



PHYSICAL FITNESS GUIDE



WARNING!

This guide and the accompanying videos present a series of physical tests that may be extremely difficult for many. As with any physical exercise program, consult your physician before starting.

Welcome to the Prepper Physical Fitness Guide, where we recognize that preparing for the worst-case scenarios goes beyond stockpiling food, water, and gear. Amid our prepping endeavors, we often overlook the most crucial aspect – our physical fitness.

Consider this: the average American commutes 20.5 miles one way to work each day. Could you navigate this distance on foot in the event of a disaster, separated from your family while at work? What if the power goes out in the dead of winter, and you need to gather firewood to keep your family warm? If the roads are impassable and you physically have to lift yourself over a treacherous debris field and series of walls, do you have the core strength to do that? The scenarios are endless, but the question remains: Is your body prepared for the physical challenges that may arise?

This isn't about a fleeting New Year's resolution; it's a conscious decision to enhance your life, starting now. Your physical fitness is the ultimate preparation. Let me emphasize that – there is no greater prep than your physical fitness. I would choose to be healthy and capable with minimal preps over having extensive supplies but lacking health.

Whether you're a seasoned marathon runner or someone recovering from a medical crisis, this Prepper Fitness program is designed for you. While I'm not a doctor, I've collaborated with several professionals who have made fitness their lifetime work. One, a Marine, an expert in designing PT programs, to adapt Marine Corps principles for everyday individuals, assisted in designing and adapting the exercise routines for the everyday person. Others I consulted, both former military and civilians, lent their

expertise on diet, nutrition, mobility, and countless other areas. This program focuses on essential fitness abilities that anyone can achieve with dedication and intent.

This City Prepping physical fitness plan isn't about training for a reflection in the mirror; it's about being fit for practical, real-world scenarios. After 8-weeks of the program, however, you might start to like the reflection of yourself you see in the mirror. It's natural, but understand that fitness goes beyond outward physical appearance. Many people will attain higher fitness and health indicators, like lower cholesterol, blood pressure, or resting heart rate, but may struggle to see any changes in their body image. As you gain muscle, which weighs more, and lose visceral fat buried deep in your core, the appearance of your body might be slow to change. That doesn't mean no change has occurred. You may notice more stamina, renewed vigor, or just a general "feeling better." Look for those things as the real indicator of your progress in your fitness journey. We understand that fitness is as crucial of a prep as food or water. If you can't perform when disaster strikes, reach safety, or be there for your family, no amount of prepping will suffice.

It's also important to note that we aren't nutritionists or dieticians here at City Prepping. Nothing we suggest should replace the advice you get from your medical professionals. If you have any concerns with either the physical fitness routines or the diet and nutrition we suggest in this program, feel free to print out the guide and take it to your doctor or healthcare provider to get their take on it. Seeking guidance from a healthcare professional or nutritionist before starting any dietary plan ensures personalized advice, navigating complexities, and ensuring a safe, practical path toward nutrition aligned with individual needs and health goals.

Whether you're already fit, were in the past, or find yourself in a different fitness situation, this program is tailored to benefit you. What sets it apart is not only its effectiveness but also its accessibility. It's free, designed to be done at any fitness level, and requires no special equipment or supplements. We invested time and resources

because we believe that a well-rounded prepping strategy includes ensuring you're physically prepared for whatever challenges come your way.

If at anytime you want to check out our [playlist covering physical fitness](#), we recently added this to our channel. All the material in this document is also covered in these videos.

What to Expect?

So, what can you expect in this guide and series of videos? First, we'll have a series of tests you can do at home. You don't even need a gym membership for this. These tests will help gauge your starting point to form a baseline for your progress as you dive deeper into the program. Second, there's a nutritional component. Working out is critical, but if you've ever tried to lose weight before or get in shape, you know that 80% of any successful physical fitness plan is contingent upon what you do in the kitchen. You can't outrun a bad diet. Don't worry. It isn't some radical fad diet you will burn out on after a few days. We'll follow the time-tested basics.

This is about learning to eat healthy. Simple yet critical concepts include avoiding processed food, eating whole foods, how to track what you eat, and understanding calories and macros. Third, we'll do basic home workouts with everyday household items. Again, this will not require a gym membership. If you have dumbbells or kettlebells, feel free to incorporate those into your program, but they aren't required. Finally, we will tie everything together and point you in the right direction to get you going. I suggest you read this entire guide and watch the videos before starting. Understand what this will require of you and plan accordingly. Set a start date and do good planning leading up to that date. Start this program with intent and understanding.

The workouts are as strenuous as you want them to be, but they're all doable at whatever level you are at. I want you to be motivated but not intimidated so you won't find exercises that are too hard to do in the program. I genuinely set out to create a

program that would get you results fast regardless of how fit you were when you started, and if you are already pretty fit, this program will help you level it up, hopefully, a notch further.

Regarding fitness as a prep, there isn't a top point. The fitter you are, the better your life right now will be. The more fit you are, the better your odds of surviving catastrophes and the relentless stress of daily living. Fitness isn't something you buy freeze-dried and put on a shelf for after a disaster. It's a prep you have to tend to now, so it will be ready for you when you need it most, and if you don't need it in a time of disaster, you will still reap the benefits of it in your everyday life.

Let me be honest with you here for a moment. I'm carrying more body fat than I should. I've studied the numbers and carry a little more than I should for my age. I often hear in this community, "Hey, it's OK to carry a little extra body fat. If SHTF happens, having a little extra fat will help." I can't tell you how dangerous that thinking is. Studies show that carrying extra body fat increases your chances of many health issues.

You're not alone in this. Our whole prepping community has been asking for this for quite a while now, so here it is. If you are starting this program close to its release date and you are a subscriber in our [CityPrepping.com Prepping Community](#), we would love for you to share your progress, successes, and tweaks there so we all can benefit, learn, and motivate each other. We can also answer any questions you may have about the program in that community portal. It's up to you when you start, but please, please start. None of your preps will matter if you don't have the fitness level you need to survive our uncertain but undoubtedly turbulent future.

Week 0 - Baseline Tests

Everything we're about to cover in this section of the document is [covered in this video](#).

