without me holding their hand in the gym).

Working Out Using The 3, 6, 9 Principle

Introducing my 3, 6, 9 Principle which ensure you're training with the right volume and intensity.

Number of sets....3 is sufficient.

How heavy....6 is the minimum number of reps you must be able to complete with a particular weight.

Muscle building...9 is the maximum number of reps you want to reach before taking training to the next level through progressive overload.

Varying your training routine is extremely important and this will also be achieved in terms of mixing up different exercises, the order you complete them, rest periods between sets etc.

However, applying The 3,6,9 Principle gives you solid markers for sets, minimum amount of reps, and a clear indication of when you're ready to move on to the next level. This will ensure you make the best progress in the gym.

Proper Recovery – Real Results Come Outside Of The Gym

The idea of lifting weights 5, 6, 7 days per week in order to get in great shape like any good Meathead would do probably ain't that appealing to you.

That's fine – because you don't have to.

What if I told you that just three heavy weights sessions per week was enough training to build muscle and burn fat effectively?

Training nearly every day of the week is not necessary. In some cases it can actually be counter-productive and lead to injury.

The body requires sufficient rest to repair the damage done to muscle tissue during intense weight training. Many weightlifters get round this by working specific muscle groups on certain days.

But this is not necessary either. By working various muscle groups at once using compound exercises you ensure a total body workout. And if you're training properly at a high level of intensity, as described in this book, then you'll need a day's rest in between workouts.

When it comes to your training week, more is not always better. We're going for quality over quantity. That means:

* Focusing on the biggest and best exercises (aka compounds).

- * Lifting heavy and progressively overloading the weight.
- * Making every single rep count.
- * Working so intensely that you need one day on, one day off, to properly recover.

The inevitable and unavoidable DOMS (delayed onset muscle soreness) from training this way should be enough to convince you that it makes complete sense to lift weights just 3 or 4 days per week.

Proper rest and recovery is too often overlooked in the health and fitness industry. People are so desperate to see results tomorrow that they continue to hit the weights hard even when their body is still patching up the damage from the previous session.

This puts the brakes on progress. To realise this, you must understand the basic science of lifting weights, coupled with healthy nutrition, in order to build muscle and burn fat.

The type of training we'll be doing - lifting heavy weights with lower reps - causes tiny tears on the muscle fibres. This shocks the muscles into *myofibrillar hypertrophy* – which essentially leads to your muscle fibres growing bigger and stronger to try and adapt to the weightlifting strain.

This growth process really kicks in after you've finished your last rep in the gym. In order to maximise the gains from our workouts we must give the body the tools it needs to repair those muscle fibre tears (i.e. healthy, nutritious food) – and get enough rest for the job to be done properly without more strain on the muscles.

That's why, following the training advice in this book, 3-4 days of strength training is sufficient for building muscle and burning fat effectively. And efficiently.

Preparation And Staying Motivated

Preparing properly and staying motivated go hand in hand. Problem is, most of us miss out the preparation part.

Can you remember the last time you tried to gain muscle, develop six-pack abs, or lose the layer of flab that just wouldn't shift?

It's usually in January with a New Year's resolution...or about six weeks before we go on holiday! We get all fired up about making it happen 'this time'. Buy new gym shoes, stock on up healthy food, think positive thoughts about the lean, muscular version of you.

You convince a friend to start hitting the gym with you, and you set about training with a full tank of will-power. The first session was tough but you're determined this time.

Fast forward 3-4 weeks...

You've got so much going on at work right now. By the time you get to the gym after work it'll be so late you'll probably only have about 30 minutes max to train. Plus, your friend skipped the last two sessions and probably won't make it today either. Have you even got any healthy food in the fridge to cook a decent post-workout meal? "*I'll just train tomorrow...*" you tell yourself as that tank of will-power gets down to its last drop.

Let's be honest, we've all experienced this kind of scenario, or at least come up with some of these excuses. No matter how motivated you are at the beginning, it can be a real struggle for all of us to stick to our training goals. Sh*t happens.

But through proper preparation we can avoid giving into excuses and going completely off track. There are tricks and tools we can use to supercharge our motivation, prevent our willpower from wilting, and stick with the plan until we start seeing results.

That's what the next chapter is all about.

CHECKLIST

- * Step back from ‘information overload’ – and focus solely on the ‘non-meathard’ approach to building muscle and burning fat.**
- * You don’t have to know how to perform countless exercises, or the latest fitness fad routine.**
- * Compound weight training exercises are the most effective and efficient ways of building muscle and burning fat.**
- * Compound exercises work various muscle groups at once – and create an anabolic environment in the body. This means more muscle and less fat.**
- * It’s time to turn up the volume in your training: lifting heavy with fewer reps.**
- * Use The 3,6,9 Principle to make solid progress in your training: 3 sets, no fewer than 6 reps, and add more weight as soon as you can hit 9 reps.**
- * You DON’T have to train 5,6,7 days per week.**
- * Lifting weights 3-4 days per week can deliver outstanding results when it comes to building muscle and burning fat.**
- * One day on, one day off lifting weights is ideal because our body requires proper rest to repair damage to muscle fibres. This recovery period assists in muscle growth following intense training sessions.**
- * Proper preparation is crucial to staying motivated and to avoid going off track.**

Chapter 2 - Preparation and Goal Setting For Maximum Results

Picture this...

You hit the gym with real confidence because you have a masterplan. Clear, defined goals for once. And you're finally focusing on the right exercises.

So no more worrying if you're doing enough in your workouts to build muscle.

No more wandering about the gym and simply jumping on whatever machine is free.

You have focus – and that focus alone sparks real motivation.

The post-workout soreness and surprising gains in strength after just a handful of workouts has another positive knock-on effect...

You don't need as much willpower to stick to a healthy diet. Junk food just ain't as appealing when you're clearly making steady progress, even at this early stage.

Buzzing for every upcoming weights session, you start hitting personal bests you thought you never had in you.

“You Start Seeing Some Proper Muscle Definition...”

Remember when the gym used to be boring? Remember when you were always fighting the excuses to miss a session? Not now.

For the first time you start seeing some proper muscle definition and your posture naturally changes. You hold yourself upwards more confidently.

This confidence you've quietly nurtured through a commitment to becoming a stronger, healthier you then gradually filters into your relationships with other people, your career, other sports etc.

Why? **You may only be lifting heavy weights, but ultimately you're bettering yourself.** This is then surprisingly reflected in other places outside of the gym.

It feels amazing when people start commenting on the difference in your physique.

That spurs you on even further, but at this stage who needs motivation now anyway?

What feels even better is the rush of endorphins bursting out of your head after every workout.

You're a stronger, fitter, healthier, leaner, better version of you.

If you're just starting out, or if you've been training for years but got nowhere, then you won't be familiar with the above scenario.

But this IS how your body and health transformation can unfold for you. I've experienced it myself and witnessed it with clients.

All you have to do is follow the advice in this book – and apply it.

Two Things That Are the Difference Between Failure and Success

The first crucial step in this chain of events leading to a stronger, healthier, better you is proper preparation and goal setting.

These build solid foundations for success – and are the difference between quitting and actually getting somewhere.

This is essential. Failing to prepare is preparing to fail. (I've clearly ripped off someone's cliché here, but it's true).

Getting this right at the beginning means you'll be fully focused and prepared so that you stick with the programme long enough to begin to see results.

Once those results come you're given even more juice to keep going to start making more progress. Others start noticing the difference and then you're HOOKED. You won't have to read

this chapter again, the need for willpower will dwindle – and your motivation levels will naturally be elevated.

Preparing For Success

Everyone who takes up strength training, or any other form of exercise, to get in great shape all have one thing in common: we do it as a reaction to something.

For me, it was simply a cheeky comment about my “skinny arms” in front a big group of people. Aged 16 and very self-conscious about my weak, thin body, I felt humiliated and this anger was enough to kickstart my hobby/healthy obsession with weight training.

Someone may have made a thoughtless throw-away comment about your weight and it hit you hard.

Maybe you’re getting married in six months and are worried about not looking your best in your wedding photos.

Whatever you’re reacting to sparks enough motivation to get started - in that moment.

Problem is, that fuel runs out fairly soon if you haven’t prepared properly. You see it in every gym across the world every year.

Gym memberships skyrocket in January due to New Year resolutions and plenty of good intentions...

People don’t prepare properly or stick to a plan....

They get bored because they don’t see immediate results...

Gym population returns to normal by mid-February, most of the new faces have disappeared.

You wouldn’t run a marathon without properly preparing first, would you? Same goes for lifting weights and transforming your body.

You’re not going to be able to achieve a chiselled physique overnight, but you can definitely achieve it – and preparing properly will give you a firm foundation to build upon.

Five Principle Pieces of Preparation

#1 Gym membership

I might be stating the obvious here but this point is for the benefit of anyone considering buying a dumbbell set and lifting at home, or working out in your garage. Don't waste your time or money because you simply won't make enough progress.

It's absolutely essential that you join a local gym that has all the correct equipment to support the type of exercises and workout programs I discuss later in chapter 4.

Also, you'll experience a rapid gain in strength by following the advice laid out in this book. You would outgrow your home weights in no time and, if you don't move on to the next level, then neither will your results.

#2 Setting goals

This is the part that most people miss out – and is one of the main reasons we see all those new faces at the gym in January and never see them again after February.

With clear, defined goals you'll:

- Have a target to aim for
- Be inspired to get going
- Put some real meaning behind your workouts
- Be MUCH less likely to quit

Without clear, defined goals you'll:

- Get bored easily and look for excuses
- Have no real perception of progress
- End up majorly frustrated
- Run out of motivation quickly
- Undoubtedly quit and end up back at square one

We'll discuss goals further and how to set them properly soon.

#3 Gym training diary

Using a gym training diary is one of the simplest, yet most powerful pieces of advice I could give you. A cheap, small pocket sized diary transformed my workouts in various ways – and this can have a huge impact on your progress too.

Do you get bored easily or struggle to keep pushing forward when training on your own? Or do you sometimes forget what you lifted last time round and therefore don't have a clue if you're making progress?

Well, a training journal solves these problems and should be your body's Bible for the following reasons:

- Laser sharp focus.

To help you stay focused it's extremely important you map out the workout ahead and set goals. Don't worry about what anyone else is lifting, we're not interested in them.

By writing down exactly what you plan to achieve in the gym in advance you're much less likely to be distracted by anything else. It also gives you a definitive plan and targets to aim for, giving your workouts even more purpose.

- Accountability.

When you step into the gym your training session should be all about continuous personal improvement – and setting new personal bests. It doesn't matter if you don't have a training partner. You have the training journal to answer to!

It's there to record your score for every exercise – and for some reason that small pile of paper holds you to account. It's your training partner that can't talk. It can tell you how far you have progressed. It reminds you of exactly how you performed last time around. And it can guilt trip you into doing even better this time.

- Better performance.

A training journal means your workout plan is there in front of you in black and white. So, there's no skipping the last couple of exercises because then you'll have to leave that part blank -

or score the exercises out completely - when filling in your training journal.

Then the next time you're training you'll be reminded of how you cheated yourself last time around. See what I mean about the guilt trips?

This naturally makes you want to complete ALL the exercises listed in your journal – and squeeze out a rep or two more than you thought you could.

- Staying on track.

As you become stronger and continually take your training to the next level, you'll be surprised how hard it is trying to remember the level of weights you reached or number of reps you completed for all the various exercises you're doing every week.

Our usual response to this: default to the lighter weight. This means you're not pushing yourself hard enough and are missing out on gains.

- Motivation.

As that journal starts filling up with performances you didn't think you had in you, it will fire you up big time. Seeing those weightlifting numbers climb as the weeks go past gives you an extra injection of motivation.

You'll know for certain you're making progress because it's there in black and white. That gives you more confidence, gets you buzzing for your next workout, and automatically provides the motivation you previously struggled to find.

- Sense of achievement.

And finally...the rush of endorphins usually makes us feel great after a tough workout, but this is enhanced when you see on paper everything you have just put your body through.

And flicking through your notes, seeing where you have started and how far you have come, is amazingly satisfying.

#4 Scheduling your training a week in advance

Another problem that sinks good intentions and derails many health and fitness programs is being vague.

We've all told ourselves at some point, "*I'm going to make the gym three or four times per week*". Let's be honest, it usually doesn't take very long before life takes over and we're only managing to train a couple of days per week.

Then we beat ourselves up, lose motivation and quit.

The perfect solution to this is to schedule your workouts a week in advance in your new training diary.

It need only take 20 minutes on a Sunday. First, analyse your working week and identify the days and exact times you can work out.

Pinpoint four training slots – and make them non-negotiable. Fit your day around them, instead of the other way round.

#5 Stock up on the right foods

We're in the game of sculpting a brand new lean, athletic, ripped physique. Weight training is the sculptor – and the right foods are his tools.

There are three main reasons why we must clear the junk out of our cupboards and fill up on unprocessed, whole foods.

1. Proper nutrition before training will help fuel your workouts.
2. The nutrients they provide give your body what it needs after lifting heavy weights to repair tissue damage and build muscle.
3. It will boost your immune system and improve your overall health.

We've got pretty tough workouts coming up and a quarter pounder meal ain't gonna help us get through it.

And just because KFC sells chicken doesn't mean we should make a detour there on the way home from the gym either.

Seriously, we want to make the most of our gym efforts. We can do that by supporting our body's transformation with proper nutrition.

Fortunately, that doesn't mean being on some sort of crazy diet that makes you miserable...and you eventually end up quitting anyway. No, the dietary advice in this book is do-able, sensible and definitely achievable.

We'll serve up plenty on diet in chapter 8, but for now bear in mind that clearing out most of the junk and stocking up on healthy foods is another essential piece of preparation.

The Power Of Goal Setting

“Set a goal to achieve something that is so big, so exciting that it excites you and scares you at the same time.” – Bob Proctor.

All the hugely successful people in this world usually have two things in common:

1. – They are physically fit because they know that looking after their bodies will also sharpen their minds.
2. – They set goals and go about achieving them with a laser like focus.

Goal setting is very important before you lift a single dumbbell because it clears the path leading to where you want to be and gives you targets to zero in on.

By writing down your body transformation goals down and keeping them in mind, it prevents you from training aimlessly, spurs you on - and plays a big role in keeping you on track.

There are three key elements to setting powerful goals.

#1 Be specific about what you want – and aim high

We don't do vague goals like, 'I want more muscle', or 'I want to lose my belly fat'. That's hardly inspiring, is it?

Specific details about your perfect body is more like it. No point in setting the bar low, let's raise it right up and get fired up about the possibility of completely transforming your physique.

Think about how achieving this will make you *feel*.

#2 Set your starting point

To get where we're going we need to know where we are. Take measurements, date, weight, size of waist, arms etc.

Also, take a 'before' picture. Nobody really likes doing this as it feels awkward, but it will feel much better looking at it when you have the 'after' photo to compare it to.

#3 Set a deadline

Choose a date – between 12 and 16 weeks from now – and make that your deadline for hitting your goals.

This is the ideal period because if the deadline is too far in the distance you'll slack off. We want a sense of urgency as we chase these goals.

CHECKLIST

- * Proper preparation and goal setting are the difference between quitting too soon and getting results.**
- * Don't lift weights at home or in your garage because your progress will be limited. Join your local gym instead.**
- * Use a gym training diary to properly keep track of your progress, boost motivation and help you stay on track.**
- * Plan your three gym workouts a week in advance - and keep those important appointments with yourself.**
- * Clear the junk foods out of your cupboards, so there's less room for temptation.**
- * Write down your weight training goals – and make them specific and detailed.**
- * Take all the relevant weight/body measurements, and a 'before' picture, to ensure you have a clear starting point.**
- * Set a deadline – 12-16 weeks is an ideal time frame – for hitting your goals.**

Chapter 3 - The Secret To Staying On Track

Do you get bored at the gym sometimes? Struggle to drag yourself in there after a long day at work? Then you leave knowing your session was only a half-hearted effort...

We've all been there. Training without a partner was another problem for me in the past, I just never got as much out of working out on my own.

These are all just tiny barriers on the road to success and can easily be overcome.

The secret to staying on track is by...

#1 Not changing everything at once

Right now we're planning, preparing and getting in the right mindset for building a new body. Later there will be clear instructions on training and advice on diet, nutrition and rest.

Taking all of this on board, particularly when it comes to diet and rest, might mean a complete lifestyle change for you. Trying to implement everything at once to achieve your goals will lead to overwhelm and frustration.

The answer - don't change everything at once. In my 12 week programme with personal training clients, we introduce one positive habit per week primarily with nutrition, i.e. cut your sugar intake by half, or have a takeaway meal just at the weekend, rather than 2 or 3 days per week.

We build upon each weekly habit and it all adds up to major shifts and great results.

It's much easier to stick with gradual changes rather than turning your entire life upside down. Sticking to the same healthy task each day for the whole week helps to naturally form positive habits. Soon it isn't so difficult to stick to them.

#2 Treat your training diary as your body's Bible – and fill it in religiously

Writing in this little book might seem trivial, maybe even pointless to some people, but planning your workouts and keeping record of your performance will supercharge your progress. Trust me.

A training diary gives you focus, accountability, improves your performance, keeps you on track, motivated and heightens your sense of achievement.

The coaches at Crossfit Los Angeles have made it a requirement that every one of their clients keeps a training journal. It's because they know how powerful it is in bringing the best out of people and achieving amazing results.

I know from experience that if I've not planned out my workouts in advance, or if I've left my training journal at home, then I always have a mediocre workout. And mediocre training equals mediocre results.

#3 Review your goals daily

Write down your clear, defined goals and make it a habit to spend just 30 seconds reading them every morning.

Keep reminding yourself of what you intend to achieve and how you're going to feel once you do it.

It's a simple habit but one that keeps you focused on your targets and bats any excuses right out of the park.

If They Can Do It So Can You...

Too often we limit ourselves mentally when it comes to what we want to achieve. That's why I emphasised that when you set your goals make sure you aim high.

It doesn't matter where you are just now. Whether you think you're too skinny and weak, too fat, unhealthy, not athletic enough, don't have the right genes, or whatever other crazy thought process enters your head.

These are all just limiting beliefs. They may have held you back until now, but they hold no real weight.

There are some amazing people out there who prove that once you set a firm intention with the mind, the body will follow suit. At the time of writing, check out what these superhero pensioners were achieving...

Danish weightlifter Svend Stensgaard deadlifts 290lbs and says the rush of endorphins he gets from lifting weights is like a “dosage of morphine”.

Svend is 97 years old at the time of writing this and is the world’s oldest powerlifter.

New York supergran Willie Murphy weighs just 105lbs but she trains like a boss in the gym – and has got the biceps to prove it.

Aged 78, Willie can do one-handed push-ups and pull-ups – and deadlifts double her own bodyweight.

Pat Reeves has beaten cancer twice – through a raw foods diet only and lifting weights to strengthen her body.

Aged 71, she’s the UK’s oldest competing female powerlifter, and has some words of wisdom for us: “Be pro-active, find a goal/dream and every day do something that progresses you towards that.

“Be clear about what you want, not just aiming to ‘improve’ but being exactly specific as to projected achievement.”

These people are the inspiration that you CAN significantly improve the condition of your body and your overall health – no matter your level of fitness right now.

Time to get started.

CHECKLIST

- **If you don't already have a gym membership, sign up for an induction at your local gym.**
- **Buy yourself a gym training diary for scheduling your workouts and designing your training programme using the exercises and systems described later in chapter 4.**
- **Write down your clear, detailed goals.**

Chapter 4 - Building Muscle and Burning Fat Through Compound Exercises

A few years ago I used to see the same guy in the gym virtually every time I went, whether I arrived at 4.30pm, 5pm, 6.08pm. I'm still wondering if he was paying rent!

He lifted weights but would jump from machine to machine, sometimes going back to the same one 20 minutes later.

But not once did I see him squat. Never did I see him do deadlifts, or clean and press.

After one gym workout I overheard him talking to another guy in the locker room and he said: "Glad that's over. That was two and a half hours today."

The other guy replied: "That's a serious gym session!"

He said: "I was in for three hours on Sunday."

Fair play to the guy for showing up and putting in the work – but it was getting him nowhere. I saw him in the gym constantly for a solid six months and never noticed any change in his physique.

This was because he was making several mistakes. Firstly – he was judging his workouts based on the amount of time he spent in the gym. Focusing on the correct exercises and training at the right intensity is far more important than how many minutes you've been sweating.

Secondly – he was training inefficiently doing countless muscle isolation exercises, with no real structure to his workouts or system in place for progressing to the next level.