Here, we have detailed a series of physical tests every prepper should take to determine their current physical fitness level. If you had to bug out right now or a disaster hit your area, these tests would help you determine how physically fit you are to endure the event.

Each of these workout evaluations is broken up over 3 days. Before starting each test on separate days, you'll first need to warm up, which we'll cover now.

Warm-up Routine

These warm-up exercises should take you roughly 12 to 15 minutes. These exercises aim to elevate your heart rate and prepare your body for a workout. Do not skip this part. This is not the baseline test. That will come later. This is the basic warm-up routine you should perform before any physical activity. You'll need some comfortable loose clothing, a pair of exercise shoes like sneakers, and a stopwatch or timer on your phone.

For each of these warm exercises, perform three sets of each. You'll do the exercise for 45 seconds, followed by 10 to 30 seconds of rest, then do the exercise for a second time for 45 seconds, rest for 10 to 30 seconds, then exercise for 45 seconds for a 3rd time, and then rest. That makes three sets. As you watch each of these workouts, you can pause the video and come back to the next exercise after finishing your three sets.

Again, you'll do three sets as we just described for the following exercises. If the warm-up exercise is too much for you to do at any time, that's ok. Do as much as you can. We're just trying to get our heart rate elevated and ready. For examples of each of these warm-up exercises, [consult our video, where I demonstrate them for you](#).

- **Jog in Place.** Do this for 45 seconds. Rest for 10 to 30 seconds, do the exercise again for 45 seconds, rest for 10 to 30 seconds, exercise again for 45 seconds, rest for 10 to 30 seconds, and then do the next warm-up exercise. Again,

remember, you'll apply this time on/time off approach to each of these following warm-up exercises.

- **Jumping Jacks** (do the exercise for 45 seconds, rest for 10-30 seconds, 3 sets)
- **Butt Kicks:** Alternate kicking your heels up toward your glutes. (do the exercise for 45 seconds, rest for 10-30 seconds, 3 sets)
- **High Knees:** Lift your knees high in front of you, hold for a moment, then place your foot back on the ground. (repeat the exercise for 45 seconds, rest for 10-30 seconds, 3 sets)
- **Open/Close the Gate:** Perform sideways leg swings, opening and closing your legs. To do this, lift your leg up and bend at the knee. When your thigh is horizontal, push your knee out to the side of your body. Replace your leg in front of you and repeat movement with the alternate leg. You can use a chair to stabilize yourself. (repeat the exercise for 45 seconds, rest for 10-30 seconds, 3 sets)
- **Shoulder Circles:** Rotate your arms forward and backward in circular motions. On your first set, rotate them forward. After resting, rotate them in the opposite direction. After resting, repeat by circling in a forward direction. (repeat the exercise for 45 seconds, rest for 10-30 seconds, 3 sets)

Now remember, on each day that you do your tests, do these warm-ups first. So, after you finish your warm-up, let's jump into our first test.

Day 1 - Strength & Power

For today's evaluation, you will do three different exercises to determine your current strength and power. Remember, this multi-day test is designed to examine your overall fitness critically. This is day one, but you will need to set aside time in the next two days to complete the tests.

Here's what you'll need:

- Sneakers or workout shoes along with comfortable workout clothes

- Stopwatch or timer app on your phone
- Printed out “DAY 1 FITNESS RECORD SHEET to record your results ([below](#)).
- For a few of the exercises, we’ll be lifting an object. Regarding weight, if you have any dumbbells or kettlebells, great...use them! But if you don’t, a 1-gallon jug of water, a 2.5-gallon water container, a #10 can of food, or anything you can hold steadily in front of you works fine.

You will record your results on the [DAY 1 FITNESS RECORD SHEET](#). For each of these three exercises, you will do the exercise for one minute and write down your results in the chart while taking a one-minute break between. You’ll then do another one minute of exercise, again recording your results while resting for one minute, and then finish with another minute of exercise and afterward recording your results while resting. In other words, we’re doing 3 sets of exercises with one-minute breaks in between. You’ll follow this exact pattern for each of these three following exercises.

Test #1 - Standard Pushup

For examples of any of these three exercises or the alternatives I present, consult the [video where I demonstrate them for you](#).

So, let’s start with a standard push-up. First, start in a plank position with hands slightly wider than shoulder-width apart, palms flat on the ground, and body forming a straight line from head to heels. Do not flare out your elbows. Try to keep your back and legs straight. Lower your body by bending your elbows until your chest nearly touches the ground. Push back up to the starting position, fully extending your arms. Keep your core engaged throughout the movement.

Too difficult?

If that's too hard for you in your current physical condition, here are some variations you can do.

- **Modified pushup.** With a Modified Pushup, start on your knees instead of your toes, maintaining a straight line from knees to head as you perform the pushup.
- **Inclined pushup.** With an Incline Pushup, perform the pushup with your hands on an elevated surface like a bench or sturdy surface, reducing the load on your upper body.
- **Wall pushup.** With a Wall Pushup, stand facing a wall, place your hands on the wall with your body at a slight incline, and perform a pushup against the wall. To increase your intensity, gradually move your feet away from the wall.

Again, do as many of whichever push-ups you can do as possible in one minute, resting a minute between each set and doing a total of three sets. Record 1 point for each pushup that you do in the three sets. So, for example, if you can do a total of 20 pushups during all three sets, write down 20 on the [Fitness Record Sheet](#) (see below).

Test #2 - Goblet Squats

To do a Goblet Squat, hold your weight at chest height, right in front of your heart, stand with feet slightly wider than shoulders, squat by pushing hips back and bending your knees, keeping your back straight, then return up by pushing through your heels and squeezing your glutes at the top. Repeat for as many reps as you can accomplish. Focus on keeping a good form, straight lines, and no wobbling. Again, you will do as many as possible in one minute, resting a minute between rounds and doing three rounds each. Record one point for each Goblet Squat on the Fitness Record Sheet. As mentioned earlier, you can use any item you can hold and provide resistance that matches your capabilities. If holding a weighted object is too much for your current ability, do the movement without weights.