Pretty sure I saw him make a pit-stop at Burger King on the way home too....

Seriously, we can completely wipe out these same mistakes and guarantee muscle gains by placing a huge emphasis on compound exercises, training at the right intensity and optimising our diet.

Compound exercises are the most effective and efficient way of training.

I'm crazy about compounds. Within a few weeks of hitting them hard you will be too. Why?

Because you'll finally know what it's like to work your body properly and feel every muscle ache afterwards.

You'll witness your strength go through the roof.

And you'll see clear results in your physique as you gradually gain muscle and strip away fat.

Now we're ready to really get down to business.

Time to introduce the top 10 compound movements our training will centre around, along with a selection of effective muscle isolation exercises that will be weaved into our workouts too.

Proper technique is crucial so there are clear written instructions on how to perform each move correctly, along with tips on common mistakes to avoid.

Also listed are the muscles worked in each exercise – which will underline exactly how effective compound exercises are for achieving a total body workout and creating optimal body composition.

Why Compound Exercises Build Muscle AND Burn Fat

Heavy weight training using compound exercises – particularly squats and deadlifts – has been scientifically proven to boost production of anabolic hormones, growth hormone and testosterone. (Don't worry ladies, this isn't a problem for you as your testosterone levels are naturally 15-20 times lower than men).

- Testosterone is the primary hormone that interacts with muscle tissue, repairing the tiny tears caused during heavy lifting and stimulating development.
- Growth hormone is also a main player in muscle growth because it enhances uptake of amino acids (the building blocks of protein) and protein synthesis in muscle. At the same time, it also increases lipolysis (fat breakdown) and the use of fatty acids by the body. So, it's a two for one with GH – more muscle and less fat.

Creating this anabolic environment in the body leads to hypertrophy – growth in the size of muscle cells.

It's the combination of heavy lifting and large groups of muscle involved that sparks this process. Other forms of exercise simply don't have the same muscle building effect.

Gaining Muscle Is Like Adding More Coal To A Fat Burning Fire

To maintain muscle your body burns more calories than it does holding on to fat.

Some experts estimate that each extra pound of muscle burns an additional 30-50 calories per day.

Ultimately, it's beneficial for your metabolism to gain muscle mass. Just by developing muscle, your body naturally becomes more efficient at burning fat.

Muscle gain and fat loss go hand in hand.

Other Benefits Of Compound Exercises

#1 Several muscle groups are worked at once

Why do three or four leg machine exercises when you can get the same benefits, and more, from barbell squats? The nature of compounds is that they engage several muscle groups in one complete movement. This is what makes them so efficient.

#2 Better body composition

We've all seen the Johnny Bravo type physiques. Gym goers with a puffed-out chest, broad shoulders – and legs like twigs. Too much muscle isolation work can result in specific body parts being over-developed, although this isn't too common. By working various muscle groups in a synergistic way, compound exercises avoid this and sculpt a natural athletic physique.

#3 Improves heart health

The short intense nature of compound exercises also work the cardiovascular system effectively. It's not all about building muscle and burning fat, compounds are good for your ticker too.

#4 You can complete your workouts quicker

To achieve a total body workout and fatigue your muscles enough to spark muscle growth, you could do upwards of a dozen different muscle isolation exercises. With compounds hitting various muscle groups at once, you could achieve the same end goal using just half the amount of exercises. That means less time spent in the gym unnecessarily.

#5 Rapid gains in strength

By forcing different muscle groups to 'pull together' to deal with the strain of whatever compound exercise you're engaging in you'll surprisingly gain strength rapidly. By working out applying The 3,6,9 Principle you'll likely make

huge strength strides in a matter of weeks, which will of course lead to muscle gain.

#6 Every squat adds a day to your life

Still can't find the scientific study proving this one - you're just gonna have to trust me on it!

Gaining Muscle And Burning Fat – But At The Same Time?

Most fitness professionals will tell you that you can't build muscle and burn fat effectively at the same time. That you either have to shed the pounds and then work on gaining muscle afterwards, or that you need to 'bulk' then 'cut'.

I disagree. I've seen people achieve it, and there are experts out there who have helped folk achieve both goals at once.

In a recent interview with Bodybuilding.com, Stephen Adele, fitness coach, best-selling author and owner of nutritional firm iSatori, argued that it's inaccurate to say it's impossible to build muscle and lose bodyfat at the same time. The fitness firm boss says it's all down to your approach and described such a double success as a "true transformation".

The approach to training within the next few chapters are exactly what you need to help you achieve both muscle gain and fat loss.

"But what if I've tried compound exercises before and I got nowhere?", some readers might ask.

There are two more important elements to achieving this muscle gain/fat loss body transformation. Miss any of them out and you won't get the results you want. They are:

1. Not coupling your training with a healthy, whole foods diet, and breaking some of the foundational nutrition rules.
2. Not being consistent with either training or diet.

You CAN Achieve Amazing Results...But Nothing Worth Having Comes Easy

Another question you might ask is, “How long is this all going to take?”

I wrote an article a few months ago for The Good Men Project website titled, ‘11 Mistakes Every Gym Rookie Makes’. Number 11 on that list was ‘not being consistent’ because the problem with most people is that they don’t stick with the programme long enough to see any results.

We now live in the 21st century where it’s all about instant gratification. We text somebody - and we’re annoyed if we don’t get a reply within 10 minutes!

Don’t be a gym rookie.

I know you’re taking your plan to build muscle and burn fat much more seriously than that anyway...simply by the fact that you’ve bought this book.

Nothing really worth having comes easy. Same goes for that awesome physique you’ve been chasing. It won’t come overnight, or over a fortnight, but you CAN achieve amazing results if you’re consistent with your training and following a healthy diet.

You can’t put a number on something like this because our bodies are all different, with various compositions, fat levels, bone density, rates of metabolism etc, so your body transformation is not something you can accurately schedule.

Having said that, I’d still expect most people to start seeing a positive difference in their body shape – and overall health and wellbeing – within 4-6 weeks, provided they stick with the advice on training and diet.

One of my recent online personal training clients, Chris Hannan, lost 10lbs in just 10 days. The 33-year-old father-of-one is now taking his body transformation to the next level and so can you.

CHECKLIST

- * Compound exercises are the most effective and efficient way of training.**
- * Heavy weight training using compound exercises, particularly squats and deadlifts, have been proven to boost the production of muscle building anabolic hormones.**
- * Other forms of training, like standard cardio and endurance training, simply does not have the same effect in developing a great body.**
- * More muscle = more calories burned naturally.**
- * It's estimated that your body uses an extra 30-50 calories to maintain each additional pound of muscle you gain.**
- * Other benefits of compounds include: several muscle groups worked at once, better body composition, improved heart health, a total body workout, and rapid gains in strength.**
- * Don't listen to the naysayers – you CAN build muscle and burn fat at the same time.**
- * Results won't come overnight, but they will come – if you stay consistent with your training and diet.**

Chapter 5 - Compound Exercises: Bigger Movements, Better Results

I'm always banging on about compound exercises and these are the top moves I believe everyone should be doing whether you're a man, woman...or reptile.

Looking to build lean muscle? Develop definition? Strip fat?

These 10 exercises will form the core of your training, along with some muscle isolation moves I'll introduce in the next chapter.

I give descriptions of each exercise but it's too tricky to include high quality photos in this book, particularly the Kindle version. But I want to make sure you get the most from this book and I realise some readers might not be familiar with some of the exercises at all, so I've created an exercise demo guide that you can download for free on my website.

It includes high quality pictures of me performing all 25 exercises...(and pulling some weird looking faces during them). You can download it for free on my website via the web address below (I've included the link at the end of this book too).

www.weighttrainingistheway.com/exercise-demos

#1 Barbell Squats

The King of exercises – and one to master if you're serious about building muscle, losing fat, and changing the way you look and feel.

Technique

>> Warm up for a couple of minutes doing a light jog on a treadmill and then a series of leg stretches.

>> Place the barbell on the squat rack at shoulder height and add the weight plates to each side. Ensure they are locked on using a collar or clamp. Also put safety bars in place just below waist height (as seen in the picture).

>> Position yourself under the centre of the bar so that it sits on your trapezius. Stretch your hands out and grip the bar at either side at a length that feels comfortable.

>> Lift the bar upwards off the hooks and step back with both feet.

>> Position your feet in a natural standing position, toes pointing forward and slightly outwards.

>> Keep your back rigid, holding the barbell on your trapezius with good posture.

>> Staring straight ahead, squat down in a controlled manner until your thighs are parallel with the floor or just slightly lower.

>> Keeping your eyesight focused ahead, push back up forcefully through your hips and straighten your legs back into the starting position.

Common mistakes – and how to avoid them

Arching your back during the movement. Concentrate on keeping your back rigid throughout and also keep your gaze focused on an object directly ahead as you lower yourself and until you return to the top again. This is good for balance and staying focused.

Moving your feet. Once you step back from the rack and you're in a comfortable starting position your feet should not move from that spot. Your heels may occasionally lift off the ground as you push upwards with the weight. Do not let this become a habit because it can make you unsteady. Your feet should be planted in the same position until the final rep is done.

Forgetting to lock the weights on to the bar. I've done this a few times and seen weights slide right off the bar. Always think safety first and by put a collar/clamp on the bar to make sure weights stay safely in place.

Muscles worked: The entire lower body, particularly the quadriceps, hamstrings, glutes and calves, abs, erector spinae (group of back) muscles.

#2 Deadlifts

Another monster move that involves multiple muscles in the upper and lower body.

The deadlift basically involves lifting a heavy weight off the floor and then standing with your legs straight and shoulders back. This one can be tricky though so make sure you start off with a light weight and pay close attention to the information below.

Technique

>> Stand at a loaded barbell with your feet slightly wider than shoulder width. Bend down and grab the bar with one hand over the top and the other underneath.

>> The grip should be just at the outside of your feet and your palms must be facing in different directions.

>> With your feet firmly on the floor and the bar close to your shins, pull the bar upwards over your knees. As you rise, push your hips forward and straighten your back.

>> The bar should be resting against your thighs as you stand straight with your shoulder pressed back. (It should always be kept close to your body throughout the exercise).

>> Bend your knees as you carefully lower the weight back down over your legs to the floor.

Common mistakes to avoid

Don't round your back. Keep it rigid and by looking straight ahead, rather than on the floor, helps achieve this.

Don't hitch or jerk the bar upwards. It should be lifted in one flowing, continuous movement.

Don't tip your feet forward – or move them at all – during the movement. There's a fair chance you'll end up faceplanting.

Muscles worked: Glutes, quads, hamstrings, calves, traps, (lower back), (forearms), shoulders, abs, (obliques)

#3 Bench press

The number one exercise for developing your chest muscles, especially when it comes to adding mass. The bench can be set at an incline level to focus more on the upper section of your chest, or decline to hit the lower part.

Technique

>> Lie on a bench under a weights rack with your feet flat on the floor. The barbell should be roughly level with your nose. Your hands should grip the bar slightly beyond shoulder width.

>> Lift off the rack and lower to the mid-section of your chest in a controlled manner.

>> Push back up forcefully and lock out your arms.

>> The first lowering part will take roughly a couple of seconds, but pushing to the top should take only half the time.

Common mistakes to avoid

Too narrow grip. This works the triceps and puts less strain on the chest. It'll also make the bar more difficult to balance, meaning you will struggle to cope with the same level of weight.

Too wide grip. This works a smaller portion of your chest and brings the shoulders more into play. A wider grip also makes the bar more unsteady and harder to balance.

Raising your lower back off the bench. There may be a very slight raise when you first lift the bar off the rack at the start of your set, but don't arch your back throughout as this will inevitably lead to injury.

Muscles worked: Pecs, anterior deltoids (front of shoulders), triceps.

#4 Clean and press

I nicknamed this one 'busters' a long time ago – because you feel absolutely busted after them! Works both the upper and lower body, which is obviously great for overall composition, but it also works the cardiovascular system hard. After one

punishing set of these you'll feel like you've been running for an hour.

The clean and press basically involves lifting a barbell off the floor, hiking the weight up and pressing directly above your head.

Technique:

>> Same starting positioning for a bent over row. Stand over the bar with your back straight at a 45 degree angle.

>> Overhand grip for both hands, slightly beyond shoulder width, and with your knees tucked in between your arms.

>> Sweep the bar upwards, pushing forcefully through your hips almost in a jumping motion...but keep your feet on the floor.

>> As the barbell reaches your chest, flick your wrists so that your palms are now under the bar.

>> Then, without pausing, press the bar straight up until your arms lock out at the elbows.

>> Bring the weight down to chest again, and then bend the knees as you lower it to the floor in a controlled fashion.

Common mistakes

Arching your back at the beginning of the exercise. Your back should be at a straight 45 degree angle as you lean over to pick up the bar. Otherwise you're in danger of hurting your lower back.

Stumbling forwards or backwards during the exercise. You should be steady and the weight should be under control in one flowing movement.

Dropping the weight on to the floor. It's unsafe to just drop or throw the barbell down once you have raised it above your head. You should control the weight as you lower it to the floor and your muscles will still be working as you do so.

Muscles worked: Glutes, quads, hamstrings, traps, front shoulders, triceps, forearms.

#5 Bent over row

Want a V-shaped torso? Then do not miss this exercise out. Bent over rows work the entire upper back – and your biceps. It's also definitely the number one exercise for developing the lats to taper the back and give it a natural, athletic look.

Technique

>> With a loaded barbell on the floor, stand with your feet just beyond shoulder width.

>> Bend the knees and grab the bar. Keep your lower back arched, chest puffed out and look straight ahead.

>> Lift the bar to your lower chest, making sure you keep the static position and don't swing up and down.

>> The bar should be brought up hard and fast, but should it should take twice the time to lower the bar under control.

Common mistakes

Straight legs during the lift. This makes the move awkward and increases your chances of injury so keep your knees bent slightly throughout.

Moving upwards during the lift. After initially lifting the bar from the floor, keep your hips in place and your upper body static. This works your upper back harder, and means you are not compensating by using your hips or lower back to help lift the weight.

Muscles worked: Lats, traps, biceps, front and rear shoulders.

#6 Upright row

The upright row of course works several muscles like the other compounds, but it primarily hits the upper trapezius. This creates the nice sloping look from your upper neck down to your shoulders. I personally saw a noticeable difference in development within a fortnight of first using this exercise.

Technique:

Note: an Ez-bar (pictured) is preferable to a straight barbell for this exercise because it allows for a full range of movement and causes less strain on your wrists.

>> Grab the loaded barbell at the two dipped points and have it resting at your knees.

>> Keeping your back straight, pull firmly upwards to just under your chin, with your elbows extending outwards.

>> Lower the bar in a controlled, slow fashion.

Common mistakes

Lifting the bar only to your chest. This is only half a rep, you must lift higher right up to your chin...without smacking yourself in the face.

Swinging your body to lift the weight. Your legs and back must be kept straight throughout to target the right muscles and stay injury free.

Muscles worked: Traps, middle of shoulders, biceps.

#7 Chin-ups

Chin-ups blast your biceps, lats, lower traps, forearms...and abs aswell while we're at it. The chin-up is a variation of the pull-up. In fact, some people switch the names about because they are so similar.

The difference between the chin-up is that your palms face inward and you have a narrower grip on the bar. This brings the biceps more into play.

Both exercises are outstanding for developing upper body strength – but most people struggle to perform even one full rep. (Don't worry, there's a clever tactic you can use to gradually build your strength on these that will eventually get you to the point where you can rattle them out easily).

Technique

>> Reach up and grab the bar above with your palms facing inwards. Your hands should be exactly shoulder width apart.

>> Pull yourself upwards and, just like pull-ups, cross your legs as they come off the floor.

>> Squeeze your biceps to pull your chin over the top of the bar.

>> Lower your body to the starting position in a controlled manner.

Common mistakes

Not lowering your body far enough. We're not interested in half reps. Lower your body right down, lock your arms out at the elbow and drag yourself back to the top.

Spreading your hands too far across the bar. This makes the move awkward, putting strain on your shoulders and chest which could result in injury – or falling.

Not climbing high enough. For a full rep your chin must at least touch the bar, if not go slightly over it.

Muscles worked: Lats, biceps, lower traps, forearms, abs.

- Chin-ups and the next exercise pull-ups are so good for developing your upper body, but they're very difficult at first and most people struggle to do even one rep.
- But don't just give up on these amazing exercises – you can do assisted reps until you develop enough upper body strength and/or lose bodyfat if you need to.

Some gyms have a machine you can rest your knees on which is ideal for assisting people in doing chin-ups, pull-ups and dips. If your gym doesn't have one of these then I'd highly recommend investing in a resistance band. These serve the same purpose, taking some of the load of your bodyweight while you do the exercise.

Once you can comfortably do 10 chin-ups, pull-ups or dips using the band then you'll have built your strength up to a decent level. Then you'll be able to perform the

exercise without any assistance and work on increasing your rep numbers.

You can buy the bands easily online. Just search for 'resistance bands' on www.amazon.com and you'll find a good selection.

#8 Pull-ups

A mammoth exercise that blasts the entire upper back, shoulders and arms. Pull-ups also work your core area to an extent as you balance your body during the movement.

Slightly harder than chin-ups, but so effective for developing muscle tone. As you build up your strength you will also naturally increase your reps.

Technique

>> Grab a pull-up bar with your hands positioned at wider than shoulder width and your palms facing outwards.

>> Pull your body upwards and cross your legs as soon as they leave the floor.

>> Pull hard until your shoulders are level with your hands and then lower your body to the starting position.

Common mistakes

Not dropping your body low enough. Again this is only half a rep and simply won't work your muscles hard enough. Your arms should lock out at the bottom.

Swinging your head and body. It's not easy to balance your body during pull-ups, but focus on using the full range of your arms to raise and lower your body, rather than trying to 'nudge' yourself upwards at the top.

Muscles worked: Shoulders, lats, trapezius, forearms, triceps, abs.

#9 Dips

I've heard this one being nicknamed 'The Upper Body Squat' – and no wonder, it is an outstanding exercise that engages

most parts of your upper body.

Technique

>> Grab both handles of the dip bar and straighten your arms, keeping your body rigid and crossing over your legs.

>> Looking straight ahead, bend your elbows and lower your body in a controlled way until your arms are at a 90 degree angle (i.e. your upper arms are parallel with the floor).

>> Focusing on keeping your body rigid, push your body upwards again until your arms are straight and your elbows lock out.

Common mistakes to avoid

Swinging your body. Balance is important and it's all too easy to swing forward or backwards as you perform this exercise. Keep your body firm and your gaze straight ahead to avoid doing this.

Not dipping low enough. A very common mistake is where people only lower their body slightly, sometimes only a few inches. It's important to hit that 90 degree angle to properly work the muscles.

Muscles worked: shoulders, chest, triceps, forearms, abs.

#10 Military Press

A straightforward but highly effective compound exercise for developing your upper body.

Technique

>> Stand with your legs apart and hold a barbell at just above your upper chest area, with your elbows slightly below a 90 degree angle.

>> Press the bar firmly above your head until your elbows lock out, then lower to the starting position.

Common mistakes to avoid

Swaying backwards or forwards during the exercise. Keep your feet planted in the same position throughout.

Muscles worked: Shoulders, chest, trapezius, triceps, forearms.

Chapter 6 - Muscle Isolation Moves

Compounds are king and will form the majority of our workouts, but we'll also include some isolation exercises.

We're sculpting stronger, better bodies here, so think of it like this: compounds are the sculptor's clay for creating the athletic, muscular physique...and isolation exercises are his carving tools for definition.

There are countless variations of isolation exercises – enough to fill a book on their own. But it's pointless going into them all because they'll only make up a smaller part of our workouts.

Instead, I've chosen my top three isolation exercises for each of the main muscle groups and listed them below.

CHEST

Dumbbell press

Similar to bench press, but using a dumbbell in each arm instead to work the pectoral muscles.

Technique

>> Lying flat on a bench, hold two dumbbells at slightly wider than shoulder width, with your palms facing outward .

>> Press dumbbells straight up and inwards till they meet in the middle.

>> Squeeze your chest at the very top of the movement for a second and then lower the dumbbells to the same starting position in a controlled way.

Common mistake to avoid

Bashing the dumbbells together at the top of the movement as this can lead to losing balance and poor form.

Dumbbell flyes

Again involving the bench and dumbbells, but hitting the chest muscles in a different way.

Technique

>> Lying flat on a bench, press two dumbbells straight up in the air with your palms are facing inwards.