Test #3 - Step-Ups

For this exercise, we will test your ability to do step-ups. If you're not accustomed to stepping a high distance or don't have a solid chair, stepping up on a bottom stair or curb will work just fine. Whatever you use, make sure it's stable and that you're capable of doing the motion. If it's not stable, there's a great chance you can fall and injure yourself. If you're unsure which approach to take, just use the stairs or curb. If you want to use a rail wall or piece of furniture to balance better, just make sure you aren't using your arms to pull yourself up.

Place one foot on an elevated surface like a box, bench, sturdy chair, or curb for step-ups. You want to step up on something at a maximum height of about 3/4 of the way up to your knee, no higher than your knee. For most, that's 12-18 inches. Push through that foot to lift your body up, bringing the opposite foot up above the foot placed on the elevated surface, and bending the knee of that leg, and then bringing it down next to the stable foot until both are on the surface. Lower yourself down by stepping back and off with control, alternating legs, or focusing on one side at a time. Keep your core engaged and maintain a steady pace for a complete workout.

You will do as many as possible in one minute, resting a minute between rounds and doing three rounds. Record one point on the Fitness Record Sheet for each complete Step-Up when both feet are on the surface. Stop if you feel shaky or lightheaded.

Day 2 - Stamina

Here's what you'll need for today's test:

- Sneakers or jogging shoes along with comfortable workout clothes
- Stopwatch or timer app on your phone.

Unlike the previous tests, you will do these just one time and not in sets of three. Before you begin either, do the Warm-up Routine outlined earlier.

One Mile Fast Walk/Run

For this test, we will run or fast walk one mile, or for those that don't use "Freedom Units," that's 1.6 kilometers. If you can access a treadmill or a track around a football field, you can easily monitor that distance. Most standard running tracks are 400 meters (0.25 miles) in circumference and four laps around a track equal one mile. Or on your phone, you can download a free jogging, walking, or step app, which will, combined with your GPS on your phone, measure the distance you've traveled. If you have a step counter or need to count out the steps to equal a mile, there are 2,000 steps in a mile on average. Counting each step might slow you down, so when I do this, I just count the fall of my right foot and double the number at the end. You can also just use a program like Google Maps to measure the distance of a route before leaving your home. Make sure your route is as flat as possible.

To cover one mile with speed, start by setting a brisk pace that challenges your comfort zone. That might be a fast walk for some and a fast jog for others. Focus on quick, purposeful strides while maintaining good posture. Find a sustainable pace to complete the distance without compromising form. If you're a veteran jogger, consider a pace faster than your regular jog but sustainable for the entire mile. If you are more on the walking end of this, adopt as fast of a pace as you can. If you are in the middle, switch between walking, running, and jogging to where you are pushing yourself but maintaining good form.

If your body isn't used to it, you may experience sharp pains in your feet or legs or the discomfort of an accelerated heart rate or labored breathing. You may also consider bringing some water. Whatever your pace, you want it to be just inside that discomfort zone, but you must accept that you may not be the best at it. It will take some time, and that's okay. We just want to figure out your baseline. You will get better and better at it

as you get further into the program. Complete the mile as fast as you can without stopping. You should be moving at a pace that will leave you winded. If you feel lightheaded, ease back.

Keep track of your time for the one mile with a watch, stopwatch, app, or whatever. Then, record the time when you have completed your 1-mile fast walk/run. This will be the baseline you will gauge your progress against.

Day 3 - Endurance

Here's what you'll need for today's test:

- Hiking boots or sneakers along with comfortable workout clothes
- Stopwatch or timer app on your phone

Unlike the previous tests, you will do this just once and not in sets of three. Before you begin, do the warm-up procedure I outline for you at the time shown here on the screen.

3-Mile Ruck March (4.8 kilometers)

The first item most people build in the preparedness community is their bug-out bag. But have you ever really hiked with your bag before? We'll perform a 3-Mile Ruck March (or 4.8 km) for this test. You should load a backpack with a weight between 10 and 20 pounds. You can load in whatever you have and use a standard bathroom scale for an accurate weight measurement. One caveat: if you are closer to the 20 pounds or more range, you will want a backpack geared more toward hiking because of the position of the straps and the weight balancing. Most of us in this community already have a bug-out bag, so let's start with that.

The hike involves brisk walking or hiking with a loaded backpack or rucksack. Begin by strapping on the backpack, maintaining good posture and a steady pace while covering the distance. Keep a consistent rhythm, alternating between slower and faster sections

if needed, and focus on endurance rather than speed, ensuring comfort and safety throughout the march. Think of this as a brisk walk but not a run.

When you have completed your 3-mile ruck/march, record your time on the Fitness Record Sheet. This will be the baseline you will gauge your progress against. Again, like the jogging we previously did, you will do this just one time and not in sets of three.

Assessing Your Results

The series of tests we just ran through gave us a foundation to build upon. You are only in competition with yourself. So, after running through the tests, accept where you are today and use that to drive you to make improvements. Of course, there were many exercises we could have chosen from to do this assessment, and there will be many more exercises in our fitness routine. Still, we chose these three, the walk and the 3-mile ruck, because they are more specific to the types of movements (pushing, squatting, stepping up, covering distance, and walking with weight) you may do a lot of in a post-disaster environment.

This is your overall points score and total fitness assessment grade. As we move through the program and record future reps and times, you will periodically want to use the same criteria to measure your progress. If you're Great, let's move you to Excellent. If your grade is Poor, let's get you to Fair or better. Don't feel defeated or ashamed. Everyone has to have a starting point, so use this as a place to start your physical preparedness journey. Your level of fitness is a reflection of your preparedness, and it's an indicator of your potential ability to survive challenges you might face.

My sample results are the FITNESS RECORD SHEET (Kris' Sample Sheet) after your blank FITNESS RECORD SHEET on the next page.