>> Slowly bring your arms outwards, as if you were stretching, until your upper arms are roughly parallel with the floor. Your arms should be slightly bent and you should feel the strain across your chest and shoulders.

>> Bring your arms back up in a butterfly motion till the dumbbells reach the starting position again.

>> Squeeze your chest muscles at the very top of the movement, before lowering again.

Common mistake to avoid

Raising your lower back off the bench. Keep your upper and lower back firmly on there.

Dumbbell pullover

This great single dumbbell exercise inflates the ribcage area – and your chest if you give it enough attention!

Technique

>> Lie flat on a bench, with your head in line with the very top of it. Hold a dumbbell straight above your head using your two palms.

>> Keeping your arms straight, slowly lower the dumbbell backwards over your head and towards the floor.

>> Once you feel the full stretch on your ribcage and your arms can't lower any further, raise the dumbbell back to the starting position while keeping your arms straight.

Common mistake to avoid

Bending the arms. Keep them as straight as possible throughout the movement.

SHOULDERS

Arnie press

Named after Mr Schwarzenegger because he introduced this twisting style of exercise to really work the shoulders hard. It's a little tricky to master at first, but you'll soon get comfortable with it.

Technique

>> With a bench set in the upright position your back firmly against it, press two dumbbells straight above your head, with your palms facing outwards.

>> Bend your elbows and slowly lower the weights – but gradually twist your palms inwards as you do so.

>> In the final third of the movement your palms should be facing inwards and your forearms should come together side by side.

>> In a reverse motion, open up your arms again and twist your palms outwards while simultaneously pressing the dumbbells.

>> Do this twist/press until the dumbbells meet at the starting position, with your palms facing outwards again.

Common mistake to avoid

Not pulling your arms in far enough at the bottom of the movement. Bring your forearms close in together until they are side by side.

Deltoid raises

Dumbbells called into action again and doing a mix of two lifts to hit the front and medial deltoids (aka shoulder muscles).

Technique

>> Stand straight holding two dumbbells by your side.

>> With your palms facing inwards, raise the dumbbells up in front of you to shoulder height. Pause for a second and then lower them to the starting position.

>> For your next rep, turn your hands inward and then raise your arms directly up from the side until shoulder height. Pause briefly again before lowering the weights to your sides again.

>> Alternate between the two front and side variations throughout the set until failure.

Common mistake to avoid

Letting your arms just drop back down again. Lower them in a controlled way.

Reverse flyes

Using dumbbells to effectively target the rear shoulder muscles.

Technique

>> Stand with your feet together and knees slightly bent.

>> Bend forward holding dumbbells together facing inwards and while looking straight ahead.

>> Raise your arms out to the side (in the opposite motion to chest dumbbell flyes).

>> Lift the weights as high as possible – while keeping your back in the same position – and lower again to the start.

Common mistake to avoid

Swinging your back up and down during the exercise. Stay steady and only move your arms.

BACK

Cable row

99.9% of gyms have these machines and they're great for isolating the lats, helping develop an athletic v-shaped back.

Technique

- >> Place your feet on the foot-rests and your shins/knees against the pads, effectively locking your legs in position.
- >> Grab the cable handle and sit up straight, keeping your back rigid.
- >> Pull the cable handle towards you until it almost touches your lower chest.
- >> Slowly release the handle and cable back to its starting position.

Common mistake to avoid

Moving your back forwards and backwards. Keeps your hips and back in the same upright position throughout the move.

Lat pulldown

This is like a machine variation of the pull-up...but not nearly as effective as that compound exercise.

Technique

- >> The bench may have pads you can rest your knees under, which helps hold your body in position. If it does, then use them.
- >> ...but first grab the bar from above your head, with your hands in a position slightly wider than your shoulders.
- >> Pull the bar down as close to your upper chest as feels comfortable.
- >> Return the bar and cable back to its starting position in a controlled way.

Common mistake to avoid

Raising your lower body off the bench as you return the weight to the starting position. Keep your legs and waist in place, locking them in position under the pads if the machine has them.

Dumbbell row

Another great exercise for targeting the lats and therefore hitting a large portion of your back.

Technique

>> Rest your right knee/shin and your straight right arm on a bench, holding yourself in position.

>> Keep your left leg straight at the side and grab a dumbbell from the floor with your left arm.

>> Pull the dumbbell towards your body until your arm is at a 90 degree angle.

>> Lower your weight back to the starting position until your arm is straight again.

>> Do a full set and then switch round, placing your left limbs on the bench, so you can then work your right side.

Common mistake to avoid

Moving your shoulder up and down. Focus on keeping the arm resting on the bench completely straight throughout as this will hold your body in position.

BICEPS

Barbell curls

The standard biceps exercise that everyone recognises. Great move for isolating the biceps and also hitting the forearms.

Technique

>> Stand with your back straight and hold a barbell at your thighs, with an underhand grip and your arms at shoulder width.

>> Keeping your elbows tucked in against your waist, curl the bar upwards towards your chest.

>> Squeeze your biceps at the top for a second and then lower the bar in a controlled way down to your thighs again.

Common mistake to avoid

Swinging your body to gain momentum and help lift the bar. Focus on keeping your body rigid throughout the movement,

with your upper arms flat against your body and your elbows locked in position at your waist. Only your forearms should be moving up and down like a lever.

Lying bench curls

Curling with dumbbells this time and by lying at an angle you put additional strain on the biceps. Exactly what we want!

Technique

>> Set a bench to a slight incline, but not too high or too low (see picture for ideal level).

>> Lie back on the bench with a dumbbell in each hand and start with your arms completely straight down each side.

>> Fix your gaze on something directly above you to stay focused.

>> While keeping your upper arms and elbows in the same position, curls the dumbbells up close to your shoulders.

>> Squeeze your biceps as you hold the dumbbells at the top for a second – and then slowly lower to the starting position.

Common mistake to avoid

Raising your waist or back off the bench. Keep your body firmly placed against the bench and move only from the elbows.

21's

This is basically barbell curls again – but with a bicep burning twist. It involves 21 continuous reps and is a great move to include near the end of your workout as it is really effective for reaching muscle fatigue.

Technique

>> Get in the same starting position as you would with the barbell curl – but decrease the weight by $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{3}$ because you will be completing more reps at once.

>> With your upper arms firmly against your side and working only from the elbow again, curl the bar upwards. However, only come halfway up this time – until your forearms are parallel with the floor – and then lower the weight to your thighs once more.

>> Do this for 7 reps.

>> Then hold the bar with your arms bent at a 90 degree angle and curl up to your chest – like you would in only the second part of a normal bicep curl.

>> Lower the bar, but only till the halfway point where your arms reach that 90 degree angle again.

>> Do this for another 7 reps.

>> Without pausing for a rest, then move straight into full barbell curls, lifting from your thighs all the way up to your chest.

>> Do this for a final 7 reps until you have completed 21 in total.

Common mistake to avoid

Lifting the barbell too high in the first part, or lowering it too low in the second part of 21's. Remember to only go halfway each time, which makes the arms work hard to control the weight – and then makes the final 7 reps much tougher.

TRICEPS

Narrow press

This move is basically bench pressing, but with a narrow grip which brings the tricep muscles into action.

Technique

>> Set up a barbell and bench as you would for bench pressing, but decrease the weight by at least 1/3 as the narrow grip makes this a bit more tricky to balance the bar.

>> Grab the bar and move your hands inwards by a couple of inches, so that they are narrower than shoulder width.

>> Lift the bar off the catches and straighten your arms till you're holding it comfortably and feel balanced.

>> Then lower the bar to the middle part of your chest and press back to the top until your elbows lock out.

Common mistake to avoid

The bar swaying from side to side. It's a bit awkward to balance at first because of the narrow grip but focus on holding the bar steady at the start before beginning your reps.

Cable pushdown

Is a cable machine exercise, this involves pushing a bar downwards rather than pressing or pulling it to engage the triceps muscles.

Technique

>> Set the pin in the machine to a suitable weight level.

>> Set the cable pulley to the top of the machine and attach either a straight bar, or ideally one with a bend that allows your hands to slope downwards.

>> Stand up straight with your feet apart and grab the bar with an overhand grip. Then pull the bar down to your thighs until your arms are straight.

>> Keeping your back straight and upper arms tucked against your side, raise the bar until your forearms are slightly higher than being parallel to the floor.

>> Push the bar back down to your thighs until your arms lock out.

Common mistake to avoid

Swinging the bar upwards and raising your arms too high. This can be avoided by focusing on keeping your upper arms pressed against your side and your elbows in the same spot throughout.

Overhead rope extension

Another cable machine exercise, but this time involving pressing a rope outwards. Can be a bit tricky to master at first, so start with a light weight until confident with the move.

Technique

>> Set the cable pulley to the top of the machine and attach a short rope.

>> Facing outwards away from the machine, grab the rope from behind your head with your fists.

>> Step forward and bend your knees, while your elbows are raised next to your head as you pull the rope forward.

>> This is the position to hold your body in throughout – as the only part of your body to move is your forearms.

>> Holding the rope tight, press it forward past your head until your arms are straight in front of you. (Feel free to whip out a cape and pretend you're Superman).

>> While keeping your elbows in position at the side of your head, bring your fists backwards again behind your head.

Common mistake to avoid

Not bending forward enough at the beginning. Bend your knees and lean forward from the waist to get in the correct starting position.

LEGS

Quad machine

Seated leg curl machine that totally isolates the quadriceps muscles.

Technique

>> Adjust the levers on the machine so that your back is well supported and the cushioned bar is resting back against your lower shin, effectively locking your legs in position.

>> Hold the bars at either side of the machine and curl your legs upwards until your calves are parallel with the floor and you can feel the tension on your thighs.

>> Lower the weight to the starting position in a controlled manner.

Common mistake to avoid

Arching your back. This is a shortcut to injury so keep your back firmly pressed against the rest behind you. Holding the bars at the side of the machine also help keep you in place.

Hamstring machine

Virtually the reverse of the quad machine, curling from the top downwards and isolating the hamstring muscles.

Technique

>> Sit on the chair with your legs straight, resting your heels on the cushioned bar that is furthest away.

>> Make sure your back is supported and then pull the other cushioned bar on to your lower thighs and lock it in position.

>> Push downwards with your heels, curling the bar inwards until the soles of your feet are virtually parallel with the floor.

>> Hold for a second and then raise your legs to the top again in a controlled way.

Common mistake to avoid

Not bringing the bar down low enough. Ensure you curl your legs in until the soles of your shoes are facing the floor.

Dumbbell lunges

One step forward, bending the knees, with a dumbbell in each hand. Really effective move for toning the glutes too.

Technique

>> Stand up straight with your arms by your side, holding a dumbbell in each hand.

>> Take a step forward, bending your legs as if you're about to propose to some unlucky person.

>> Keeping your shoulders and back straight, lower your body until your trailing knee almost touches the floor. Push back into the starting position and then repeat with the other leg.

Common mistake to avoid

Rounding your shoulders, or leaning forward too far, which can put you off balance. Keep your upper body rigid and your arms straight down by your sides.

EXERCISE TIPS

>> Try to perform them all in front of a mirror. This is the best way to maintain proper technique.

>> In the eccentric (second part of every exercise) always make sure you lower the weight in a controlled way. You'll work the muscles harder – and be less likely to get injured.

>> Never drop or smash your weights off the floor. It ain't cool. Only Meatheads do that.

Chapter 7 - How To Create Your Own Training Plans

I've had to learn all sorts of new things over the past couple of years just to get this book in your hands. I've been writing for a wee while but...getting the book on Kindle? Creating a paperback version? Building my fitness business website?

I didn't have a clue what I was doing. I could have spent 23.5 years trying to figure it all out...or I could have paid an expert to lead the way and save me light years.

Same applies to strength training, a healthy diet and your body transformation. A personal training and nutrition coach with plenty of experience can give you a shortcut to success.

For beginners, I'd always recommend signing up to a proven programme with a personal trainer as the accountability alone can be invaluable. But for those who want to go it alone, this chapter will equip you with a simple method for designing your own workouts.

We already have the exercises. We already have a solid guide for reps and sets. Now we'll introduce effective training systems.

This chapter will also provide sound advice on training intensity and rest periods to avoid possible burnout.

Let's get started...

Variety + Progressive Overload = Progress

The two main components of an effective weight training routine are progressive overload and variety. If every gym day feels like Groundhog Day then obviously you won't stick at it long.

Variety is not just essential for keeping you motivated and making good progress, it'll also consistently challenge you and add an element of excitement to each workout.

It's easy to chop and change by mixing up countless variations of compound and isolation exercises, the order you complete them in, and varying your rest time.

Through *progressive overload* we gradually increase the weight resistance on our muscles.

The aim should always be to go as heavy as possible - whether you're a male, female or filthy animal – but without letting your technique slip. (Remember, if you can't manage 6 reps then you're going too heavy, if you can manage more than 9 then it's time to up the weight).

The science behind progressive overload is that the added resistance induces muscle hypertrophy, which leads to growth and development. Instead of performing 3 sets of 10 reps of with the same weight for weeks and months at a time, you add more weight as the body strengthens and adapts

Your muscles get wise to doing the same routine with the same weight. This does nothing for the development of your physique and will leave your body looking flat. By increasing the weight in stages you are continually causing tears in the muscle fibres, prompting a repair, growth and adapting cycle.

How To Design Your Own Workout Plan

Step #1

Select 7-8 exercises from the previous two chapters – but make the majority of them compounds. (i.e. *Squats, deadlifts, chin-ups, upright row, bent over row, military press...and lunges* and *cable row* as your isolation moves).

Step #2

Apply the 3,6,9 Principle (3 sets and aiming for between 6 and 9 reps each time) for these exercises. This is ideal for achieving muscle fatigue and progressive overload as it indicates when you're ready to increase your weights, or decrease them if need be.

Step #3

Choose a training system to combine all of the above. There are many different training approaches, and they all have their pros and cons. Below I've listed what I consider to be the most effective.

Select one of them and use it for 4-6 weeks before switching to another.

This ensures the body doesn't adapt to any particular routine and keeps shocking the muscles – which helps stimulate more growth and development.

Four Top Training Systems

Three Set Shocker

For each exercise complete two sets of a heavy weight, focusing on proper technique for every rep. Have up to 90 seconds rest between these sets.

Then immediately after completing the second set lower the weight by one third and jump straight into a third 'shocker' set.

By giving your muscles little or no rest after their 90 second breather first time around we're aiming to shock them into shape.

Workout example (all listed kilogram weights are just random examples and no indication of what you should be lifting, find your own suitable weight using the 3,6,9 Principle):

- Squats 90kg >> 90 secs rest >> squats 90kg >> 0-20 secs rest >> squats 60kg.
- Clean and press 45kg >> 90 secs rest >> clean and press 45kg >> 0-20 secs rest >> clean and press 30kg.
- Dumbbell lunges 20kg >> 90 secs rest >> Dumbbell lunges 20kg >> 0-20 secs rest >> dumbbell lunges 15kg.
- Bent over row 50kg >> 90 secs rest >> bent over row 50kg >> 0-20 secs rest >> bent over row 35kg.
- Pull-ups max amount of reps >> 90 secs rest >> Pull-ups max amount of reps >> 0-20 secs rest >> pull-ups

max amount of reps.

- Military press 45kg >> 90 secs rest >> military press 45kg >> 0-20 secs rest >> military press 30kg.
- Barbell curls 30kg >> 90 secs rest >> barbell curls 30kg >> 0-20 secs rest >> barbell curls 20kg.

The Slow Burner

For each exercise do two sets as heavy as you can go... remember to aim for between 6 and 9 reps. Allow for up to 90 seconds rest after your first and second set.

Then drop the weight by half and complete a final set – but with a slightly different approach.

Begin each exercise normally and then squeeze the muscles when they are contracting at the peak of the exercise. Then lower the weight more slowly in the eccentric part of the movement.

For example: when bench pressing lower the bar slowly for 2-3 seconds. When it reaches your chest hold it for 2 secs before pushing firmly back to the top. Then repeat.

Another example: when doing bicep curls, raise the bar as you normally would. But as you reach the top of the movement hold and squeeze your biceps for 2 secs. Then slowly lower the bar downwards for 2-3 secs. Then repeat.

Workout example (5 compounds, 3 isolation exercises):

- Deadlifts 80kg >> 90 secs rest >> deadlifts 80kg >> 90 secs rest >> deadlifts 40kg slow reps.
- Bench press 70kg >> 90 secs rest >> bench press 70kg >> 90 secs rest >> bench press 35kg slow.
- Clean and press 45kg >> 90 secs rest >> clean and press 45kg >> 90 secs rest >> clean and press 22.5kg or 25kg slow reps.
- Chin-ups >> 90 secs rest >> chin-ups >> 90 secs rest >> slow chin-ups.
- Upright row 40kg >> 90 secs rest >> upright row 40kg >> 90 secs rest >> upright row 20kg slow.

- Dumbbell flyes 25kg >> 90 secs rest >> Dumbbell flyes 25kg >> 90 secs rest >> Dumbbell flyes 12.5kg
- Dips >> 90 secs rest >> dips >> 90 secs rest >> slow dips.
- Triceps bar pushdown 55kg >> 90 secs rest >> triceps bar pushdown 55kg >> 90 secs rest >> slow triceps bar pushdown 27kg or 30kg

Drop Sets

This system involves starting with a weight where you can manage 6-9 reps, followed by two consecutive sets where you drop the load by about 20%-25% each time.

For example, a barbell row may start at 60kg, the second set would drop to 45kg, and third set would be done at around 35kg. Sounds easy enough, right?

Not really, because you are only allowed up to 30 seconds rest between each set. The weight may be decreasing each time, but the shorter recovery period ensures it doesn't feel like it.

The drop sets system is much easier with a training partner because they can unload the bar between sets while you catch your breath.

Workout example (6 compounds, 2 isolation exercises):

- Bench press 70kg >> 30 secs rest max >> Bench press 55kg >> 30 secs rest max >> bench press 45kg.
- Dumbbell flyes 25kg >> 30 secs rest max >> dumbbell flyes 20kg >> 30 secs rest max >> dumbbell flyes 15kg.
- Deadlifts 80kg >> 30 secs rest >> deadlifts 60kg >> 30 secs rest >> deadlifts 50kg.
- Chin-ups >> 30 secs rest max >> chin-ups >> 30 secs rest max >> chin-ups.
- Military press 50kg >> 30 secs rest max >> military press 35kg >> 30 secs rest max >> military press 25kg.

- Bent over row 65kg >> 30 secs rest max >> bent over row 50kg >> 30 secs rest max >> bent over row 40kg.
- Lat pulldown 70kg >> 30 secs rest max >> lat pulldown 55kg >> 30 secs rest max >> lat pulldown 45kg.
- Lying bench curls 12.5kg >> 30 secs rest max >> lying bench curls 10kg >> 30 secs rest max >> 7.5kg.

The 25's

Still three sets. Still lifting heavy. Only difference is you're aiming to complete a combined total of at least 25 reps.

If you exceed 25 mark a '+' in your training diary to step it up a level next time.

The difficulty with this system is that by the third set your muscles will be tiring, but you're maintaining the same heavy weight (unlike drop sets or the three sets shocker).

The upside is that you should give yourself up to 90 secs rest in between every set to prepare. Also, you're less concerned with the number of reps in an individual set than you are with the sum total.

For example, if you only manage 8 reps in your first two sets of biceps curls you know that it's not impossible to still achieve a '+' by really going for it in the final set.

That is when it is time to get some good music on, turn it up loud, and stay focused on the number 9 in your head. On the other hand, this system is particularly good for bodyweight exercises such as press ups, dips, pull-ups and chin-ups. By the third set you will likely be knackered and manage maybe only 5 or 6 – but if you racked up 11 and 8, or 10 and 9, in your first two sets then you can still hit 25 in total.

If you're a complete beginner then a resistance band is highly recommended. No matter how many reps you get, mark it in your training diary and just keep aiming to outdo yourself.

Workout example (5 compounds, 2 isolation exercises)

- Squats 80kg >> 90 secs rest >> Squats 80kg >> 90 secs rest >> Squats 80kg.
- Incline bench press 60kg >> 90 secs rest >> incline bench press 60kg >> 90 secs rest >> incline bench press.
- Cable machine row 60kg >> 90 secs rest >> cable machine row 60kg >> 90 secs rest >> cable machine row 60kg.
- Clean and press 50kg >> 90 secs rest >> clean and press 50kg >> 90 secs rest >> clean and press 50kg.
- Chin-ups >> 90 secs rest >> chin-ups >> 90 secs rest >> chin-ups.
- Upright row 45kg >> 90 secs rest >> upright row 45kg >> 90 secs rest >> upright row 45kg.
- Dumbbell flies 15kg >> 90 secs rest >> dumbbell flies 15kg >> 90 secs rest >> dumbbell flies 15kg.

You Call The Shots...Give Your All With Every Rep

These are all just workout examples, none of it is set in stone. It's simply to demonstrate how you can create an endless variety of weight training workouts.

You choose the exercises.

You choose the order you want to do them in.

You select the weight that's right for you.

I'd always recommend doing at least 7 exercises – and ensuring that compounds make up the majority of your workout. (Have I mentioned how important compounds are yet??) Whether that's at a 6:2 ratio with isolation exercises, a 5:3 or 7:1 ratio...or even just all compounds.

You may even want to expand your workout to do 9 or 10 exercises. That's cool, but it's not necessary to go beyond that when you train this way. Stick to the advice in this chapter – and just give your all with every single rep!

CHECKLIST

- **Variety and progressive overload are key to making good progress in building muscle and burning fat.**
- **To keep things fresh you simply mix up countless variations of compound and isolation exercises, the order you complete them in, and by utilising different training systems.**
- **Through progressive overload we always aim to increase the weight - but not at the expense of proper technique.**
- **Progressive overload induces hypertrophy, which leads to muscle growth and development.**
- **Design your own workout plan in three simple steps.**

1 – Select 7 or 8 exercises, the majority of which should be compounds.

2 – Apply the 3,6,9 Principle for reps and sets.

3 – Choose a training system.

- **There are four recommended training systems: Three Set Shocker; Slow Burner; Drop Sets; and 25's.**
- **Apply one training system for 4-6 weeks and then switch to another to keep shocking the muscles.**
- **Stay consistent. Then the muscle will come...and the fat will go.**

Chapter 8 - 9 Essential Ingredients To Better Nutrition

Following the right diet is a bit like politics: most people have an opinion on it...and no-one is ever right.

The Paleo crowd will tell you that we should eating like cavemen, vegans will argue that you shouldn't touch meat, and following the alkaline diet means you'll live until you're 193 apparently...

I'll be honest, I've tried all of the above – and plenty other diets. This was simply down to having a dodgy stomach in my 20's and I wanted to figure out what foods were easiest on my messed-up digestive system.

What I found from nearly a decade of experimentation is that each diet has its upsides and downsides. Each diet has similarities. And most of them share a few core principles (i.e. everyone agrees that refined sugar is bad for you and too much makes you fat).

But I don't even like the word 'diet', it makes me think of something we're chained to and need to struggle through. Fact is, we need food to survive...and stuffing our faces is one of the best things about being alive!

I'll never give up Chinese takeaway food as long as I live...I love chicken and ham fried rice (with prawn crackers) wayyy too much. I'll carry on having a cappuccino when I want one, and I'll eat some chocolate occasionally.

Here's what I tell my online personal training clients: **eat as clean as possible Monday-Friday and then cut loose a bit at the weekend.**

By 'cut loose' I obviously don't mean have a KFC chicken bucket for breakfast on Saturday followed a pizza and half a tub of ice cream for dinner. But by allowing yourself the odd treat at the weekend and not being as strict with your food, you're much more likely to stick with healthy eating throughout the rest of the week.

And when you're training properly in the gym three days per week as described in this book, you'll eventually raise your metabolism to a level where you'll be a fat burning machine anyway! But what exactly does eating 'clean' most of the week involve?

#1 Avoid alcohol

Not simply because the booze is bad for you, but because of how much garbage we eat afterwards. Hangovers lower our blood sugar, make us feel terrible...and what do we do to feel better? Eat mountains of junk food.

Hungover people naturally crave sugar, fat and simple carbs as a quick way to raise their blood sugar levels. Now I'm in my thirties, hangovers don't just hang around on a Sunday...I'm still feeling it by Tuesday morning!

#2 Reduce sugar intake

If you're exercising regularly but still eating a diet high in sugar then you're wasting your time. Fats have got a bad rap for years, but the real enemy to fantastic health and a great physique is the sweet stuff.

The liver can only store so much glycogen from sugars and when there's too much sugar in the diet, this glycogen is converted to fatty acids and released back into the body. This is then stored as bodyfat in areas you don't want...belly, chest, arms, ass.

My number one piece of dietary advice for anyone looking to improve their physique, whether their priority is losing weight or adding muscle mass, is to reduce sugar intake as much as possible.

Health experts recommend that we only have around 25g-30g (6 teaspoons) of added sugar per day. There are 35g of sugar in a small can of Coke!

Go for one sugar instead of two in tea or coffee, or even better, swap these drinks for herbal teas or water. Stop eating desserts after dinner, ditch fizzy drinks, eat something like scrambled eggs with wholemeal bread rather than cereals, which are often high in sugar.

#3 Cook fresh

Stock up on fresh foods, plenty of vegetables etc, and cook meals at home from scratch rather than popping a ready meal in the microwave. Firstly, you know exactly what ingredients are going into your meal and there won't be any dodgy additives or preservatives in there.

Secondly, the microwave zaps the life out of your food, meaning there's very little left in the way of vitamins and minerals by the time you hear that 'ding' noise.

Not a good cook? Neither was I. There are tons of good cook books out there and I recently published one on Amazon specifically for gym-goers called [*Meal Prep Recipe Book: 50 Simple Recipes For Health & Fitness Nuts*](#). I'd also highly recommend Jamie Oliver's cook books. And here's an even easier option for recipes....Google.

#4 Cook double the amount of food for dinner

Then take it into work for lunch the next day. This is an easy healthy habit to get into.

Cooking freshly-made healthy dinners regularly at home is the way forward for eating clean – and you can kill two birds with one stone by cooking plenty and munching on the rest for lunch the next day.

It means you won't buy fast food or an unhealthy option from the work canteen.

#5 Don't buy in junk food

If there are chocolate, biscuits, potato chips etc in your cupboards within easy reach then they're going to get devoured at some point. Just remove the tempting foods completely by bodyswerving them at the supermarket.

Buy in plenty of vegetables and fruit, and stock up on healthy snacks such as packets of nuts and raisins, hummus, and oatcakes and natural unsweetened peanut butter (my favourite snack which is really filling).

#6 Refrain from hitting that 'snooze' button 23 times

If you regularly get out of bed late and rush around in the morning your diet will always suffer. It's hard eating clean when you've only got 30 minutes to get showered, dressed, brush your teeth, get to work...and then think about filling your belly.

Set the alarm a bit earlier than normal, keep your filthy paws away from that snooze button, make yourself a delicious dish, and eat it in a civilised, non-manic manner.

Which takes us on to the next tip...

#7 Get breakfast ready the night before

Want a foolproof way of getting your day off to a healthy, clean eating start? (Like, if you don't trust yourself not to hit the snooze button constantly).

Make a healthy breakfast shake the night before. Just Google 'healthy smoothie recipes' or 'clean eating smoothie' to get plenty of shake ideas. You can then grab the shaker as you run out the door and drink that one the way to work, rather than swinging past a fast food drive thru for a greasy breakfast.

#8 Think about how crappy you'll feel *afterwards*

The treats, sweets, and fast food are hard to resist sometimes because they taste so good. That's usually what's on our minds when we get stuck into the less than healthy food.

But how do you usually feel after a splurge when you've been trying to eat clean? The guilt usually kicks in pretty sharpish, doesn't it? And there's a fair chance you'll feel bloated, tired, maybe even a bit sick after a large fast food meal.

When you're struggling with the temptation of junk food, first focus on this familiar not-so-good feeling that usually occurs after you go off the rails. It takes a bit of practice and perseverance but it can help you stay on track.

#9 Cut yourself a bit of slack at the weekend

Making the right food choices consistently is hugely important, but don't treat eating and nutrition like some sort of military exercise. It'll never work – as most fad diets prove in the long run.

You'll only end up miserable and back at square one. Going round in circles.

As I mentioned earlier in this chapter, why not focus on eating super clean Monday-Friday, and then cut yourself a bit of slack at the weekend?

Enjoy your favourite takeaway meal on a Saturday night with some wine. Or popcorn and some chocolate while watching a movie.

As long as you don't go overboard, you'll still be able to make progress in your health and fitness goals.

Knowing the rules are relaxed a bit at the weekend makes it much more likely you'll stick with the clean eating masterplan for the majority of the week.

CHECKLIST

- **Avoid the big bad booze as much as you can. It'll only make you feel like crap and then the low blood sugar levels will have you eating more junk food in one day than you would in a week!**
- **Eat as clean as possible Monday-Friday and then cut loose a little at the weekend.**
- **Reduce sugar intake as much as possible because excess sugar is stored as body fat.**
- **Cook fresh regularly and avoid fast food/ready meals as much as you can.**
- **Making large amounts of food for dinner and then taking a serving into work for lunch the next day is a good healthy habit to get into.**
- **Try not to keep hitting the snooze button repeatedly. You'll likely get up late, not have time to prepare proper healthy food for breakfast and lunch, and will grab some convenience junk food.**
- **A healthy shake can be made in minutes the night before, and you can grab this in the morning for breakfast or lunch.**
- **Step away from the cakes...simply don't buy in junk food. Clear away temptation by replacing the crappy foods with healthier snacks such as nuts and raisins, fruit etc.**

Chapter 9 - 10 Reasons You've Not Been Building Muscle And Losing Fat

What if you've been exercising hard for years? What if you've always been a healthy eater? What if you seem to be doing things right...but the muscle just ain't coming and/or the flab just ain't shifting?

It can be head-explodingly frustrating when there's not much to show for all the hours of gym work. Especially when you've got some freak of nature pals like me who put in less effort, eat more junk and yet they still manage to stay in good shape.

I've pulled together my top 10 reasons for a lack of success in building muscle and losing fat. Some of them touch upon areas already covered in the book – but underline the importance of avoiding commonly made mistakes.

This puts you in a position where you can see where you've maybe gone wrong in the past. You'll also know exactly what needs adjusting to get real results.

I've made every single one of these mistakes myself in the past, and I'll still occasionally slip-up with two or three them. Stuff happens in life that can throw our training, diet and healthy lifestyle out of whack.

This often results in one or more of the 10 consequences listed in this chapter. The important thing is simply to get back on track as quickly as you can. When I look back to my life about 10 years ago I was constantly making three of these mistakes – and it affected both my weight training results and health.

I was hitting the gym four times per week and eating a clean diet. I was lifting heavy, doing squats, deadlifts, all the big movements I rave about these days. My nutrition was good: good sources of protein, fruit and veg, and very little junk food. Doing everything right on those two major fronts.

But I *still* wasn't seeing any noticeable results in muscle size or definition. I've always been a 'hard gainer' – aka skinny dude who struggles to get bigger – but it seemed like I just

couldn't add one single pound of muscle. It was doing my head in.

At that time, I was struggling with my old job at the time and was pretty highly-strung and feeling anxious Monday-Friday.

The only time I really chilled out was at the weekend when I wasn't in the office. This led to an unhealthy cycle of feeling zapped of energy after work, going to the gym partly to try and relieve the stress...but then not recovering properly from my workouts because I was only getting 4-5 hours of sleep per night.

Stress and lack of sleep are a bad combination – and you'll see why they're a block to a brilliant body in reasons 7 and 9.

Back then I was also playing football (badly) with my mates one, sometimes two, nights per week in addition to my gym training sessions. As a slim guy with a pretty high metabolism, these high energy games were eating into my muscle gains.

The odd 20-30 minute session of intense cardio – such as sprints or circuit training – is really good for conditioning. My problem was that I was doing 60-120 minutes of it per week and expending too many calories. As a result, my body also used some of my protein stores for fuel and I lost muscle gains.

My health is more important than work, and muscle is way more important than football. So I ditched the football and finally cut back on the extra hours in the office. I also found the answer to both the stress and sleep problems – magnesium oil and meditation.

10 Blocks To Building Muscle And Burning Fat Effectively

#1 Wasting your time on cardio

Cardio is crap. Simple as that. Jogging, running, aerobics, fitness classes may well burn calories – but they do zilch for adding muscle mass or developing the proper definition you're looking for.

These forms of standard cardio are also less effective at stripping away fat anyway. While both cardio and weight training elevate your metabolism levels, the post-workout burn continues for much longer periods with weight training.

Studies have shown that metabolic rates can stay heightened for more than 24 hours afterwards. Your body effectively turns into a muscle building, fat burning machine...while you sleep. Result!

#2 Not continually raising the bar

Two words to always keep in mind when weight training: go heavy. Doesn't matter whether you're a man, woman, young or old, the way to initiate real change in the shape and strength of your body is to properly test it with serious resistance.

This is obviously pointless without proper technique - no swinging, swaying or half reps - as strict form is crucial to working the muscle correctly.

You will develop strength quicker than you think. You will often be able to do more reps than before. You will start lifting heavier than you thought you could.

It's up to you to keep pushing on so that the body doesn't adapt. Not only is this gym work about pressing and pulling the bar, it's about continually raising it too.

#3 Focusing on the wrong weightlifting exercises

This means skipping the biggest and best moves – compound exercises. Yes I do sound like a badly broken record, but the squats, deadlifts, bench press, chin-ups etc have got to be at the forefront of your training.

These are the most effective exercises for building muscle, stoking up the fat burning fire, and optimal body composition. Yet I'd guess that less than half of people I see lifting weights in the gym include these moves.

Why? Because they're tough, especially when you're lifting heavy. But the easy route leads nowhere good. Let the rest of them take that path while you charge along the road to real results.

#4 Eating junk food

Eating healthy, natural, unprocessed, freshly cooked food the majority of the time is the way forward. It should never feel like you're on a diet, and it doesn't mean you have to give up the odd treat.

At the same time, you've got to realise that too much junk food will hamper your efforts. While this type of weight training will add muscle and torch fat extremely effectively, a diet with excess sugar and highly processed foods simply leads to more fat being stored again.

#5 Messing up your calorie intake

Calories from our foods are used by the body for energy. Regularly take in more than you expend and you'll gain weight...and vice versa.

A slim guy like me is never going to add another pound of muscle if I regularly fall below the extra calories my body needs for tough training sessions. For someone who is overweight, their body will not use up their fat stores for energy if they continue taking in an excessive amount of calories every day.

I'd never recommend you keep a constant count of calories, life's too short. But you should at least have a fair idea of how many are in the foods you're eating and your personal requirements based on your health and fitness goals.

#6 Not drinking enough water

The body is made up of around 65% water and us humans generally agree we'd be pretty screwed without it.

But plenty of water is also very important for muscle strength and size, particularly when supplementing with creatine as this pulls more fluid into the muscles. Studies have also shown that just a small drop in water of 4% can cause a loss of muscular strength and endurance. In order to stay strong you must stay hydrated.

The European Food Safety Authority recommends around 2.5 litres per day for men and 2 litres per day for women, while

the USDA (United States Department For Agriculture) tells us adult men and women should be drinking 2.7 litres daily.

The numbers vary with different health authorities, but taking into account sweating during training, men and women lifting weights should shoot closer to 3 litres per day.

#7 Not getting enough sleep

Don't underestimate how detrimental a lack of sleep can be. The hard work may be done in the gym, but muscle is built in bed. Your sleeping hours are when the body develops. It sets to work repairing the tears caused to muscle fibres during weight training.

This is supported by the release of anabolic hormones including testosterone and growth hormone during your sleep. Medical experts say the body releases testosterone between 2am and 6am, so it's wise not to interrupt this process through staying up late or broken sleep patterns.

Minimum seven hours, but eight is even better. Late night TV, texting on your mobile phone, or messing around on Facebook not long before you go to bed all keep the brain stimulated – and make it difficult to nod off. Getting into a routine where you generally go to bed and get up at the same time will also create a healthy pattern where you're not trying to catch up on lost sleep.

#8 Digestion issues

This is another big factor, yet not properly appreciated. Most people are more concerned about cramming in protein, protein and more protein in the hope of building more muscle... without properly taking digestion into account.

You could eat as much protein as you like, or the best food sources, but you may not be able to *absorb* it properly due to poor gut health. The body gives us warning signs, like a bloated stomach, heartburn or embarrassingly stinky gas, when we're struggling to break down our food.

Stress is a culprit because the digestive system effectively shuts down when we're struggling mentally or emotionally. Eating processed junk over a long period of time also plays its

part, and both can negatively affect the ratio of good to bad bacteria in your stomach (which is crucial for digestion).

Introducing digestive enzyme supplements and fermented foods into your diet can help you break down your food properly.

#9 Too much stress

Chronic stress can lead to high blood pressure, mineral deficiencies and your overall health taking a nosedive. But it can also sabotage your efforts to gain muscle.

In times of stress your body goes into ‘fight or flight’ mode and releases the stress hormones adrenaline and cortisol, as it should. Problem is, chronically high levels of cortisol breaks down muscle tissue and can impact the immune system, leaving you feeling run-down.

A second knock-on effect of high stress levels is that it can affect your sleep. In times of stress, anxiety, or worry the brain struggles to shut down properly. This can lead to insomnia – and we’ve already covered how lack of sleep can affect muscle growth and your body’s development.

Do whatever you can to minimise stress. Meditation, a relaxing bath, going for a walk with the dog, whatever you enjoy doing.

#10 Not being consistent

This might be the most important mistake not to make. And just to warn you – I bang on about consistency again in this book’s conclusion too. Consistency paired with patience = guaranteed success.

Too often one – or both – of these elements are missing when people set about transforming their physique.

Throwing themselves into a new training regime, all guns blazing at the start with a gym membership, new training clothes, stocking up the fridge with healthy foods.

When the muscle doesn’t magically appear within a fortnight they lose interest, begin skipping workouts, and become more magnetically drawn to the McDonald’s drive-thru. Five

Quarter Pounders, three strawberry milkshakes and one Unhappy Meal later and it's back to square one.

There isn't some 'gain muscle, lose fat quick' masterplan that someone has been hiding from us all this time. Body transformations simply don't happen overnight.

But they DO happen. **You absolutely can become a stronger, healthier, barely recognisable version of you if you...**

- Hit the gym 3-4 days per week – and go heavy.
- Precisely plan your training sessions – and stay accountable to your Gym Bible (aka training diary).
- Keep progressively overloading your muscles – and always mix up your training.
- Become obsessed with outdoing yourself – and aim for personal bests in every workout.
- Supply your body with everything it needs for fuel, growth and recovery through a healthy, whole foods diet.
- Treat your body well by minimising the amount of junk that passes your lips.
- Stay focused on the end game.

...and you do all of the above consistently.

CHECKLIST

- **Cardio only serves to burn calories, it does nothing for muscle growth and definition.**
- **Weight training burns fat more effectively because the post-workout burn lasts much longer.**
- **Keep raising the bar and keep two words in mind: 'go heavy'.**
- **Focus primarily on compound exercises, no matter what the majority of others are doing.**
- **Excess sugar and eating highly processed foods will lead to more fat being stored by the body.**
- **Calorie intake is important for both muscle gain and fat loss – the MyFitnessPal app will help big time.**
- **Aim to drink around 3 litres of water per day.**
- **Sleep for a minimum seven hours, eight is better.**
- **...if you can't sleep try magnesium oil. It's insanely good for a deep, restful sleep.**
- **Do whatever you can to minimise stress. Meditation, a relaxing bath, going for a walk with the dog, whatever you enjoy.**
- **Stay consistent and patient because it will lead to guaranteed success.**

Conclusion

It's just a matter of "*repeating simple little disciplines – done consistently over time*" that add up to the biggest achievements.

This is a fine piece of wisdom from Jeff Olson, the author of one of my favourite books, *The Slight Edge*. It's a best-seller that's packed with amazing advice from a guy who has experienced both massive success and huge failures in life.

But I'll pick out one of the key lessons from the book and explain why it's relevant to your health and fitness goals.

Jeff Olson tells us that success is something you experience, gradually, over time by consistently showing up and doing what's necessary.

But failure is just as gradual, by letting seemingly small things slip, and not being patient enough for results to come.

Sure, skipping a gym session won't kill you. Not filling in your training diary won't hurt. Boozing every weekend ain't the end of the world.

But if you want to keep growing, moving forward, improving, getting stronger and leaner...instead of slowing, slipping, sliding backwards...then you have to cut out the crap and stay focused on repeating the simple positive disciplines consistently.

Then you'll be on the right side of the 'Slight Edge' – and also on the right path to real results.

Strength Training Program 101 was written to help people frustrated with their lack of success in transforming their physique. It was also written to empower you to take charge of creating your workout programs, make solid progress in the gym, and ultimately get hooked on strength training.