FITNESS RECORD SHEET

Exercise	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Total	Poor (1 Point)	Good (2 Points)	Great (3 Points)	Your Points
Push-ups					<30	30-80	81+	
Goblet Squats					<20	20-40	41+	
Step-ups					<40	41-60	61+	
1-Mile Run (minutes)	8:37				>10	7-9	<6	
3-Mile Ruck March (minutes)	41:12				>50	41-50	<40	
Total								

FITNESS RECORD SHEET (Kris' Sample Sheet)

Exercise	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Total	Poor (1 Point)	Good (2 Points)	Great (3 Points)	Your Points
Push-ups	33	29	31	93	<30	30-80	81+	3
Goblet Squats	16	18	14	48	<20	20-40	41+	3
Step-ups	25	24	21	70	<40	41-60	61+	3
1-Mile Run (minutes)	8:37				>10	7-9	<6	2
3-Mile Ruck March (minutes)	41:12				>50	41-50	<40	2
Total								13

With all of your exercises converted to a single number between 1 and 3, now just add those 5 test values together for a total score of between 5 and 15. I got a 13 out of a possible 15, so I have room for improvement.

Total Points	Grade
5	Poor
6-8	Fair
9-12	Good
13-15	Great

Diet & Nutrition

For this segment, [please refer to our video](#).

Your diet and nutrition are core pillars of your fitness and health. Your physical capability is your #1 prep. No other decision that you make impacts your overall physical well-being AS MUCH as what you eat. Heart disease and cancer are the two leading

causes of death in the United States, and what you put in your body will either increase your chances of succumbing to these diseases OR spare you from them.

We will approach this with two goals in mind:

1. I want to help you understand how to eat healthy, and
2. I want to detail for you how to practically lose body fat.

Not everyone is trying to shed unwanted body fat, but I'd be willing to wager that 80% of those watching have that goal in mind. Depending upon where you are in your fitness journey (age, history, current weight, current fitness), you could eat right and follow a rigorous exercise program only not to shed a single pound. After all, muscle weighs more than fat, and visceral fat, the fat that is most damaging around your internal organs, doesn't appear when we look in the mirror.

I'm currently overhauling my meal plans as I just want to be healthier, so I figured I'd share what I'm practically doing. Now, please don't skip this portion of the program. I know it's not exciting, sometimes bland, sometimes flavorless. There isn't going to be as much sugar or salt to sweeten or flavor things. However, given enough time and some time in the kitchen on your part, you can maintain the same level of satisfaction with your food— even enjoy it more.

I will tell you upfront that there's a lot of information here to cover. Diet and nutrition is probably one of the most talked about and written about subjects out there. We are going to simplify it here. By necessity, that means we also have to leave much information out. We condensed it down into bite-sized (pun intended) information for this guide to give you simple concepts that, if followed, will put you on a healthy path.

Before we begin, let me just say that if you have any specific dietary needs or health concerns, consider consulting with a registered dietitian or healthcare provider before you follow what we're about to outline.

Importance Of What You Eat

If I could sum this section up, it really comes down to eating whole foods and not processed foods and sugar.

Whole foods refer to unprocessed or minimally processed foods that closely resemble their natural state, retaining their original nutritional content without adding preservatives or artificial ingredients. Examples include fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains like brown rice and quinoa, lean proteins such as poultry and legumes, nuts, seeds, and unprocessed dairy products. These foods are valued for their nutrient density, providing essential vitamins, minerals, fiber, and antioxidants. Emphasizing whole foods in one's diet is often associated with promoting overall health and well-being due to the absence of excessive processing and including natural, wholesome ingredients.

The predominant portion of the American diet consists of processed foods, which are convenient to grab and consume with minimal effort. However, these foods are associated with adverse health effects such as obesity, heart disease, and dementia. The human body is not well-adapted to handle the high levels of fats, sugars, and salts prevalent in modern diets. Processed foods can be deceiving, as they do not induce a sense of fullness, leading to overeating to satisfy hunger. The excess consumption of calorie-dense processed foods contributes to obesity, which in turn is linked to cancer, heart problems, and a diminished quality of life.

Processed foods, essentially altered from their natural state, often contain numerous additives and chemicals. Distinguishing between natural and manufactured foods, like comparing a candy bar to a banana, underscores the importance of opting for whole foods. In the simplest way of understanding this, the candy bar didn't grow on a tree, but the banana did, so eat the banana and not the candy bar. That may be an oversimplification, but it holds true. I try to look at the food and roughly estimate the amount of time and processing and additives that went into it. If you read the labels, you will find that even some seemingly healthy options might not be so healthy. Some dried fruit, for instance, in addition to being a massive amount of sugar, may also contain additional added sugar, sulfur dioxide, synthetic preservatives, and artificial colors. A

single-serving packet of oatmeal might have copious amounts of sugar and even trace pesticides like glyphosate– the health risks of which we don't fully understand but know are there.¹

BENEFIT OF A WHOLE FOODS DIET

1. Nutrient Dense: Whole foods are packed with essential nutrients, providing your body with the vitamins and minerals it needs for optimal function.
2. Weight Management: This diet can help control weight due to its high fiber content, which promotes feelings of fullness and reduces overeating.
3. Improved Digestion: Whole foods are easier to digest compared to highly processed foods, leading to better gastrointestinal health.
4. Lower Risk of Chronic Diseases: A whole foods diet is associated with a reduced risk of heart disease, diabetes, and certain cancers due to its low levels of added sugars and unhealthy fats.
5. Sustained Energy: Whole foods release energy gradually, preventing energy spikes and crashes commonly associated with processed foods.

Remember that a balanced diet involves portion control and variety. While whole foods offer numerous benefits, it's essential to tailor your diet to your individual needs and preferences while consulting with a healthcare professional or nutritionist if necessary

While considerations about organic foods can arise, prioritizing a deeper understanding of nutritional choices contributes to a healthier life. It's essential to recognize that the true cost of cheap processed food lies in its detrimental impact on both lifespan and overall well-being. The thing is, processed foods eliminate much of our need to prepare anything. We don't have to source, hunt, or gather anything from the wild. Eating whole foods is more time intensive, as it will force you to prepare some of your own food. We are not asking you to gather acorns, harvest the meat from them, pound them into flour,

¹ <https://www.health.com/nutrition/pesticides-in-oatmeal>

leech the tannins out in a stream, dry out the paste, and bake it into cakes. Who has time for that?