But my main aim was to simplify weight training, diet and motivation methods so that it's all easier to understand – and easier to maintain. Meatheads are making the uncomplicated way too complicated, and that's why so many folk quit too early. Convoluted training regimes and crazy regimented diets.

Who wants to live like that every day? How long can it really last? And where's the fun in it? Transforming your body, and improving your health, through weight training and a healthy diet should be a process you enjoy every day, not something you dread.

Sure, we need to make some sacrifices, but we shouldn't go to other extremes where a mind-numbing overhaul of diet and training simply can't be sustained in the long term.

It might have taken me 18 years of experimenting with countless training methods and diet plans, and reading a ridiculous amount of fitness articles and books.

You don't need all that hassle because what's in this book WORKS. It keeps me strong, in great shape, and most importantly, in great health. I've seen clients and close friends achieve fantastic results by applying the same tactics.

Know what? This is effectively just another "how to" book... and there are plenty of them out there. What's more important is whether or not you DO the "how to".

Are you going to skip planning out your workouts in advance because you've got better things to do? Are you going to do the exercises - but give squats a miss because you've never really like doing them?

If so, then you might as well not bother at all. Not trying to lecture you. This entire book is just friendly advice based on experience, experimentation and education. But I've got to underline that this is all about action.

If you want to build muscle, lose fat and feel strong, healthy and happy then you've got to keep showing up. You've got to be disciplined and back all your efforts up with the right mindset.

The first step in achieving that mindset firm focus is proper preparation and setting clear, defined goals. Chapter 2 shows you how to do this effectively – which naturally boosts your motivation levels and makes it much less likely you'll go off track.

There are then 10 compound exercises, with some isolation moves, to focus on. Master these and then you'll have weight training mastered. These are the biggest, best, and most effective exercises for developing muscle.

Your strength will go through the roof, you'll make gains you never expected, and you'll enjoy the process.

But it's all about sticking with the programme long enough – and not forgetting the other important ingredients, which include:

- Progressively overloading the muscles using The 3,6,9 Principle.
- Adding variety to your training routine to keep shocking the muscles into growth.
- Switching to a different training system every 4-6 weeks.
- Following a healthy whole foods diet – and paying more attention to sufficient calories rather than crazy amounts of protein.
-and giving yourself the edge with 'The Essentials' supplements.

These are just a handful of some of the key lessons. I've also included the checklist at the end of each chapter so it's easy for you to revisit the most important pieces of information - without having to read everything again.

We all want to be in the best shape possible. There are many thousands of people telling us many thousands of ways of achieving this.

When I first started weight training aged 16 I saw a small ad in FHM magazine for a book that promised the secret to building serious muscle. Desperate to transform my embarrassingly skinny physique, I sent £20 in the mail to buy it.

The next week a black and white book arrived at my house. I'll sum up the book's "secret to building serious muscle": lift weights, make sure those weights are heavy...and drink lots of milk!

Not everything I was expecting, and gulping gallons of milk was a bad idea. But do you know what? It was money well spent because it included most of the compound exercises I'm obsessed with now, and it taught me to go as heavy as possible.

I've shared that same advice here, but there was so much more to learn. I delved deeper into training, nutrition, recovery, supplements etc over the next 18 years, and have now passed on what I consider the best strategies and tools for success in building muscle and burning fat.

Strength Training Program 101 doesn't follow the typical advice being spewed out by gym Meatheads, or a large chunk of the health and fitness industry.

That's intentional. Their way is not the only way to develop the strong, lean, athletic physique you want. This approach can also be maintained more easily with just three or four weight training sessions per week.

Training 5,6,7 days per week is unnecessary and can be counter-productive. This way is effective, efficient and crucially gives your body the rest periods it needs for proper recovery and growth.

If you've tried everything to get in great shape before and got nowhere then this can be your ticket to success. Or if you're just starting out in lifting weights then you've probably saved yourself many months and years of trying to figure out the best way to get results.

Forget everyone else. This is all about becoming a stronger, healthier, better version of you.

I created this book to help other people transform their body, health and to receive the multiple benefits I have from strength training over the years. I want you to get the most out of it... that's why I've created a special bonus e-book with photo demonstrations of me performing every exercise.

This will help anyone who is less experienced or is just not familiar with some of the exercises I mentioned earlier. You

can download it for FREE online at:

www.weightrainingistheway.com/exercise-demos

All the best going forward, my fellow Non-Meathead friend.

Marc McLean.

Strength Training Nutrition 101

**Build Muscle & Burn Fat Easily...A
Healthy Way Of Eating You Can
Actually Maintain**

By Marc McLean

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Time to serve up the starter....

Introduction

I love food.

I really love it. I know you do too. The health and fitness industry doesn't seem to love it quite so much.

We're bombarded with advice on what we should be eating, how much we should be eating...and what we should be avoiding like an STI.

There are so many diets out there we can't keep up...Paleo, vegan, raw food, SIRT, Atkins, vegetarian, alkaline...I'll leave it there. We could be here a while otherwise. Every diet has its die-hard followers who insist their way is the only way. Not only does this do your head in, it also leaves you confused.

Maybe I shouldn't eat meat? Maybe carbs are the devil? Maybe I should be eating a garden full of greens for breakfast?

This book wasn't written to preach to you about any particular diet. In fact, I hate the word 'diet', I simply prefer a healthier way of eating. Diets are no fun – and most of them don't last.

With the title *Strength Training Nutrition 101*, I reckon you've figured this book is aimed at people who are fond of picking up a dumbbell or two. But I also want to make clear that I won't be regurgitating the usual "you MUST eat six small healthy meals per day" nonsense.

That's what we've heard from 95% of people in the health and fitness industry over the past decade and longer. I've read the same approach in several high profile fitness books and still see it in health magazines, as if it's the only proven way to develop muscle and keep your metabolism at a healthy level to stay lean too.

I tried that approach – eating/grazing every 2-3 hours - for way too many years. Guess what? It left me bloated, miserable and I felt like crap.

Then there's the chicken and broccoli brigade. You see it everywhere on Instagram, people cooking a week's worth of

chicken and broccoli, placing it all neatly in 7 containers, and then uploading pictures of said 'prepped' cuisine.

F*ck eating the same old, boring, dry, tasteless chicken and soggy greens every day. Think I'd rather become one of those housebound 56 stone men you sometimes see on TV than live like that.

Here's a better idea: how's about we just eat as clean as possible Monday-Friday, limit sugar and booze, live a little more at the weekend, and actually go back to eating our meals in a more normal way?

We've made the uncomplicated way too complicated when it comes to diet and nutrition, particularly for weightlifters looking to gain muscle and strip fat. Want to transform your body and get in better shape? You don't have to go to crazy extremes.

Yes, protein builds muscle – but we don't really need 200, 300...or 400 grams per day like we read about in some fitness magazines. That's just insane.

Yes, energy drinks can give you a boost before your workout. Most of them also contain double the amount of sugar you should have in one day...with ridiculous amounts of caffeine too.

Yes, some supplements can assist in you hitting your health and fitness goals, but what about building a solid nutritional foundation first by eating plenty of whole foods?

The bottom line is that sticking with good nutrition should not be hard work. It should be easy to follow, manageable, and never actually feel like a 'diet'. Since I took up weight training as a ridiculously frail and pale 16-year-old back in 1998, I've experimented with countless ways of eating for energy, performance, muscle gain, keeping my bodyfat levels low and most importantly optimal health.

I've studied various nutritional courses, read countless books and articles, and used myself as a human guinea pig over the past 18 years in the quest for the best approach for all the goals I mentioned above.

The result? I have a formula for eating that is not only healthy, helps me hit all those health and fitness goals...and is easy to maintain. That's the key – if your diet is too complicated or restrictive then you're going to get pissed off in no time and will probably end up going bananas in the nearest Pizza Hut.

In Strength Training Nutrition 101, I share with you how to simplify the way you eat and my golden rules for clean eating. I also reveal my pre-workout nutritional approach that gives me bags of energy and maximises my effort in every workout.

Confused about what you should be eating and when after your gym sessions? I share advice to help you get the most out of all your hard strength training work.

As for supplements, there's so much out there that you could easily spend a fortune. You could also easily waste that fortune. There's a lot of unnecessary, and potentially dangerous, junk out there. You don't need to blow cash on supplements as a proper, healthy diet will give your body the tools it needs to repair, rebuild and remodel your body.

But there are still a handful of (all natural) healthy supplements that I include in my strength training regimen that are really effective. I share my recommended products with you towards the end of the book - and there's also a supplements guide bonus for you for buying this book.

Now onto the main course....

Chapter 1 - Simplifying Diet and Nutrition For More Muscle and Less Fat

If you're talking to your local gym instructor, personal trainer, or any bodybuilder/powerlifting pals then there's a fair chance they'll say: "Eat regular smaller meals throughout the day, with plenty of protein, that's the way to build and keep muscle."

See, that's the advice that's been spouted for years. Six smaller meals, some even munch through 7 or 8, going crazy for calories and ridiculous amounts of protein to build muscle mass. In fact, I know one bodybuilder who says he eats TEN smaller meals per day and he basically carries plastic tubs of food everywhere with him.

Surely we're verging on ridiculous when it gets to that stage? That just ain't natural. In fact, it's mental. Don't get me wrong, it DOES work for building muscle. I'm simply arguing that it's not the only way – and that there are a good few downsides to doing it.

You may have been trying to figure out how you're going to manage to prepare and devour so many meals in a day. You may already have been doing it. Prepping food every night or morning, eating by the clock, counting calories and grams of protein like some sort of macronutrients military exercise.

You can choose to do that each day. Every day. Or you can eat in what I consider a more normal way (3-4 meals per day) and still build a strong, athletic, lean physique. I'll also show how eating this way is highly effective for burning fat, while preserving muscle.

I followed the six smaller meals advice for the best part of a decade. Here's what happened...

It left me feeling bloated all the time.

The constant clock watching for scheduling meals was monotonous.

The endless food prepping made me want to chop my own head off.

I spent way too much time on the toilet.

I became a slave to my diet.

It was all way too stressful. But I still did it for those 10 years because I thought that was the only way to build muscle and stay in great shape. Looking back on it now, it was nuts.

I changed my mind around 2011, thanks to two people. Kettlebell and hormone optimisation expert Mike Mahler – and my flatmate at the time. My friend Ryan moved in with me after splitting up with his girlfriend and he was also into fitness. He also did some weight training and some mixed martial arts too.

Ryan was in great shape and his abs were always ripped. To the point where I considered evicting him. I figured he must train harder, eat better and get in even more protein than I was. So I watched what he was up to – and was pretty shocked.

While I was stuffing my face with a high protein breakfast within 30 minutes of waking up, Ryan would regularly skip breakfast.

While I would be munching constantly to cram in calories and protein, Ryan would go long periods between meals and still maintain muscle.

While I was so strict with my diet and struggled to see my abs, Ryan would occasionally eat junk food and STILL have that damn six pack.

While I ate all the time, Ryan ate when he was “hungry”.

It didn't make any sense. I was the one being mega strict with my nutrition, timing my meals perfectly, a total slave to my diet, and was pretty miserable with it all. Ryan didn't bother with all of that – and was in better shape than me. I remember asking him: “When do you fit in your extra meals? Do you eat a lot when you're at work?”

He said: “No, I don't want to eat 6 or 7 times per day. I eat when I'm hungry and just make sure the food's as healthy as possible.”

Around the same time I came across Mike Mahler, an American kettlebell and hormone optimisation expert. Mike follows a vegan diet, eats three or four times per day, and is built like a machine. He also goes against the standard regular smaller meals theory and backs this up through his extensive research on hormones. (Which we'll talk about shortly).

Mike Mahler and my friend prompted me to dig a bit deeper behind their success in staying strong and lean. I found they

had the following in common:

They would take longer stretches between their meals, maybe 5-6 hours. This optimised their hormones, particularly master hormone leptin and increased their insulin sensitivity. (I'll go into more detail on the importance of this later).

They both managed to get enough calories in over the course of the day to maintain and build muscle. The bigger portion of these were post workout – the prime time for flooding the body with nutrients it needs to repair and build muscle.

They didn't stress out about meal frequency.

So yeah, I'm going against the grain (pun fully intended) when it comes to the typical diet for men and women looking to gain lean muscle. First, let's talk about the reasons FOR eating 6,7,8 or more smaller meals per day...and then swiftly debunk them.

Main reason #1

“You need to keep supplying your body with calories and protein throughout the day or you will lose muscle.”

A study carried out by 11 sports nutrition experts shows that meal frequency is actually irrelevant, as long as enough calories and the right macronutrients are consumed over course of the day.

Dr John Berardi is founder of Precision Nutrition, who are world leaders in sports nutrition, and he is one of the most highly respected experts on diet and nutrition. He was part of

this study and admitted that he too had initially thought that splitting up your daily food intake was the best approach. Dr Berardi said that early research indicated this would speed up the metabolism, help control the hormones insulin and cortisol, and better manage the appetite.

Following their detailed review in the *Journal of the International Society of Sports Nutrition*, the 11 experts concluded that as long as we eat the right foods in the right amounts, meal frequency is irrelevant. (Further details of this study and other research mentioned later can be found at the end of this book). You can either eat lots of smaller meals every few hours or you can eat a few big meals with bigger breaks in between. It's up to you.

Also debunking the 'eat frequently to maintain muscle' argument is the emergence of The Warrior Diet. Many thousands of people around the world – including big name athletes – are having huge success in sport and developing strong, ripped physiques by following this diet...which is the complete opposite to the eating six or more meals per day. The Warrior Diet, developed by sports scientist and former Israeli Special Forces member Ori Hofmekler, essentially involves fasting for up to 18 hours per day and then feasting at night.

This radical way of eating has been shown to ramp up fat burning, boost energy – while surprisingly preserving muscle mass. There are countless stories of people getting in the best shape of their lives by fasting, or eating very lightly during the day, and then cramming in most of their calories in the evening. This of course also reduces the need for mind-numbing food prepping and eating constantly throughout the day.

The Warrior Diet is followed by sporting superstars including MMA former world champion Ronda Rousey, DC Maxwell,

two time women's Jiu-Jitsu world champion, and Pavel Tsatsouline, who basically introduced kettlebell training to the Western world back in 1998. Pavel says he has "better things to do than graze all day".

Main reason #2

"You can't get enough calories in to maintain and build muscle by eating fewer meals per day."

Calories are important, there's no denying that. If you regularly eat too many you'll pile on the pounds. If you don't eat enough you'll lose weight. We get it. There are a few different factors affecting your calorie requirements, but you can *roughly* figure out how many calories you need using this simple calculation:

Lose weight: bodyweight in lbs x 12 = total number of calories.

Maintain weight: bodyweight in lbs x 15 = total number of calories.

Gain weight: bodyweight in lbs x 17 = total number of calories.

We'll go into more detail about calorie consumption and your body's protein needs a bit later. But first, we're looking at getting in enough calories in just three or four meals rather than six or more. This is simply done in two ways - eating more at each meal and adjusting your diet to include some higher calorie foods. Increasing your intake of healthy fats is a good option as fat provides 9 calories per gram, while protein and carbs provide 4 calories (energy) per gram.

.... "But won't eating more fat make me fat?"

Not if you eat the right types is the short answer. ‘Good’ fats are found in fish, plant foods such as nuts, avocados and olives, eggs and dairy. When pulling together your shopping list at the top have foods like salmon, almonds, free range eggs, tuna, olive oil, coconut oil, coconut milk and butter.

There was a long-standing misconception that saturated fats are bad for you when in fact they play several important roles in the body including the manufacture of hormones, stronger bones, boosting the immune system and improved brain health. I go into more detail on healthy fats and which fats to avoid later.

Five Reasons Why 3-4 Meals Per Day Is Ideal

So, we’ve dealt why eating lots of smaller meals every day is not necessary for building and maintaining muscle. Sure, it works – but it can be stressful, difficult to maintain and leaving you feeling like you’re chained to a fad diet. Here are five reasons for eating 3-4 meals per day like, erm, most people do.

#1 Taking longer stretches between meals optimises leptin (the master hormone) and keeps insulin sensitive.

Getting down to how diet affects our body at a core level is by looking at our hormones. Hormones are chemical messengers released into the blood which control the functioning of our brain and body. They are responsible for everything from mood and sex drive to physical performance and body composition.

Leptin is a powerful hormone produced in fat cells, which is in control of all other hormones in the body. Eating fewer meals optimises leptin. Eating often, especially with the wrong kinds of foods and in large amounts, causes leptin resistance. This can lead to problems with weight, particularly around the midsection.

Hormone optimisation expert Mike Mahler says that the best way to get out of leptin resistance is to give your body a break from eating large volumes of food often. For those trying to lose fat, sticking with two to three meals per day, with five to eight hours between meals, will give the body an opportunity to use stored bodyfat as energy. For people with lower bodyfat levels and looking to gain more muscle mass, four meals per day with about four hours between meals is a better option.

#2 To enjoy your food and avoid unnecessary stressing about diet.

The average person is only awake 16 hours per day so to manage at least six small meals per day you're gonna have to eat every 2.5 - 3 hours. Every day. Every week. This means always keeping an eye on the time to check when your next 'feed' is. It means disturbing your work to snack in the office, eating breakfast as soon as you can after waking up, munching when you're not even hungry, taking food 'on the go' whenever you're out and about, always thinking about what and when you're eating next...

Don't know about you but I'm stressed even reading all of that! How's about we relax and just enjoy three or four meals – when we're actually hungry - instead?

#3 To avoid constant crazy prepping.

When I used to follow the old six-meals-per-day advice I had an entire cupboard full of Tupperware. About 93 tubs of all shapes and sizes – and with countless lids that never seemed to fit. This was for all the 'prepped' small meals I would usually make at night or sometimes in the morning.

I must've wasted about 157.5 days of my life preparing my 'on the go' food. The tuna pasta that I would eat mid-afternoon in between lunch and dinner, or the protein smoothie I would have between breakfast and lunch to bump up the

calories and keep feeding my muscle protein. I feared that if I missed a meal my biceps would somehow shrivel up!

One word - insane. Unless you've got your own personal chef, it's a nightmare to keep up with food prepping.

#4 To ease stress on your digestive system.

The length of time it takes to digest food varies from person to person and it also depends on what type of foods you're eating. In a media interview, Dr Anton Emmanuel, consultant gastroenterologist at University College Hospital in London, estimated that it takes 2-3 hours for a 600 calorie roast dinner to be broken down in the stomach before moving on through the small intestine, colon and eventually being excreted around 24 hours later.

Constantly bombarding our stomachs with food so frequently will inevitably lead to the digestive system struggling to keep up, food being backed up, and our gut health being badly affected as a result. All of this often results in common problems today such as constipation, wind, heartburn, and Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD).

#5 Spend less time on the toilet pan.

Quite often those people eating smaller meals will consume a considerably higher number of calories than is necessary to keep building muscle mass. Yep, more calories from good food sources, combined with proper weight training, does equal more muscle mass. It also equals more time in the bathroom when you overdo it so much.

Life's too short to be sitting on the toilet pan...straining...and wiping your ass 79 times per week! I spent 10 miserable years being a slave to my diet, and falling off and on the wagon trying to stick to six meals per day. I hated it but persisted because I thought it was the only way to maintain muscle.

It's not.

CHECKLIST

- **Eating 6 or more small meals per day is not necessary for building muscle and keeping fat levels low.**
- **Meal frequency is a “matter of personal preference” – as long as sufficient calories and nutrients are being taken in over the course of the day.**
- **Taking longer stretches between meals helps optimise the master hormone leptin and insulin sensitivity, which makes the body more efficient at burning fat and building muscle.**
- **Eating in a normal fashion, i.e. 3-4 meals per day, rather than the typical bodybuilder approach has several benefits such as easing the strain on your digestive system and avoiding constant food prepping.**

Chapter 2 - The 7 Golden Rules Of Clean Eating

Eating clean all the time is a pain in the @ss. I get it. That's exactly why I always recommend eating as healthy as possible Monday-Friday and then loosening up a little at the weekend...without going too nuts.

Eating 'clean' in the broadest sense means reducing the following as much as possible in your diet: ready meals, takeaways, sugary drinks and foods, and generally all processed junk. It also means staying well hydrated and making sure you're getting enough vitamins and minerals to give your body the right tools to keep you healthy and to support your strength training goals.