We ask that you strive to find the least processed foods, the least removed from nature, and eat those while avoiding processed foods loaded with other ingredients, salts, sugars, and fats. Eat brown rice instead of white. Try chickpeas, lentils, or peas instead of meat or processed protein sources to incorporate nutrient-dense plant-based alternatives rich in fiber, protein, and various essential vitamins and minerals. Regarding meat protein sources, use herbs and spices over sauces, and pass on the cured meats for the lean cuts. As my grandmother said, “pay the grocer and butcher, not the doctor.”

You are not giving up fats on this diet. Your body needs fats and oils. You may just be switching to fats your body can process more easily, fats that exist in foods. Including a variety of healthy fats in your diet is crucial for overall health, and both monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats are considered healthier options compared to saturated and trans fats. Saturated fats, prevalent in animal products and certain plant-based oils, are solid at room temperature and can elevate the risk of heart disease and LDL cholesterol levels when consumed excessively. On the other hand, trans fats, artificially created through partial hydrogenation of vegetable oils, are also associated with heart disease and are recommended to be limited or eliminated from the diet due to their adverse effects on cholesterol. Opting for a diet rich in whole foods, such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins, can naturally reduce the intake of saturated and trans fats. Whole foods are typically low in these unhealthy fats and provide essential nutrients, contributing to better heart health and overall well-being.

Monounsaturated fats, found in foods like olive oil, avocados, and nuts, are associated with heart health and may help improve cholesterol levels. Polyunsaturated fats, present in fatty fish, flaxseeds, walnuts, and oils like soybean oil, provide essential omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids, contributing to heart protection. Some of the healthiest oils to incorporate into your diet include olive oil, known for its monounsaturated fat content and association with the Mediterranean diet, avocado oil rich in monounsaturated fats and vitamin E, canola oil as a versatile option low in saturated fat, flaxseed oil for its

omega-3 fatty acids, and walnut oil offering a balance of omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids. It's important to use oils in moderation due to their calorie density, and maintaining a balanced intake of various fats contributes to overall well-being. Consider individual dietary needs and consult healthcare professionals or nutritionists for personalized advice.

So, you want to avoid processed foods and focus on whole foods. What are examples of whole foods? Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, healthy fats, and healthy dairy options.

Healthy Foods/Fat Sources	Processed Foods/Fat Sources
EAT	DO NOT EAT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avocado: Rich in monounsaturated fats, avocados are versatile and can be added to salads, sandwiches, or enjoyed on their own. • Nuts (e.g., almonds, walnuts, pistachios): Packed with healthy fats, nuts also offer fiber, vitamins, and minerals. • Seeds (e.g., chia seeds, flaxseeds, sunflower seeds): High in omega-3 fatty acids and other nutrients, seeds can be added to yogurt, smoothies, or salads. • Fatty Fish (e.g., salmon, mackerel, sardines): Excellent sources of omega-3 fatty acids, beneficial for heart health. • Coconut: Coconut oil and coconut milk contain saturated fats but are considered healthier options. • Dark Chocolate: In moderation, dark chocolate contains monounsaturated fats and antioxidants. • Nut Butters (e.g., almond butter, peanut butter): Choose natural versions without 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fast Food Burgers: Often contain high levels of saturated fats, especially if they include processed cheese and fatty sauces. • White Rice: Low in nutrients, high glycemic index. • French Fries: Deep-fried in oil, they can be high in unhealthy trans fats. • Doughnuts: Typically fried and may contain trans fats in the frying process and in the added toppings. • Processed Meats (e.g., sausages, hot dogs): Often high in saturated fats and may contain added preservatives. • Commercial Baked Goods (e.g., pastries, cakes, cookies): This also includes white breads, which are often void of nutritional benefits. Opt for whole grain or even sprouted grain breads. • Store-Bought/Commercial Pizzas: High in saturated fats, sodium, preservatives, sugars, and additives.

<p>added sugars or hydrogenated oils.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chia Pudding: Made with chia seeds and plant-based milk, it's a nutritious and satisfying snack. • Olives: A great source of monounsaturated fats and antioxidants. • Fruits (e.g., avocados, olives): Besides healthy fats, fruits offer a variety of vitamins and minerals. • Whole Eggs: The yolk contains healthy fats, vitamins, and nutrients. • Fatty Yogurt: Choose full-fat, plain yogurt for a source of healthy fats and probiotics. • Edamame: Young soybeans are a plant-based source of healthy fats. • Cheese: Opt for varieties like feta or goat cheese, which are lower in saturated fats. • Tofu: A plant-based protein source with moderate healthy fats. • Quinoa and Amaranth: Contain small amounts of healthy fats, protein, and fiber. • Brussels Sprouts: High in fiber and contain a small amount of healthy fats (alpha-lipoic acid). • Salad Greens (e.g., spinach, kale): Leafy greens provide vitamins, minerals, and very small amounts of healthy fats. Make your own dressings with healthy oils, and you will reap the benefits from the nutrient density of some leafy greens. • Sweet Potatoes: Include these as part of a balanced diet for their nutritional content, including small amounts of healthy fats. • Extra Virgin Olive Oil, Grapeseed Oil, and Avocado Oil 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potato Chips and Snack Foods: Many are fried in unhealthy oils and contain trans fats. • Processed Cheese: High in saturated fats, especially in processed cheese slices. If you're going to have a little cheese, favor artisanal cheeses, aged cheeses, and hard cheeses in small amounts. • Deep-Fried Foods: Trans fats harmful to heart health. Deep-fried foods, whether coated in batter or not, pose health risks. • Flavored Yogurts: High sugar content, low nutritional value. • Canned Soups: Some may contain high levels of saturated fats and sodium. • Margarine (partially hydrogenated): Some margarines contain trans fats, although many products have reduced or eliminated them. • Commercial Sauces and Salad Dressings: Often high in unhealthy fats, additives, and sugars. Just 1 tablespoon can be enough to ruin your diet for the day. • Artificial Sweeteners: May disrupt gut microbiota and can spike blood sugar levels. • Soda: Lacks nutrients, is acidic, high sugar content. There's nothing good for you in soda. Even the artificially sweetened and diet versions can be detrimental to your program. • Microwave Popcorn Packets: Some varieties may contain partially hydrogenated oils and artificial butter flavorings. • Vegetable Oil
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As your body tricks you into compensating for reducing and eliminating these bad ingredients, you might also be inclined to eat more of the other healthy ingredients we outline for you. For instance, eliminating pastries might have you craving sweets and carbohydrates. Don't feed that craving with a can of sweetened baked beans that will spike your carbohydrates, sugars, and salts. That's not healthy. Your body will trick your mind, and your mind will try and trick you. Instead, analyze your cravings, determine which nutrition component your body needs, and give it just a little of that healthy alternative. Eliminating some foods even for a few days will cause your body to crave them. You might even dream about them. You might unwittingly pick a doughnut or cookie up in the breakroom at work and bite into it before you even remember what you are doing here. Forgive yourself for these accidental transgressions, but definitely, with all your will and might, do not eat the foods you shouldn't and eat the ones you should.