You could train like Rocky Balboa in the gym, but if your nutrition sucks then you're going to get nowhere. At the same time, you don't have to go to other extremes and follow a super strict diet to get in great shape and stay healthy. That'll only make you miserable and you'll eventually go on the rebound and end up on a 17 day junk food bender!

Seriously, if you want to make positive changes and get real results from your efforts in the gym then pay attention to the following Golden Rules of Clean Eating. Some of them may be stating the obvious, some might be completely new concepts to you. No matter where you're at health and fitness wise, these 7 steps will guide you towards great results.

If your diet hasn't been the best and you've got plenty of work to do, then here's a tip: introduce one positive habit per week. This is what I do with all clients who join my online personal training program. If we try to change everything at once it

becomes overwhelming and makes you want to quit. If we focus on one positive habit per week, i.e. ditch fizzy drinks and replace them with water, then we can build upon each one and ultimately get awesome results at the end of the 12 week program.

Eat Clean Following These 7 Golden Guidelines

#1 Green is great

This means eating more vegetables and fruit. Stating the obvious here I know, but let's be honest - most of us don't eat nearly enough fruit and veg. Four or five servings per day is recommended to provide vitamins, minerals and a healthy source of carbohydrates. Try and include them with every meal.

#2 The white stuff ain't so great...

I'm talking about refined sugar. Excess sugar in our diets makes us fat and sick. Natural sugars from sweet fruits – yes. Fizzy drinks - complete no-no. We'll go into the problems of too much sugar in your diet, along with my tips and tricks to reduce it, in much more detail later.

#3 Cook fresh as much as possible

When buying the ingredients and preparing food yourself you know exactly what's going into your meals. No dodgy additives on the menu! I recommend investing in a vegetable steamer and blender. These are the two must haves in my kitchen. The steamer helps cook your vegetables lightly so that they retain their goodness. Boiling for too long, and even worse microwaving, remove the vitamins, minerals and enzymes from plant foods. Meanwhile, a blender is essential

for making healthy protein shakes, either for breakfast or post-workout.

#4 Drink plenty of water

Men should shoot for around 3 litres per day, with women going for around 2.5 litres. Medics estimate that more than half of Americans are chronically dehydrated and this can lead to a multitude of health problems including headaches, weight gain, fatigue, joint pain and high blood pressure.

Weight training also causes water loss through sweating and, with our muscles being made up of 79% water, we require extra h₂o to recover properly following a workout. Buy a sports water bottle and take it everywhere with you. To work, to the gym, when out walking the dog. Get into the habit of having water handy and staying hydrated. We're also usually dehydrated in the morning after sweating in our sleep. I drink a pint of warm water with the juice from half a lemon when I wake up as this improves digestion, boosts your immune system, cleanses your body, and reduces inflammation.

#5 Beware of the long ingredients list

You'll have heard the "saying too many cook spoil the broth". Well, too many ingredients usually spoil the food. If the ingredients list on the packaging is long this generally means the food has been filled with too many chemical flavourings, preservatives and additives, and is likely to be processed to the point where there is little nutritional value.

When you start seeing too many weird words you can barely pronounce then steer clear. Here are a few examples... Butylated Hydroxyl-anisole', Monosodium Glutamate, Propyl P-hydroxybenzoate. Say what?

#6 Limit salt

Usually listed as ‘sodium’ on packaging, be careful that there’s not too much in what you’re eating. The recommended daily allowance of salt is 6g – one teaspoon – per day to avoid health issues like high blood pressure.

#7 Ditch the microwave

Microwaves zap the life out of your food, robbing it of digestive enzymes, vitamins and minerals. Most pre-packaged ready meals for the microwave often have little nutritional value in the first place compared to a meal cooked with fresh ingredients.

CHECKLIST

- **The 7 Golden Rules Of Clean Eating in a nutshell:**
 - **Eat more vegetables and fruit.**
 - **Cut right down on refined sugar, no more than 35g per day.**
 - **Cook fresh as much as possible.**
 - **Limit salt to no more than 6g per day.**
 - **Drink 2.5 to 3 litres of water per day (ideally include a pint with fresh lemon juice in that too).**
 - **Beware of foods with too many dodgy additives and preservatives, the names of which you can barely pronounce.**
 - **Ditch the microwave...it zaps the goodness out of your food.**
- **And 7 ways to stay on track with clean eating... also in a nutshell:**
 - **Avoid boozing as much as you can...it's only going to turn you into a junk eating monster.**

- **Make double the amount of food when cooking a home-made dinner – then have another serving for lunch the next day.**
- **Simply bodyswerve the junk food at the supermarket – because if it’s in your cupboard you’ll likely choose that before the healthy foods.**
- **Get up bright and early so you’re not rushing around in the morning and have time to make a healthy breakfast and lunch.**
- **Alternatively, make a healthy breakfast shake the night before, put it in a shaker and then grab it on your way out the door the next day.**
- **Think hard about how crappy you’ll feel after your junk food splurge – the more you do it the more it’ll put you off.**
- **Eat clean Monday-Friday and cut yourself some slack at the weekend for some treats.**

Chapter 3 - The ‘Poison’ In Our Diets

Are you struggling to lose the flab around your waist?

...annoyed at the lack of muscle definition?

...fed up eating tasteless ‘low fat’ foods – while not actually losing much fat?

...do you lack energy and catch every cold, infection, virus that is floating around?

Cutting back on sugar might well be the answer to your problems. Too much refined sugar on a daily basis will play havoc with your body – and prove to be a roadblock to getting in great shape and achieving optimal health. In fact, it’s often considered a POISON to the body. Rewind to 1957 and Dr William Coda Martin first classified refined sugar as a poison because it is depleted of its life forces, vitamins and minerals when processed from sugar cane plants.

He said: “What is left consists of pure, refined carbohydrates. The body cannot utilise this refined starch and carbohydrate unless the depleted proteins, vitamins and minerals are present.”

Fast forward to 1972, British physician and endocrinologist John Yudkin wrote the book *Pure, White and Deadly* warning of a health disaster due to the increase in consumption of sugar in our Western diets. And these days...

□ Refined sugar contributes to around 35 million deaths around the world, according to researchers at the University of California. They commented in the journal *Nature* that it should be considered as toxic as tobacco and alcohol.

□ Cancer, heart disease, diabetes, metabolic syndrome and a multitude of other diseases have been strongly linked with over-consumption of refined sugar.

□ Childhood obesity is at record levels in the US, UK and in many countries across Europe where processed, junk foods fill most space on supermarket shelves.

□ The UK government came under more pressure in October 2005 to introduce a ‘sugar tax’ due to its links with obesity and links to illnesses such as diabetes. This came after new stats show that one in five children in the UK are obese by the time they leave primary school.

□ In the US, the number of people who had diabetes due to chronic blood sugar issues saw an “alarming” rise from 26 million in 2010 to 29 million in 2014, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Think I’ve made my point. Not only is sugar directly linked to diseases such as cancer and heart disease, it weakens the immune system and robs your body of essential vitamins and minerals needed for a strong, healthy body.

How Excess Sugar Makes Us Fat

Too much glucose is the first issue. Whenever we fill our bodies with too much fuel, which is very easy with high sugar foods, the liver runs out of storage capacity. The excess sugar is then converted into fatty acids and is then returned to the bloodstream. This is then stored as bodyfat in your belly, hips, chest...and generally most places you don’t want it.

The second issue is excess insulin. Insulin is a key hormone in the body, and is released in high amounts whenever you eat or

drink a “simple” carbohydrate, which includes the likes of white bread, white rice, baked white potato, bagels, croissants, cornflakes, cake, sugary drinks, beer, and anything that has high fructose corn syrup on the nutritional label.

When insulin levels are spike the body’s fat burning process is shut down so that the sugar that’s just been consumed can be used for energy straight away. Sugar is shuttled into your muscles but, as soon as the muscle energy stores are full, the excess sugars are converted and stored as bodyfat. There are many ways you can drastically cut back on sugar in your diet and I’ll share 10 simple ways you can start doing so today. First, here’s a quick breakdown of different types of sugar.

Sucrose – comes mainly from sugar cane or sugar beets.

High fructose corn syrup (HFCS) – not technically a sugar, it is a liquid sweetener made from corn introduced to our diets in the 1970’s.

Fructose, maltose and dextrose – comes from fruits and starchy plants.

Lactose – comes from dairy products.

Sugars consumed in large amounts contribute to obesity and disease, but the first two above are the real problem. Cane plants are stripped of all vitamins and minerals when refined to make common white sugar. In this state, it is considered toxic to the body by medical experts. Meanwhile, HFCS is an industrial food product which is far from natural.

The American Heart Association recommends that 37.5 grams (around 7 teaspoons) of added sugar is the daily limit for men, while 25g (around 5 teaspoons) is enough for women. One 330ml can of Coke contains 35 grams alone. Be aware that there’s likely too much sugar in your foods if sugar is listed

close to the top of the ingredients list. Also, sugar is not always listed as sugar. Look out for the names of its man-made dodgy cousins including high fructose corn syrup, dried cane syrup and brown rice syrup. If there are several of them in the one food item then I'd steer clear.

10 Simple Steps To Reduce Sugar In Your Diet

#1 One lump, not two

Have one sugar in your tea or coffee instead of two. Then cut back on the number of cups of tea/coffee you have every day...and gradually wean yourself off the sugar.

#2 Super Stevia

Even better, use Stevia. It is a 100% natural zero calorie sweetener with numerous health benefits. Studies have shown that Stevia can actually reduce blood pressure and fight type II diabetes.

#3 Go herbal

Try out herbal teas instead of tea, coffee or soda. Herbal teas are awesome, with lots of varieties that are full of flavour and decaffeinated too.

#4 Let the fizzy drinks fizzle out.

If you drink juice/soda throughout the day gradually cut back by swapping some for a cup of water instead. Wean yourself off the fizzy drinks gradually by replacing it with water instead.

#5 Change up your breakfast.

Do you eat cereal for breakfast? Most have high levels of sugar (Up to three teaspoons per small 30g bowl). So why not swap cereal for porridge or wholegrain toast with scrambled eggs?

#6 Ditch the desserts.

If you have desserts after dinner or chocolate most nights then gradually cut that out one day at a time.

#7 Add spices to your foods.

Cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg and cardamom will naturally sweeten your foods and reduce cravings for sugar.

#8 Don't buy sugary snacks.

The cravings will come and go for chocolate and other sweet foods, but if you don't have these snacks within easy reach in your house or work office then you will be able to cut down on sugar intake.

#9 Have a piece of fruit instead.

This can help satisfy sugar cravings and the natural sugars fruit contain are healthier than refined sugars.

#10 Read the labels.

Sugar is not always listed as sugar. Look out for names including high fructose corn syrup (remember than one?), dried cane syrup, sucrose and brown rice syrup. These can all be listed as separately on ingredients lists, and if the names are listed close to the top there is probably a considerable amount of sugar in the food.

Did the sugar message get through? Was all the chat about cancer, heart disease, diabetes and general doom as delightful and uplifting as I intended? Good - job done. Let's be honest, you (probably) won't drop dead after the next king size Mars bar you eat. But if you want to be healthy and are serious

about getting in good shape then cutting out as much sugar as possible is a massive step.

Remember, excess sugar turns to fat – and both refined sugar and high fructose corn syrup are the worst offenders. Doesn't mean that you don't have to give up treats forever. Just follow the 10 steps above and gradually cut back your sugar intake overall.

CHECKLIST

- **Refined sugar is considered a poison in many medical circles and has been directly linked to various killer diseases including diabetes, cancer and heart disease.**
- **Glucose overload from too much sugar results in the liver converting it into fatty acids. These are then returned to the bloodstream and stored as bodyfat.**
- **Excess sugar also causes our insulin levels to spike and, when our muscle energy stores are full, it is also stored as bodyfat.**
- **Look out for other forms of man-made sugars listed as high fructose corn syrup, dried cane syrup and brown rice syrup on food labels. Steer clear if there are several of these names on the packaging.**
- **Choose some, or all, of these options to reduce your sugar intake:**
 - **Cut down on the sugar in your tea or coffee.**
 - **Better yet, drink herbal teas.**
 - **Choose natural sweetener Stevia instead of sugar.**

- **Ditch desserts after dinner.**
- **Replace fizzy drinks with water.**
- **Add spices to your foods for more flavouring.**
- **Don't buy in sugary snacks, there are healthier alternatives like fruit.**
- **Read food labels and keep an eye out for high sugar content.**

Chapter 4 - Making The Right Food Choices

Building muscle is not all about how much protein you eat. Losing fat is not about how much fat you eat. And carbohydrates are not all bad, despite all sorts of new ‘low carb’ or ‘carb cycling’ diets we hear about these days.

Diet and nutrition can get crazily complicated in the health and fitness industry. Fad diets, calorie counting, macronutrients calculations and fancy supplements. But the bottom line is that you won't gain lean muscle or be able to strip fat effectively if you don't get the basics of making correct food choices right. Our macronutrients are of course split into three categories: protein, carbs and fats. Each macronutrient can also be split into two more groups...the good guys and the bad guys.

Yep, the *sources* of your carbs, protein and fat are what's most important. Brown rice is high in carbs...but so is white bread. Deep fried chicken is high in protein and fat...so are almonds. Which will you choose? Let's take each of the three macronutrients and sort the good from the bad.

Carbohydrates

Carbs are the body's main source of fuel and it's a straight up battle between complex (the good guys) and simple (bad) carbs. Complex carbohydrates are unprocessed and contain the fiber found naturally in the food, while refined carbs have been processed and had the natural fiber stripped out.

Simple carbohydrates are made up of easy to digest sugars with little nutritional value for your body. The higher in sugar, the worse the carbohydrate is for you. Obviously cookies, sweets and desserts are among the worst offenders – but you can still enjoy them occasionally.

A much better option is for your daily intake to be made primarily made up of complex carbohydrates. Dietitians and nutritionists compare carbohydrate foods based on their glycemic index. This basically refers to how quickly and how high your blood sugar will rise after eating carbohydrates. Lower glycemic foods are healthier and most, but not all, complex carbs fall into this category.

The Goodfellas: sources of complex carbs include: vegetables, fruits, wholegrains, brown rice, beans, legumes, nuts and seeds. Fill up on these.

The Bad Guys: common simple carbohydrate foods include: cakes and cookies, pastries and desserts, white breads, white pasta, white rice. Limit these.

Protein

Protein's main role is for tissue growth and repair. Forget building muscle without a decent supply of protein. But how much protein do we need exactly? That's something we'll delve deeper into later. First, let's break protein down. Protein is made up of 'amino acids', which are the building blocks of the body for repairing and developing muscle. They also play a role in energy, weight loss, and brain function. Of the 20 amino acids, there are nine 'essential' ones, which the human body cannot produce.

What should be on the menu to build muscle? Food sources considered 'complete proteins' – meaning they contain all nine essential amino acids - or a combination of 'incomplete proteins' to ensure you cover all bases. Complete proteins are primarily animal-based foods and a few plant-based sources. These include: meat, poultry, fish, dairy products, eggs, quinoa, buckwheat, hemp seeds.

Have you Googled those last two already? No, they're not on my shopping list either. And don't panic if you're a vegetarian or vegan. You can still grab all essential amino acids and build muscle by feasting on a variety of incomplete protein sources including nuts, seeds, grains and vegetables. There are also some awesome plant-based protein supplements, such as brown rice protein and vegan blend protein, that I switched to years ago.

Personally, I avoid red meat and don't eat much animal protein at all, apart from chicken 3-4 days per week. My body finds it harder to digest meat and I believe there's truth in the arguments that too much animal protein is bad for our health. I'm not trying to convince you either way, I'll leave it up to you to do your own research.

Fats

Fat clogs your arteries. Fat makes you fat. Fat causes obesity. Fat started World War Two...I reckon fat gets a pretty bad rap. For decades the medical establishment had us believe that fat is at the root cause of our health problems. *'Eat a low fat diet and you will lose weight,'* they told us. *'Cut down on fat for better health,'* they promised.

Fact: The 'low fat' diet was first recommended to Americans back in 1977 – yet obesity has more than doubled since then.

Fact: The standard Mediterranean diet is as high as 40% fat, yet research has shown it cuts the risk of heart disease and strokes by around a third.

Fact: Eating those Satanic saturated fats, that we have been told we must avoid, is the best way to reduce a substance

called lipoprotein – which is strongly linked to heart disease.

Just like carbs, there are good guys and bad guys when it comes to fat. There are four main types of fat: saturated (good), monounsaturated (good), polyunsaturated (okay, but when heated we have a problem) and trans-fats (bad).

Here's how I sum the whole situation up:

Saturated fats are better for us than we were led to believe.

Trans-fats (aka man-made ones) are to be avoided like the plague.

Monounsaturated are good for us.

Polyunsaturated fats are okay in moderation.

The Goodfellas: fish, unrefined animal fat, plant foods such as nuts, seeds, olives and avocados, eggs and dairy, olive oil, coconut oil etc. Get stuck into these.

The Bad Guys: fried foods, baked goods, margarine, and processed snack foods. I've also lumped vegetable oils (such as sunflower, corn, canola etc) in with the bad guys, but there is still debate about whether or not they're good for us. I err on the side of caution. Limit or eliminate these.

“Aren't saturated fats bad for us?....”

I can hear some readers saying this already. There's still plenty of debate over saturated fats, but it seems health experts are finally catching up to the idea that added sugars are public enemy #1, with dodgy man-made trans-fats (used in the likes of vegetable oil and margarine) also culpable. Plenty of leading medical researchers and top health and fitness experts, including the hugely-respected Charles Poliquin and Mark Sisson, have long argued the case that saturated fats are not only good for us, but they play some really important roles in the body.

Mark Sisson, of Mark's Daily Apple, recommends saturated fats in animal products and the likes of extra virgin olive oil as part of a healthy diet. He often writes about their importance in immune function, enhancing calcium absorption and providing fat soluble vitamins. The late Mary Enig PhD, nutritionist and researcher, had been screaming about how we had it all wrong on saturated fats for years. She spent decades studying the role of fats in the diet and disputed the widely held medical views that high levels of saturated fats caused heart disease.

Enig, who was awarded Master of the American College of Nutrition, argued that foods high in natural saturated fats, such as butter and coconut oil, are *beneficial* for heart health. *She wrote: "The much-maligned saturated fats—which Americans are trying to avoid—are not the cause of our modern diseases. In fact, they play many important roles in the body chemistry. The scientific evidence, honestly evaluated, does not support the assertion that 'artery-clogging' saturated fats cause heart disease."*

The American Heart Association still advises us to limit saturated fats, arguing that studies have shown it increases level of 'bad' cholesterol. Some other medical experts still believe too much saturated fat contributes to heart disease. I'm in the pro-saturated fat camp and reckon fats make up around

30%-40% of my diet. My main sources of fat are butter, nuts and coconut milk.

Eating For Your Body Type

Food provides us with fuel and the nutrients needed for repair, growth and development. So how much protein, carbs and fats should someone involved in strength training be taking in to gain lean muscle and keep bodyfat low? The Institute of Medicine calculated an acceptable macronutrient distribution range for active people as: carbohydrate (45%-65%), protein (10%-35%), and fat (20%-35%).

Our bodies are different so there's no perfect ratio of macronutrients that applies to everyone, but by figuring out our body type we can get a fair idea of how to mix up our carbs, protein and fat. *Ectomorph*, *mesomorph* and *endomorph* body types each have different metabolic rates and hormonal responses to food. I was a 100% ectomorph (aka super skinny) before I took up weight training, but I'd say I'm more between ectomorph and mesomorph now that I've managed to gain and retain muscle mass due to years of training.

Ectomorph

This is the 'hard gainer' body type. Naturally slimmer people who have a faster metabolism and a higher tolerance for carbs. They can eat more junk food than most and generally get away with it. Their typical macronutrients split could be: carbs 55%, protein 25%, fats 20%.

Mesomorph

The people skinny and heavier dudes love to hate. They have a naturally athletic physique with more muscle mass and seem to get in great shape with less effort. Moderate carbs with higher ratio of protein and fats. Typical ratio would be: carbs 45%, protein 35%, fats 20%.

Endomorph

People with these body types pack on muscle with ease, but have a bigger, rounder frame and can struggle to lose weight. Their diet should have fewer carbs, with more protein and healthy fats. Typical ratio – carbs – 35%, protein – 35%, fats – 30%.

These are just averages and the ratios can be adjusted depending on the particular goal at the time. For example, an endomorph who wants to lose weight might cut carbs down further to 10-15%, bump up the number of protein foods, and add a few more healthy fat food sources. Or a mesomorph, who is neither fat nor thin but is looking to develop a six pack, might also cut carbs so that the body turns to fat stores for energy.