Buying whole foods and preparing them yourself results in better nutritional density and more bio-available nutrients. It requires more pre-thought, planning, and a little time in the kitchen, but there's no better way to gain health than preparing wholesome foods yourself, portioning, and planning.

Sometimes, the whole ingredients are tremendously cheaper because consumers are accustomed to having the foods processed and prepared for them. The fresh form of the food can actually be more expensive, sometimes. It's cheaper to buy one fast food burger than the components of the burger for preparation at home. That said, it's more rewarding and far better nutritionally to make one batch of sugar-free catchup, pay up for low-fat, lean, grass-fed ground beef, and use a whole wheat bun or skip the bun altogether. Realize that you may be eating less of the fresh food that comes in the package (you have to buy a pound of beef, but you shouldn't eat a one-pound burger), though it's probably more of the healthy stuff than is present in the processed equivalent. And, remember what my grandmother said, "It's better to pay the grocer than the doctor."

Macronutrition, Micronutrition, Calories (Macros, Micros, and Calories)

It's not crucial for you to understand the details, but you do need to know how to recognize the values in each of these, as they will have a profound impact on you. You'll use this information when you shop for food.

Macros

Regarding Macronutrients, you have 3 primary components that you'll see on food nutrition labels. Macro means large, and these are the "largest" parts of our diets. They are Carbohydrates, Proteins, and Fats. Our bodies must have these three to function properly.

Carbohydrates are the body's primary source of energy. They provide fuel for daily activities and exercise. Think of this banana. It has 0 grams of fat, 1 gram of protein (which is not much), and 28 grams of carbohydrates. So this would primarily provide you with carbohydrates if you ate it.

- Role: Carbohydrates are the body's primary source of energy. They provide fuel for daily activities and exercise.
- Recommendation: Aim to get about 45-65% of your total daily calories from carbohydrates. Focus on complex carbohydrates like whole grains, fruits, and vegetables.

Proteins are important for muscle repair, growth, and overall tissue maintenance. A great example of lean protein is chicken. For 3 ounces of chicken, your body would get 26 grams of protein, 0 carbs, and about 2.7 grams of fat. So, as you can see, this would provide a lot of protein.

- Role: Proteins are important for muscle repair, growth, and overall tissue maintenance.
- Recommendation: A goal of 1 gram of protein per pound of body weight is often used in the fitness community. Good sources include lean meats, fish, poultry, dairy, legumes, and plant-based protein options.

Fats are essential for overall health, including supporting cell function and absorption of certain vitamins. A great example of fat is olive oil. For a tablespoon of olive oil, your body would get 0 grams of protein, 0 carbs, and about 14 grams of fats that are considered healthy. So, this would provide a lot of fat.

- Role: Fats are essential for overall health, including supporting cell function and absorption of certain vitamins.
- Recommendation: About 20-35% of your total daily calories should come from healthy fats. Include sources like avocados, nuts, seeds, olive oil, fatty fish, and dairy.

Micros

Micronutrients are your intake of vitamins and minerals: These are essential for various bodily functions, including energy production, immune function, and overall health. A well-balanced diet with various fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and dairy products can help ensure an adequate intake. Processed foods normally lack nutrients, whereas whole foods are rich in them. Processed foods often have these micronutrients chemically stripped, heated, or otherwise processed right out of them.

- Vitamins and Minerals: These are essential for various bodily functions, including energy production, immune function, and overall health. A well-balanced diet with a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and dairy products can help ensure an adequate intake.
- Calcium and Vitamin D: Important for bone health. Dairy products, leafy greens, fortified plant-based milk, and exposure to sunlight are good sources.
- Iron: Needed for oxygen transport in the blood. Include lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, and fortified cereals in your diet.

Calories

You have heard the old adage "Calories in and calories out." This concept is a fundamental principle in the context of weight management and energy balance. It

suggests that to maintain a stable weight, the number of calories consumed through food and beverages should approximately equal the number of calories expended through metabolic processes and physical activity.

Simply put, you may gain weight if you consume more calories than your body needs (caloric surplus). Conversely, if you consume fewer calories than your body requires (caloric deficit), you may lose weight. This principle underscores the importance of balancing calorie intake with energy expenditure for maintaining a healthy weight.

While the "calories in, calories out" concept provides a foundational understanding of weight management, it's essential to recognize that the quality of calories (nutrient density), the types of foods consumed, and individual metabolic factors also play crucial roles in overall health. While this simple calorie counting often encapsulates people's total understanding of "diet," we have discovered that weight and energy management is so much more than this. Some foods can cause inflammatory responses. Too many fats and sugars and a lack of fiber can result in digestive issues. A lack of nutrient-dense foods can result in dietary deficiencies and so much more.

A calorie is a unit of energy. When you hear something contains 100 calories, it describes how much energy your body could get from eating or drinking it. I'm going to oversimplify here again, but understanding how many calories you consume each day will profoundly impact whether you gain, maintain, or lose weight. Simply keeping track of caloric intake can have a tremendous impact on weight and health, when you suddenly realize those little pieces of candy around the office and the sugar in your coffee may amount to a significant daily caloric load. If you eat more calories than your body needs on a daily basis to function, it will store it as fat in your body. If you don't consume enough, your body will begin to pull from muscle and fat to supply the body with the energy it needs to function.

10 Easy Hacks To Instantly Develop A Whole Foods Diet
Here are 10 hacks to transition to a healthier, whole foods diet:

1. Create homemade dressings and sauces using olive oil, balsamic vinegar, lemon juice, and herbs to control ingredients and avoid added sugars and unhealthy fats.
2. Choose Whole Grains: Opt for whole grains like brown rice, quinoa, and oats instead of refined grains to increase fiber and nutrient content in your meals.
3. Snack on Nuts and Seeds: Replace processed snacks with a handful of nuts or seeds for a satisfying, nutrient-dense snack high in healthy fats and protein.
4. Prepare Simple Smoothies: Blend fruits, vegetables, and yogurt for a quick and nutrient-packed smoothie, avoiding store-bought varieties with added sugars and artificial ingredients.
5. Embrace Meat Alternatives: Try plant-based protein sources like lentils, beans, mushrooms, and tofu in place of some meat dishes to reduce saturated fat intake.
6. Prioritize Whole Fruits: Snack on whole fruits instead of fruit juices or sugary snacks to benefit from the fiber and vitamins found in the whole fruit.
7. Use Herbs and Spices for Flavor: Experiment with herbs and spices to add flavor to your meals without relying on excessive salt, sugar, or unhealthy condiments.
8. Batch Cook for Convenience: Prepare and freeze batches of whole-food meals in advance for convenient, healthy options when time is limited.
9. Hydrate with Water: Drink water throughout the day instead of sugary beverages to stay hydrated without consuming empty calories.
10. Mindful Eating: Practice mindful eating by savoring each bite, paying attention to hunger and fullness cues, and avoiding distractions to foster a healthier relationship with food.

Incorporating these hacks into your routine can contribute to a more wholesome and nutritious diet. Making small, sustainable changes over time can lead to long-term improvements in your overall health and well-being.

Implement the Information

We covered protein, carbs, fats, macronutrients, micronutrients, and calories. What do we do with that information? If you want to eat healthy and/or lose body fat, we must implement what we just covered.

So let's talk about the obvious for many of us: losing body fat. That's where I'm at, and suspect many of you are in the same boat. Again, carrying excess body fat puts you at a higher risk for heart disease, cancer, and so many other ailments. So, I'm on a personal mission to drop body fat over the next several months.

Macro Calculator

So, let's start with a weight loss calculator to establish the personal goals you want to achieve from this program. You can google "weight loss calculators," and there are plenty of them online. Here's the first calculator I found.

<https://www.calculator.net/macro-calculator.html>

To use this tool, simply enter your age, gender, height, and weight, and set your activity level to moderate exercise 4-5 times per week, because that is what you will want to do with this program minimum. Then, define your goal and click "calculate."

This will provide you with diet information. As you click across the top tabs, you will see variations according to different diet types: Low Fat, Low Carb, High Protein, or an option to Create Your Own. Get a sense of each, then click on Create Your Own, and feel free to tweak it a bit according to your own health needs. If you want to lower your carbs or fat or increase your program, you can do it here. Make only slight changes, though, as we don't want to shock your body too much.

Write down the target and the range for each. These will be your guidelines for calculating your intakes and for meal planning.

Nutrition Calculators

The next tool is a nutrition calculator. Many of these are free or partially free apps for your smartphone. There are numerous online calculators. I will link to 3 that I have used in the past. The advantage of the apps is they often allow you to keep a journal of the foods you eat and establish goals. The websites, however, are very handy as you meal plan.

Nutrition APPs	Nutrition Websites
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MyFitnessPal: Best overall • Lose It!: Best free features • FatSecret: Best fully free • Cronometer: Best for specific diets • Noom: Best for weight loss • Lifesum: Best for building healthy habits • Calory: Best for simplicity • CalorieKing Food Search: Free to download and use, but is supported by advertising 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.webmd.com/diet/health-tool-food-calorie-counter • https://www.nutritionvalue.org/nutritioncalculator.php • https://www.verywellfit.com/meal-plans-6386423 (pre-done meal plans) • https://www.nutritionix.com/ (food database and a tracking app) • https://www.precisionnutrition.com/encyclopedia (more info than you may want or need, but lots of extras here) • https://www.myplate.gov/ (this website will help you to understand portions of different types of food as you build your meal plan).

Additionally, I often just go to Google and type in the name of the food plus nutritional information, and the results are often the same. Some apps will allow you to log foods simply by scanning bar codes or nutrition labels. That can make recording what you eat so much easier than writing out a journal. Whatever you do, you need to record what

you are eating and the calories you are expending. I highly suggest you leverage technology to do this. I have used several of these in the past, and if I had to choose one free one to use, it would probably be MyFitnessPal. That's not an endorsement, it's just the facts. You can record your food and exercise there.

Have a Heart

You may also want to consider a SmartWatch, AppleWatch, FitBit, or step tracker App. Although I don't delve into your resting heart rate as an indicator of fitness and health, these devices can allow you to measure your resting heart rate, sleep patterns, even irregular heartbeats, and more. Even if you struggle to shed a pound, it can be reassuring to see your resting heart rate lower to a healthier level for your age, weight, and gender after a few weeks of dedicated diet and exercise changes.

Again, I won't really cover this, but it would be a good idea to measure your resting heart rate before beginning this program and see how it changes over the course of this program. For more information on that here are two links: [Health.com](https://www.health.com) and [HealthDirect.gov.au](https://www.healthdirect.gov.au).

One other thing you'll need is a [food scale](#). This is critical to help you weigh your food and they're relatively inexpensive. A food scale, like writing down and recording what you eat, is almost a cheat or hack. You may be shocked when you take the time to portion and measure your food. That one serving spoon of scalloped potatoes might be more calories and fat than you ever imagined. That portion of meat might be far more than is recommended for a person. Once you are past your shock, you will need the scale to accurately assess the portions and nutrition in those portions.