Whatever category you fall into, or if you're split between two, adjust your protein, carbs and fats to suit. If you're overweight and have a bigger frame, it would make sense to lower your carbs intake, while if you are too skinny you can take in more regularly to help add on some weight.

Carbohydrates: more of the 'complex' variety, less of the 'simple' ones. Fill up on vegetables, fruits, wholegrains, brown rice, beans, legumes etc.

Protein: meat, poultry, fish, dairy products, eggs and plant-based foods such as quinoa, buckwheat and hemp seeds are all good sources.

Fat: avoid trans-fats (fried foods, margarine etc) as much as you can. Instead, get your fat fill from fish, unrefined animal fat, coconut oil, olive oil, plant foods such as nuts, seeds, olives and avocados, eggs and dairy.

CHECKLIST

Carbohydrates are the body's main source of energy and are split into two types: 'complex' (the good guys) and 'simple' (the bad guys).

Best carbohydrate sources: vegetables, fruits, wholegrains, brown rice, beans, legumes, nuts and seeds. Fill up on these.

Worst carbohydrate sources: cakes and cookies, pastries and desserts, white breads, white pasta, white rice. Limit these.

Protein builds muscle as one of its main roles is tissue repair and growth. Protein is made up amino acids which complete this process.

Excellent protein sources: meat, poultry, fish, dairy products, eggs, quinoa, nuts, seeds, plant-based protein powder supplements.

Not all fats are bad for us and, despite years of misinformation about saturated fat being unhealthy, it's argued now that saturated fat plays important roles in our bodies such as boosting the immune system, the manufacture of hormones and strengthening bones.

Excellent fat sources: fish, unrefined animal fat, plant foods such as nuts, seeds, olives and avocados, eggs and dairy, olive oil, coconut oil.

Fat sources to avoid: fried foods such as fries, crisps, cakes, margarine, processed snack foods, vegetable oils such as sunflower, corn, and canola.

The ‘ectomorph’ naturally slimmer body type has a higher metabolism and a higher tolerance for carbs. Their typical macronutrients split would be around: carbs 55%, protein 25%, fats 20%.

The ‘mesomorph’, aka naturally athletic body type, would eat roughly around: carbs 45%, protein 35%, fats 20%.

The ‘endomorph’ bigger, rounder frame which adds muscle easily should have fewer carbs. Their typical ratio would be around: carbs – 35%, protein – 35%, fats – 30%.

Chapter 5 - Calories

So here's the deal: I'm not going to bang on about calories and insist you start counting them at every meal, every day, every week. That would make life pretty sh*t. And I don't want you turning into some sort of Rain Man mathematician as a side effect of trying to get in great shape.

BUT...I'm going to be straight up and tell you that calories are rather important when it comes to hitting your health and fitness goals. Bottom line is: if you don't take in enough calories you've got no chance of building muscle, and if you're trying to lose weight and develop lean muscle then you're going to have to be in a calorie deficit for a period.

A kilocalorie (kcal), better known as calorie, is a measure of the amount of energy in our food. It supplies our body with fuel to get through the day, our activities, our workouts etc. If we regularly take in more than we expend we gain weight – and vice versa. When clients first come to me and tell me their fitness goals, one of the first questions I ask them is: *“Do you know roughly how many calories you take in each day?”*

I've yet to meet a single client who does. And that's cool because who wants to be tracking numbers all the time when we're enjoying our food? But when we've got a particular fitness goal to hit it helps us get there much sooner when we know our calorie numbers. When you reach your ideal weight/size level you don't have to be as precise, but it's still really beneficial to know *roughly* how many calories you should be taking in on an average day, and a *fair idea* of how many calories are in your meals.

It's not as boring as it sounds because once you've been tracking calories for a little while, you soon learn roughly how

much is in most of the common foods you eat. For me personally, I hover around 2,300-2,700 calories per day to maintain muscle and stay at the same weight. If I eat less than 2,000 calories per day for a week or more then I lose weight.

Most guys looking for support from me are overweight and want to lose and develop muscle. We reduce their daily calories, along with a strength training program, to focus primarily on dropping the excess bodyfat. Then we'll make calorie adjustments and continue lifting weights to develop muscle. If a slim person comes to me saying they struggle to gain even a single pound of muscle, we'll bump up their calories along with implementing a weight training program consisting mainly of compound exercises as described in my book *Strength Training Program 101: Build Muscle & Lose Fat...In Less Than 3 Hours Per Week*.

A Simple Formula For Working Out Your Daily Calorie Requirements

How many calories we require each day depends on various factors including sex, age, height, weight, and activity levels. But without getting too complicated and trying to make it a perfect science, there's actually a simple calculation for figuring out roughly how many calories an average active person requires. How many calories should you be consuming? Do the math...

Maintenance: *Bodyweight in lbs x 15 = number of calories*

Weight gain: *Bodyweight in lbs x 17 = number of calories*

Fat loss: *Bodyweight in lbs x 12 = number of calories*

Therefore the sums for 160lb guy aiming to gain weight and size while building muscle would shoot for around 2,700-2,800 calories ($160 \times 17 = 2,720$). Or a 170lb woman looking to lose fat would aim for around 2,000 calories per day ($170 \times 12 = 2,040$).

These equations are effective guidelines for each goal will and keep you right when it comes to calories. But they aren't set in stone and can be adjusted slightly as you progress. For example, I'm a hard gainer who struggles to put on muscle mass. If I really wasn't seeing much progress after a few weeks I might actually increase multiplying my bodyweight from 17 to 18.

Someone determined to lose fat might multiply their bodyweight by 11 instead of 12 to reduce their calories a bit further. By adjusting calories as necessary, making the right food choices, and lifting weights regularly you'll be well on track to hitting your targets and seeing real changes in your body.

Building Muscle and Losing Fat - Simultaneously

Muscle gain and fat loss – at the same time. It can be done. We know we need sufficient calories to gain muscle and a calorie deficit for burning fat.

We also know now how to work out roughly how many calories we need based on our personal goals. Calories are key to everything going to plan...but we don't just get them from the food and drink that passes our lips that day. We can also turn to stored bodyfat - which are essentially stored calories – to fuel our workouts and muscle building efforts. Whenever there's a calorie deficit the body will turn to fat stores for

energy. If you're using that energy to lift heavy weights in the gym then we're getting 2 for the price of 1 here...losing excess fat in order to build muscle.

Going back to the example from earlier about the 170lb woman trying to lose fat. We worked out that she should be consuming around 2,000 calories per day to achieve this. Her maintenance calories including exercise should have been around 2,500. Where will her body get the missing 500 calories needed for energy and to build muscle? By burning bodyfat. There are roughly 3,500 calories in a pound of fat. 500 calories times 7 days amounts to 1 full pound of bodyfat being lost while fuelling muscle development.

A Top Tool For Tracking Calories...And Optimising Your Diet

The 'MyFitnessPal' app does everything – apart from shouting “don't eat that!!” – to optimise your diet and keep track of your calories. It's free to download on the iTunes and Android app stores and I use it with all my online personal training clients.

Calculating your calorie targets? Working out how much protein/carbs/fat you're taking in? Saving regular foods and recipes? Even scanning the barcodes of your food packets? This amazing app does it all for you. It's straightforward to use and will help you hit your health and fitness goals more easily. There are also demonstration videos for the app on YouTube for anyone who finds using it a bit tricky at first.

CHECKLIST

A kilocalorie (kcal), better known as calorie, is a measure of the amount of energy in our food. It supplies our body with fuel to get through the day, our activities, our workouts etc.

If we regularly take in more calories than we expend we gain weight – and vice versa.

You don't have to count every single calorie, but if your fitness goal is to lose weight or gain weight then you should have a fair idea of your average calories in and out each day.

The simplified calorie formula:

Maintenance: *Bodyweight in lbs x 15 = number of calories*

Weight gain: *Bodyweight in lbs x 17 = number of calories*

Fat loss: *Bodyweight in lbs x 12 = number of calories*

Whenever there's a calorie deficit the body will turn to fat stores for energy. If you're using that energy to lift heavy weights in the gym then it's 2 for the price of 1...losing excess fat in order to build muscle.

Want the simple answer to tracking calories and monitoring your nutrition? Download the MyFitnessPal app and set up a free account.

Chapter 6 - Do We Really Need ALL That Protein?

The world's gone a bit mental for protein. People who barely exercise are drinking protein shakes these days, you can buy Weetabix 'Protein' in the supermarket, and I'm pretty sure I saw a Protein Mars bar in a shop the other day. WTF?

People who do strength training generally end up pretty obsessed by protein. Eggs for breakfast, chicken for dinner, protein shake straight after training. What goes with it... whether it's wholegrain bread, vegetables, pasta...is usually an after-thought. We're usually too busy trying to figure out yet another way to cook our chicken breast first.

But is it really necessary? Do we really need ALL that protein?

Turns out we don't – and it took me the best part of 15 years (and 4,093 cans of tuna) to realise it. That's why this entire chapter is dedicated to debunking the myth that you need massive amounts of protein to maintain or build muscle. This book cost less than the price of a tub of protein powder and if I'd known years ago what I know now I would have saved a fortune on food and supplements. This chapter alone could save you \$\$\$\$ too – and possibly even your health.

I've heard stories of personal trainers telling women to eat 180g, 200g or more of protein per day while doing strength training. These 125lbs women are loading up on eggs, bacon, whey protein shakes...struggling to get through it all each day to hit their protein targets. Then they're surprised when they're bloated, farting like mad, and are constantly constipated. Let's put that kind of protein intake into perspective....

Arnold Schwarzenegger, the world's greatest ever bodybuilder, weighing 220lbs, standing, 6ft 2 ins tall, only consumed around 150g of protein. This was when he was competing for the Mr Olympia title – which he won seven times. Meanwhile, these women are eating MORE protein than him - it doesn't make one bit of sense. We all know that protein builds muscle....but, again, do we really need ALL that protein?

I did a lengthy amount of research on this topic because, let's be honest, there's so much advice out there on diet, nutrition, supplements, macronutrients, micronutrients...that sometimes it makes you just wanna eat pizza and tell the health and fitness world to f*** off. I was really surprised about what I discovered and it appears that some protein myths that have been spouted by 'experts' and the multi-billion dollar protein supplement industry for decades.

You might choke on your protein shake while reading this but what if someone told you that....

You could probably cut your protein intake by half – and still build and maintain muscle.

One of the world's most famous bodybuilders only ate 60g of protein per day.

An athlete who was consuming 300g of protein per day was shocked to discover most of it was going to waste...and he was developing worrying health problems as a result.

Calories are a bigger factor when it comes to building muscle than you would believe.

Our bodies can actually recycle amino acids themselves, meaning there is less need for a constant high supply of protein.

When it comes to building muscle and developing a strong, lean physique, the vast majority of experts in the health and fitness industry will tell us: "Eat more protein. Eat more protein...then have another plateful of protein." We're told to simply increase our protein numbers, train hard...and the muscle will come. The standard advice dished out by bodybuilders is: "You need 1g of protein per 1lb of bodyweight."

Some adverts in health and fitness magazines (which get paid megabucks for adverts by protein supplements companies funnily enough...) tell us we need as much as 300g or 400g to build maximum muscle. So while we're trying to cram in the equivalent of 10 x chicken breasts, or 12 cans of tuna, or 8

protein shakes, maybe it's worth asking who actually came up with these numbers anyway?

This more protein = more muscle idea seems too simplistic. Two very important factors are often ignored/forgotten about...

Protein *absorption* - a healthy digestive system can properly process the foods we eat to provide energy, extract the nutrients to nourish our cells, and help to build and repair muscle. Problem is, a high percentage of people living in the Western world don't have healthy digestive systems due to the processed junk that fills our supermarket shelves. The fact that the treatment of heartburn, constipation etc is a multi-billion dollar industry in America is proof of this. Many of us also live highly-stressed lives, and in times of stress our digestive system basically shuts down as our bodies go into 'fight or flight' mode. This means we don't break down food as we should - and certainly can't cope with ridiculous amounts of protein in those situations.

Secondly, the protein *source* is also an important factor. There are countless high protein foods we can choose from, but they are not all equal in nourishing the body and building muscle. For example, steak is one of the highest sources of protein and also contains a good dose of iron and creatine that you won't find in most other foods. It's hugely popular with bodybuilders - but takes up to 72 hours to be properly digested in the body.

It's not unusual for some bodybuilders to eat steak every other day in an attempt to keep building muscle. While the body is still processing the last one, along with other meals in between, it's looking highly likely that we're going to have some backing up of food. The body struggling to keep up is when digestive problems occur and toxins floating around in the body as a result can also lead to other health issues such as skin problems.

Is All That Extra Protein Going To Waste?

But how can we know for certain either way? How much of all that protein is actually being utilised by the body? Not much – is the answer from Dr Ellington Darden. After carrying out a unique two month-long protein study on himself back in 1970 and finding startling results, Dr Darden insisted that “*the biggest misconception 20 years ago, and still the biggest misconception today*” is the idea that we need huge people lifting weight need a huge amount of protein to build and maintain muscle.

This isn't the opinion of just another “fitness expert”. Dr Darden was honoured by the President's Council on Fitness, Sports and Nutrition as one of the top ten health leaders in the United States. Back in 1970, as a competitive athlete and bodybuilder for around 20 years he was consuming 380g of protein per day. Half of this came from protein powder and he was also popping all sorts of nutritional pills to aid his muscle growth.

That was until one of his colleagues, Dr Harold Schendel Professor in the Food and Nutrition Department at Florida State University, told him that was way too much protein and he was wasting his time. Determined to prove he was right, Dr Darden set up a detailed study on his own body. For two months, he kept precise records of his dietary intake, of energy expenditure, and his general well-being. All his urine was collected and analyzed by a graduate research team in nutrition science.

The results? The study showed his body was excreting large amounts of water soluble vitamins, proteins and other nutrients. As he had been consuming massive doses for years, his liver and kidneys had apparently grown excessively large to handle the influx of all these nutrients.

Why You Need Less Protein Than You Think

If you've been lifting weights for a while I'm guessing you're devouring tons of high protein foods like steak, chicken, eggs, whey protein shakes etc. We work so hard to build the muscle

that we want to make sure we make the most gains afterwards. We even watch the clock every day to figure out when to guzzle the next protein shake or have our mid-morning snack. If we don't our gym efforts will go to waste, right?

The idea of reducing our protein intake – even on the advice of hugely respected experts like Dr Ellington Darden – terrifies most weightlifters (aka protein addicts) like you and me. Let's look at some of the main reasons why:

#1 The Fear That Cutting Down On Protein Will Result In Muscle Loss

This is without doubt the biggest worry. The standard advice from the health and fitness industry is more protein = more muscle, and so we keep increasing it as we get bigger and stronger. Here are three examples that completely debunk this theory.

1 – Mike Mentzer was a bodybuilding champion who won the Mr Universe title in 1978 and in 1979 won the heavyweight class of the Mr Olympia competition...both with perfect 300 scores.

Mike's daily protein intake....60g per day. Yes, just 60g per day for a heavyweight competing athlete. Some weightlifters have that amount for breakfast alone. Mike placed more emphasis on calories than excessive protein intake.

Before he died in 2001, Mike said: *“Protein requirements depend almost entirely on your bodyweight, not your level of physical activity, because it is not used as fuel as long as the body's energy supply is adequate. The rule of thumb is one gram of protein per day for every two pounds of bodyweight.”* Mike also insisted that buying expensive supplements was a waste of money because we can get what we need from a balanced diet which includes meat, fish or dairy products.

2 – Dr Nick Delgado is a nutritional expert who tells us the same thing. He insists we require way less protein than we think – and also maintains that sufficient calories are more important. He follows a vegan diet and only eats around 60g of protein per day. In that case, you might imagine he's a bit of a weakling eh? Afraid not, Dr Delgado holds a world strength

endurance record in the Guinness Book of Records for pressing the most weight overhead in an hour (53,640 pounds!) Dr Delgado says that it's important we take in enough calories, arguing that a protein intake of between 45g and 75g is generous.

3 – I mentioned earlier that even Arnold Schwarzenegger consumed around 150g of protein per day (around 0.7g per 1lb of bodyweight). This is still relatively small for a 220lb guy who was training hard for the Mr Olympia world titles. Yet, I don't think anybody could argue with his results.

Also, a study was carried out in 2010 on 8 healthy men, who were each given infusions of amino acids (the building blocks of protein) over three hours. Protein synthesis increased with the influx of more amino acids – but then it began to decrease even though more amino acids were still being given. This suggests that bombarding the body with more protein does not necessarily mean more muscle.

#2 The Worry That It Will Lead To Too Much Weight Loss

Protein is not the body's primary fuel supply, carbohydrates are. By eating a sufficient amount of complex carbs and healthy fats too you can ensure the body's caloric needs are met. This helps maintain an ideal bodyweight, and has a protein sparing effect allowing you to develop muscle through strength training. For 'hard-gainers' like myself who struggle to add a pound of weight (but can easily lose two or three after a weekend on the booze), it is a good move to focus on increasing healthy fats. Fat contains 9 calories per gram, while protein and carbs contain just 4 grams each. On your shopping list add more nut butters, coconut milk, coconut oil, butter, olive oil, avocados etc.

#3 The Fear Of Gaining Too Much Weight

The complete opposite to the worry above, but a genuine fear for people who have slimmed down by following a high protein diet and by training hard. Our bodies are all different in terms of composition, metabolism, how well we process some foods etc. BUT – if you reduce your excessive protein intake and still stick to diet that is largely made up of whole foods

(i.e. plenty fresh veg and fruit, whole grains, no processed junk) then it's very difficult to go wrong...particularly if you're also lifting heavy.

The Protein Scale For A Weightlifter

Okay, so there are plenty of different opinions about how much protein we need to maintain and build muscle. And we obviously know this varies based on bodyweight. But let's look at the scale based on the information and the people referred to in this article.

World Health Organisation – 35g.

Dr Nick Delgado, world strength endurance champion - 45g-75g.

Mike Mentzer, former Mr Universe and Mr Olympia - 1g of protein per 2lbs of bodyweight.

Arnold Schwarzenegger - 1g of protein per 2.2lbs of bodyweight.

Standard bodybuilding community recommendation – 1g of protein per 1lb of bodyweight.

Advice from some protein supplement companies – 300g-400g per day.

Starting at the bottom end...let's be honest, you would probably eat that much before lunchtime. The World Health Organisation is also giving recommendations for the average person, not someone who lifts weight regularly. Going to the other end of the scale, these figures of 300g-400g are crazy, needless amounts. Dr Ellington Darden's detailed two-month long study clearly showed that large amounts of protein goes to waste.

The standard bodybuilding advice is that we must eat 1g of protein per 1lb of bodyweight. This figure has been around for decades...yet we don't know who made it up and on what basis. Yet two of the finest bodybuilders the world has ever produced are telling us we only need HALF that amount. This advice from Arnie and Mike Mentzer lies slap bang in the

middle of the scale and is what I would consider the most sensible.

My recommendation: **1g of protein per 2lbs of bodyweight** is an ideal target to aim for.....but, crucially, supported by a sufficient number of calories from complex carbohydrates and healthy fats.

CHECKLIST

- **Heavy weight training does NOT require a massive protein intake.**
- **Protein absorption is key – and both digestive issues and different types of foods are factors in this.**
- **Eat 1g of protein per 2lbs of bodyweight.**
- **This should be backed up with sufficient calories, which are equally important in the muscle building process.**
- **Our bodies can recycle amino acids, meaning there is no need for eating sky high amounts of protein.**

Chapter 7 - Pre-workout Nutrition

We all have the same gym pre-workout problem...

Trying to figure out exactly what the hell to eat/drink/gorge on for enough energy to get through a tough gym session and make the best gains possible. On one hand we want to feast on plenty of food for fuel. On the other we don't want it to leave us feeling like we need a nap afterwards!

“Load up on carbs for energy,” they tell us. I tried the big plate of pasta mid-afternoon. Left me feeling like a balloon.

“Drink a meal replacement shake for extra calories,” they said. Somehow that left me feeling like a human slug by the time I started lifting weights.

Or the plain old banana that everyone tells you is a great source of energy. They're clearly bending the truth with that one. And don't get me started on those rubbish energy drinks. They contain ridiculously high amounts of sugar, all sorts of chemicals and additives, and if you'd like another reason not to drink them then Google “energy drinks deaths”. Fact is: nothing really cut it – until I came across The Two ‘C’s. One natural supplement. One drink you probably have every day. Both beginning with the letter ‘C’.

The Two ‘C’s: Coffee and Creatine

A plain cuppa black coffee and some creatine = an outrageously good combo for firing up your energy levels and boosting your performance in the gym. Taking these on an empty stomach ahead of a morning workout is highly effective for burning fat. This also sets the body up to be in a highly anabolic state when you have your post-workout meal.

I first heard about creatine around 15 years ago when I was still at college. I was out drinking on a summer's night at a local pub and I spotted a guy who was in my year at school. I hadn't seen him for a couple of years and first thing I noticed was how big his arms and shoulders were. He had morphed into this muscley mutha and it didn't look like he had been taking anything dodgy like steroids. He was just bigger and in much better shape compared to last time I'd seen him.

Must admit, I remember feeling pretty gutted in that moment. I had been training pretty hard for around three years at that point and saw *some* gains, but looking at this dude was like a slap in the face waking me up. I figured that either I wasn't training hard enough – or I had just been going the wrong way about my weight training completely. So I pulled him aside and – while trying not to sound like a jealous weirdo who had been eyeing up another guy's muscles at the pub – I asked: *“Mate, you're in great shape. You must be training constantly. What are you doing exactly?”*

It was then he told me he had been taking creatine as a pre-workout supplement, along with the same brand's protein powder post-workout....and had gained about 10lbs of muscle in a matter of months. It had always been a nightmare for me to gain just two or three pounds. So I was sold on this stuff already. The next day I headed to the shop in Glasgow where my ex schoolmate bought his creatine. The creatine worked a treat. I put on around 6 or 7 pounds within the first couple of months and my strength went through the roof. I go through cycles of taking creatine now (two months on, one month off), but still get the same boost in power and performance in the gym 15 years later.

Creatine – The What, Why And How

Basic science behind creatine: it's an amino acid that's found in various foods and is also naturally produced in the body, helping to deliver energy to all cells, primarily muscles. Creatine increases the formation of ATP (adenosine triphosphate), which is the molecule that fuels life. ATP is where our cells get the energy to perform tasks. Essentially, more creatine = more ATP = more energy and power for workouts.

How it works: creatine has been proven to be effective in improving performance in weightlifters and other athletes. This is because it increases the body's ability to produce more energy rapidly, meaning you can train harder and for longer.

How to get more of it: beef and salmon are among the best food sources of creatine – but you would have to eat silly amounts to get the levels you need. That's why, since 1993, creatine has become a popular supplement in powder/capsules for athletes. There are several forms of this supplement but creatine *monohydrate* has been shown to be the most effective and is the most widely used.

The Benefits Of Supplementing With Creatine

As well as leading to an improvement in strength and an increased capacity for high intensity work, supplementing with creatine can reap various other benefits including:

Fuller muscles – creatine enhances the volume of muscles. This is mainly achieved through increasing the fluid content of the muscles. It pulls more water in, giving them a fuller look.

Enhanced recovery– a study on creatine supplementation was carried out in 2004 involving 34 men running a 30km race.

Eighteen men used 20g of creatine mixed with maltodextrine per day for five days, while the others used only maltodextrine. Closely monitoring several markers of cell damage in both groups, researchers concluded: “*Creatine supplementation reduced cell damage and inflammation after an exhaustive intense race.*”

Better brain function– creatine supplementation can improve short term memory and also protect against neurological disorders, studies suggest. In 2003, a study was carried out on 45 young adults where they took 5g of creatine per day for six weeks, then took tests on memory performance and intelligence. Researchers concluded that “*creatine supplementation had a significant positive effect*”.

Is Supplementing With Creatine Safe?

First off, it’s worth reminding that creatine is not a drug of any sort. It’s a natural compound produced in the body and that can also be absorbed from various food sources. There have been scare stories over the years that prolonged use of creatine can cause kidney problems, but this has been disproven in countless studies. Other negative effects have also been highlighted, such as stomach cramps.

These supposed side effects are all well addressed in an article titled ‘*Six Side Effects Of Creatine: Myths Debunked*’, which was published on Bodybuilding.com in November 2015. This well-researched, in-depth report is definitely worth a read if you have any concerns about taking creatine for the first time. The article underlines why it’s a safe and effective supplement for healthy individuals and is backed up by 31 different studies.

NOTE: People diagnosed with gout are advised not to take creatine as it will worsen the condition. If you have any health issues at all consult your doctor first before taking creatine.

How much should I take – and what about the ‘loading phase’?

Dr Richard Kreider Phd gave a formula for working out how much creatine to take at first and then for daily maintenance. Dr Kreider is professor and head of the Department of Health and Kinesiology at Texas A&M University. He has published more than 300 sports nutrition articles and abstracts in scientific journals.

He advises that we initially increase muscle creatine stores by taking 0.3g per kg of bodyweight per day. Take this amount for 5-7 days and then simply take 3g-5g per day to maintain creatine stores. So an 80kg guy would take 24-25g for the first week and then reduce it to 5g daily. Or a 65kg woman would take 20g for the first week and then cut down to between 3g and 5g per day.

Stir Up Your Training Performance With Coffee

A cuppa coffee – without the sugar and cream – is an excellent pre-workout drink. It is a much healthier, safer choice than energy drinks. A simple black coffee an hour before your workout can provide the following benefits:

Increased energy– the high caffeine levels in coffee can provide a perfect power-up shortly before you hit the gym.

More fat loss– coffee, when consumed before a workout, can cause fatty acids to be used for energy rather than glycogen. The caffeine content also speeds up metabolism, which means more fat is burned throughout the day.

Better performance– coffee can be the difference between squeezing out a few more reps in the gym, or shaving a few seconds off your running time.

This was proven back in 1992 when a group of athletes were given 3g of coffee before a 1500m treadmill run. The study, published in the British Journal of Sports Medicine, showed that those who drank the coffee finished their run 4.2 secs faster on average than the control group. Other research also points to coffee helping to improve focus, decrease muscle pain during your workouts and even having a positive effect on your memory. So, while coffee is often seen as a vice by some people, it can actually have a positive impact when it comes to your training. Black and organic is best, and it's best sticking with the following advice:

Don't go overboard. Health experts recommend that no more than 400mg of caffeine (roughly three mugs of coffee) is consumed per day, while the limit is half that amount for pregnant women. Side effects of excessive caffeine intake include an increased heart rate and insomnia. Coffee is also acidic and too much acidity in the body leads to inflammation. Chronic inflammation depresses the immune system and can lead to health problems. Stay balanced by including plenty of vegetables and fruits, and natural, whole foods.

Choose freshly-made coffee– made with organic coffee beans if possible. Quality coffee beans contain various nutrients and flavonoid antioxidants, which help maintain good health. The processing of roasted coffee granules robs coffee of these nutrients.

Cut out the sugar and cream. Unless your coffee is black you're defeating the purpose. Sugar will not only spike your insulin levels – and come crashing down later – but too much of the white stuff is also converted into fatty acids in the liver.

Meaning more fat on your belly, legs, arms...or wherever else you don't want it.

CHECKLIST

- **A great pre-workout combo is black coffee and creatine.**
- **The coffee will help boost energy and burn fat, and can have a positive impact on your performance in the gym.**
- **Creatine can help you gain muscle mass by enhancing your performance, strength, and your recovery after training. It can also give your muscles a fuller look by drawing more water into the muscles.**
- **Begin a creatine 'loading phase' of taking around 0.3g per kg of bodyweight for 5-7 days.**
- **Creatine supplementation thereafter should be reduced to 3g-5g per day.**
- **I take creatine in cycles, two months on and one month off. People with gout are advised not to take creatine as it will worsen the condition. If you have any health issues consult your doctor first.**
- **A coffee (no sugar or cream) an hour before your workout can increase energy levels, boost performance and burn fat more efficiently.**

- **Due to its high caffeine content, you should drink no more than 3 mugs of coffee per day.**
- **Choose freshly ground organic brand of coffee rather than instant, which has been stripped of its antioxidants and isn't as effective.**

Chapter 8 - Post-workout Nutrition

When I first started out lifting weights when I was aged 16 I didn't have a clue about what I should be eating to try and build muscle. I can remember my friend Bryan and I training with a weight bench in his gran's house. Within seconds of finishing our last rep we were drinking pints of milk and wolfing down slice after slice of wafer thin honey roast ham. Wasn't exactly the tastiest combo but I'd read somewhere that milk helps you build muscle. These days I don't drink the stuff at all, but it's important to underline that it's not just what you eat, but when too.

The two hour period following your workout is prime time for making the most of your gym efforts. Ori Hofmekler, world leading sports nutritionist and author, describes it as the 'window of opportunity' for maximising muscle growth. Your body will temporarily be in a catabolic (muscle wasting) state following each weight training session. This is because the strain of intense exercise triggers the release of stress hormone cortisol in the body, which breaks down muscle tissue.

Doesn't sound good, right? But this biological process actually sets you up for flipping it into an anabolic (muscle building) state through proper nutrition afterwards. By flooding your body with the right nutrients – within the right timeframe – you halt the catabolic process and kickstart some serious muscle building as your body begins the growth and recovery phase following tough work done in the gym.

Feed Your Hungry Muscles Twice Within The Window Of Opportunity

The sooner we switch from catabolic to anabolic the better for muscle growth. This is where two post-workout 'feeds' come into play.

‘Feed’ 1

Within 30 mins of your workout: feed your muscles with fast assimilating protein to start the muscle building process. I recommend a plant-based protein shake, such as brown rice or vegan blend protein powder. Mixed with water, these are really easy for the body to absorb without any digestive issues.

‘Feed’ 2

60-90 minutes later: eat a healthy meal with a good balance of protein, complex carbs and healthy fats. These should come from the food sources mentioned in chapter 4. You don’t have to be a masterchef. I recently pulled together all my favourite clean eating recipes and published [**‘Meal Prep Recipe Book: 50 Simple Recipes For Health & Fitness Nuts’**](#). To make life even easier, I also provide a breakdown of calories, protein, carbs and fats for each meal.’ The book is available online now on Amazon and I’ve been getting some great feedback about it.

CHECKLIST

The two hour period following your workout is prime time for making the most of your gym efforts.

Aim for two ‘feeds’ (which is really just a shake and one meal) in this ‘window of opportunity’ for maximising muscle growth.

I recommend a plant-based protein powder shake with water 30 minutes after finishing your workout.

Then 60-90 minutes after your shake have a nutritious meal composed of good sources of protein, complex carbs and healthy fats as described in chapter 4. My book [Meal Prep Recipe Book: 50 Simple Recipes For Health & Fitness Nuts](#) on Amazon can make life much easier for you.

Chapter 9 - Supplements: The Good, The Bad & The Useless

There's bodybuilding. And there's building a strong, healthy body. I class the two completely differently. I'd never consider myself a bodybuilder. A meathead bodybuilder probably wouldn't consider me a bodybuilder either. I'm cool with that. I'm just a guy who lifts heavy weights - and my health is of the utmost importance.

In my experience, I've seen too many bodybuilders put aesthetics, competition and their egos before their health. Just to get ahead, to try and be bigger or better than others, while not really thinking about any long-term consequences. Firstly, anyone who even considers taking steroids for a better body is not only a meathead, but a plain moron. You become fake, a fraud...and I won't bore you with the ball-shrinkingly frightening health dangers.

Secondly, anyone who takes other unnatural, synthetic pills, powders or liquids without properly doing their homework should also receive a 'moron' tattoo along with their gym membership.

"Take care of your body, it's the only place you have to live."
– Jim Rohn.

Truth is: you don't need to waste your money on a bunch of supplements, dodgy or otherwise, to achieve the great body you want. A clean, healthy whole foods diet can provide virtually all you need. Having said that, there are still a handful of natural supplements that'll help you get the job done much more efficiently and effectively. I'll detail the 'essentials' and 'extras' I use to supplement my weight

training program - and properly look after my body. They're safe, natural and opting for these will not only bring you excellent results, but it'll save you time, experimenting with garbage products, and a heck of a lot of money.

In part two of this chapter we'll also cover pre-workout and post-workout nutrition, which can be a headache for even the most experienced weightlifter. I'll share my 'ultimate pre-workout combo' for peak performance in the gym, as well as tips on what to consume afterwards to gain the most from your monster gym efforts.

'The Essentials' – stock up on these whenever you get the chance

Multi-vitamin and mineral tablet

The body uses vitamins and minerals to repair and replace cells. We simply cannot function without these nutrients. The standard Western diet and the processing of food strips what we eat of its goodness. The result? Vitamin and mineral deficiencies. These deficiencies lead to various health problems. For example, if you lack vitamin B12 you'll likely feel tired, out of breath, or develop headaches.

It's like a car that needs oil and the warning light comes on. The body gives us plenty of warning signs too and it's up to us to give the body what it needs before it breaks down. But even eating plenty of organic fruit and veg isn't necessarily enough to cover all vitamin and mineral bases. So buying a good multivitamin and mineral supplement is a wise investment for foundational health.

Creatine

This could well be your weightlifting best friend. As described earlier, creatine has been proven to be effective in improving performance in weightlifters and other athletes. It increases the body's ability to produce energy more rapidly, meaning you can train harder – and for longer. Did I mention the benefits of fuller muscles, or enhanced recovery after workouts too? Creatine is an amino acid that's found in various foods and is naturally produced by the body too.

Plant-based protein powder

No I'm NOT talking about whey isolate protein powder. I ain't a fan of the usual type of protein that 98% of weightlifters/athletes/gym-goers drink to help build muscle. In my experience, many (not all) brands of whey protein are highly processed, contain chemicals and additives, and are acidic which makes it harder to digest and it has been argued that they can damage your health in the long term.

Myself and several friends suffered digestive problems after years of guzzling whey protein shakes. When we switched to an organic plant-based protein powder all the issues stopped. Plant-based protein powders are much more alkaline and easily absorbed by the body. My advice is to ditch whey protein, buy the plant-based stuff instead. You'll likely save yourself, your toilet and anyone within a 1 metre radius of you the pain of your constipation, diarrhoea and toxic farts.

Magnesium oil

Magnesium plays so many roles in the healthy functioning of our bodies, and is crucial for sports performance and recovery. But this mineral is also very easily depleted in our fast-paced, stressful lives. Intense exercise, such as heavy weight training can also further lower levels of magnesium and therefore it's a very wise move to supplement with magnesium oil. Dr Mark Sircus, author of Transdermal Magnesium Therapy, refers to

magnesium as “by far the most important mineral in the body”.

When it comes to performance: the body’s main energy source ATP (adenosine triphosphate) must be bound to a magnesium ion in order to be biologically active. A deficiency in magnesium can therefore impair athletic performance. When it comes to recovery: supplementing with magnesium oil is hugely beneficial for people lifting weights because it relaxes and soothes sore muscles, speeding up recovery times after tough workouts.

It’s also an amazing aid for a deep, restful sleep as it calms the nervous system by inhibiting the major stress hormones cortisol and adrenaline. Proper sleep is extremely important for muscle development and overall health. Spraying magnesium chloride oil on to the skin has been shown to be most effective for absorption.

‘The Extras’ – beneficial but not completely necessary if you don’t have the cash

ZMA (Zinc, Magnesium, Vitamin B6)

This combination of two minerals and one vitamin is a potent mix for recovery and growth because it assists in achieving deep levels of sleep and hormone production. Training hard in the gym consistently can lower levels of testosterone, as can the stress of everyday life. ZMA has been clinically proven to increase anabolic hormone levels and muscle strength in athletes. Studies have shown that it can increase the testosterone levels of men by around one third.

Greens powder

We all know how good vegetables are for us. But let's be honest, most of us don't eat anywhere near enough of them. Even those who do eat plenty are probably not getting enough nutrients from them because over-cooking strips vegetables of vitamins, minerals and natural enzymes. This is where a greens powder supplement can make all the difference. Packed with antioxidants and phytonutrients, this supplement is powerful for cleansing the entire body and protecting your cells. This can boost your immune system, improve digestion, and support overall health and wellbeing.

Digestive enzymes

Enzymes are produced by the body to break down our food properly and absorb the nutrients. They're also found in whole unprocessed foods such as fruit and veg. There are two problems: first, the body can struggle when faced with a constant influx of processed junk food and large volumes of animal protein, as found in the typical Western diet.

Heartburn, bloating, too much gas etc are all signs the body is having a hard time digesting what's been eaten. Secondly, cooking also robs foods of their natural enzymes. Digestive enzyme supplements can assist the body in breaking down larger volumes of food, such as cooked main meals. This means you get more out of what you eat, which of course provides the nutrients needed for muscle growth - and optimal health.

I've created a special supplements guide as a bonus for all readers of this book. The report lists my favourite supplements brands and how and when to take them. You can download it for free on my website at: www.weighttrainingistheway.com/supplements-guide

CHECKLIST

- **The ‘essentials’ supplements are: multivitamin and mineral tablets, creatine, plant-based protein powder and magnesium oil.**
- **Multivitamins and minerals: these are important for addressing nutritional deficiencies that are common in the typical western diet and building good foundational health.**
- **Protein powder: choose an organic plant-based option, such as brown rice or vegan blend, over whey isolate protein. Not only because it is a highly absorbable form of protein, but because it’s alkaline and therefore kinder to your insides than other highly processed, acidic brands.**
- **Magnesium oil: the huge role magnesium plays in sports performance, recovery and overall health is not widely known. It’s also very easily depleted, especially following intense training. Stay one step ahead and look after your body well by supplementing with this magic mineral.**
- **The ‘extras’ supplements – if you’ve got the cash – are: ZMA capsules, greens powder and digestive enzymes.**

Conclusion

I don't think anything I've explained in this book is hard to understand or follow. That's exactly the point. Proper nutrition / a clean diet / a healthy way of eating...whatever you want to call it...should be straightforward and easy to maintain. I take the same approach with my strength training programs too. Otherwise, we end up in a never ending cycle of becoming temporarily enslaved to a fad diet >> making progress >> inevitably having a major blowout >> losing our way and feeling like crap >> beating ourselves up >> and then it's back to square one.

Does it not make more sense to just get all the basics right consistently? You know, like...

Cutting down on sugar

Limiting the booze

Eating more vegetables and fruit

Keeping an eye on your calories

Drinking plenty of water and taking a vitamin and mineral supplement every day

Doing all of the above isn't hard work. Making good food choices – as described in chapter 4 – Monday-Friday ain't that difficult either. Especially when you can relax a bit and enjoy treats at the weekend. None of that sounds like a diet to me. It's simply a healthy eating lifestyle and will provide your body with what it needs as you progress on your strength training program.

As for training itself, I've experimented with all sorts of foods, drinks and supplements to give me fuel and boost my performance in the gym. Forget all these dodgy energy drinks

or hyped-up supplements, a black coffee and creatine is the way forward. My energy and strength levels go through the roof with this combo. If you're overweight then I'd go only with the coffee and leave out the creatine until you're close to your target weight. This is because creatine pulls water into your muscles and water retention isn't what you want.

As for the coffee, make sure it's black and go for a freshly made organic brew instead of instant. Remember to fully capitalise on your gym efforts by having two post-workout feeds within the two hour 'window of opportunity'. I have my plant-based protein powder shake 30 minutes after finishing my workout, and then follow this up around 60 minutes later with a nutritious meal such as oatcakes and tuna mayonnaise, or one of my special calorific super shakes!

You don't necessarily need to blow your cash on supplements to help you build muscle, strip fat and get in better overall shape. But, as I mentioned in the last chapter, there are some essentials and non-essentials which I use to complement my training regime and optimise my health. They're all completely natural, fairly cheap, and are worth every penny.

My special supplements guide is available as a bonus for all readers of this book. The report lists my favourite supplement brands and how and when to take them. You can download it for free on my website by visiting: www.weighttrainingistheway.com/supplements-guide

I Forgot....

...I hope you've enjoyed reading these two books and they help you become a stronger, better, healthier version of yourself. If you have any questions about anything in the books feel free to email me at:
marc@weighttrainingtheway.com

Right, enough reading. Get back to the gym!

All the best, Marc McLean.

About the author



Marc McLean is a 30-something year old author and online personal training and nutrition coach from Loch Lomond in Scotland. He owns Weight Training Is The Way and is a health and fitness writer for leading websites including The Good Men Project, Mind Body Green, and Healthgreatness.com

Marc loves...climbing Munros (aka the biggest hills) in Scotland, peanut butter, amazing scenery, the Rocky movies, lifting heavy things, blueberries, Daft Punk, tennis, travelling and laughing.

Marc hates...bad manners, funerals, cardio, and all drivers who don't indicate.

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