Hydration

Increasing water intake is a valuable element in a weight loss and fitness strategy, although not a guaranteed stand-alone method. Adequate hydration is linked to weight management and plays a crucial role in sustaining an 8-week exercise routine. Proper hydration facilitates nutrient transport, aids digestion, eliminates post-exercise lactic

acid, and enhances overall bodily functions, including fat burning. Drinking water before meals induces a feeling of fullness, potentially reducing calorie intake, while choosing water over high-calorie beverages supports calorie-free hydration. Some studies suggest water may temporarily boost metabolism, contributing to calorie burning, and proper hydration is vital for effective exercise, potentially aiding in weight loss. Substituting water for high-calorie drinks can significantly cut daily calorie consumption. Despite the benefits of increased water intake, achieving weight loss requires a holistic approach involving a balanced diet, regular exercise, and healthy lifestyle habits, recognizing individual variability due to multiple influencing factors beyond hydration.

For these reasons, establish a daily water consumption goal of at least half your body weight in ounces. For instance, a 120-pound person should aim for a minimum of 60 ounces, while a 200-pound person should target at least 100 ounces. Avoid additives and opt for clean, good-quality water. The suggested amount is a minimum, and more water is generally better. To meet this goal, consume 16 ounces upon waking, 8 ounces before exercise, sip water during your workout, and drink 16 ounces post-exercise. Continue to sip water at intervals throughout the day, and frequent bathroom visits indicate proper hydration. It's essential to note that both dehydration and adequate hydration occur gradually over time, emphasizing the importance of consistent water intake rather than attempting to compensate with a large quantity at once.

Meal Planning

I showed you the calculator that shows you how to calculate your calorie intake based on your input values. We explained macros and calories. You can plug it into a [spreadsheet](#). Here's a sample [7-day meal plan](#). You can use these and the calculators to understand your existing meals and plans.

If you want to try some new recipes to have more flavor or to change your diet for the better, you can use [MyPlate.gov](#), which I pointed out earlier, to understand portions better. You can also use [EatThisMuch.com](#) to put in the calories you want, the number of meals, and the type of diet you favor to generate actual meals you can make. You can pick recipes that meet the Micro/Macro/Calorie goals that you have established.

Plan on creating all the meals you need on the weekend to get you through the week. If you can portion them out in containers, even better. If the meals require some prep time or measuring to be complete, consider parsing out the ingredients and having them ready to go.

6 Tips For Meal Planning Success

1. **Plan a Weekly Menu:** Consider your schedule and dietary needs. Create a list of recipes for balanced meals.
2. **Batch Cook:** Choose scalable recipes for easy bulk cooking. Focus on versatile ingredients that can be used in multiple dishes.
3. **Prep Ingredients Ahead:** Wash, chop, and portion ingredients in advance. Store prepped items for quick assembly during the week.
4. **Use Storage-Friendly Containers:** Invest in microwave-safe and freezer-friendly containers. Portion meals for easy grab-and-go and label with dates.
5. **Schedule Cooking Sessions:** Dedicate specific time slots on the weekend for meal prep. Cook in stages, focusing on different components each day.
6. **Turn Your Cravings Into Planning:** As your body craves, your mind will daydream about other foods. Take that time as an opportunity to plan your next week's meals. This will ensure variety and reduce dietary fatigue.

Create convenience in your diet. If you eat a hardboiled egg and a piece of whole grain toast with avocado and drizzled with olive oil in the morning, you will be satisfied and feel full enough to avoid the doughnuts in the break room at work. If you have carrots and celery pre-cut and packaged, ready to snack on, it may not be as thrilling as the fats, salts, and sugar rush you'll get from the vending machine, but it will take the edge off your hunger and make you feel healthier and better about your choices. Foods like that are guilt-free, so long as you don't drench them in sauces or dressings. If you miss your condiments and dressings, try spending some time creating fresh condiments from scratch on the weekend. Even a BBQ sauce or salad dressing made with whole, fresh ingredients might be calorically dense, but it will be phenomenally better for your health

and diet when you substitute fresh ingredients, healthier oils, lower amounts of sugars and no chemical preservatives.

Space out eating meals between 2 to 3 hours apart throughout the day. This helps you maintain energy levels and prevent spikes and blood sugar crashes. Eating at regular and frequent intervals will help you to eat less at each sitting, and it will help you avoid hunger pains or cravings.

In order to make this all work, you have to do meal planning each week. Since we're eating multiple times a day and snacking, there's no way you'll have time to cook and clean everything each day. We know that just isn't going to happen. I prep my meals usually on either Saturday or Sunday morning for the entire week. So, I typically will go to the store, buy the food, come home, start cooking my chicken, rice, green beans, and other items, and throw them into containers. Now I tried cooking enough in the past for about 4 days and would cook in the middle of the week for the 2nd half. I got burnt out on that approach really fast. So now I just cook enough food for the entire week. Some of the vegetables are good for about 4 days, so I might cook a few in the middle of the week, and then I'm fine, but otherwise, the majority is done on the weekends.

I have mentioned before that I'm not a very talented cook, and I am not that good in the kitchen. So, that's all the advice and resources I can provide you. Before you start, I would encourage you to consult any one of the many videos on Meal Planning available online, [like this one](#). In that way, you can dial in a plan and system that will work best for you and keep you in the caloric and nutrient ranges we earlier established.

Here is a sample 7-day meal plan I designed for myself:

Day 1: Breakfast: Scrambled eggs with spinach and mushrooms (3 eggs, 1 cup spinach, 1/2 cup mushrooms) Calories: ~300 Proteins: ~21g Carbohydrates: ~10g Fats: ~18g, Sliced avocado (1/4 avocado) Calories: ~60, Proteins: ~1g, Carbohydrates: ~3g, Fats: ~6g

Lunch (Prepped for 2-3 days): Grilled chicken breast with mixed greens, cherry tomatoes, and vinaigrette dressing (6 ounces chicken, 2 cups mixed greens, 1/2 cup cherry tomatoes, 2 tablespoons vinaigrette) Calories: ~400, Proteins: ~45g, Carbohydrates: ~10g, Fats: ~20g

Snack: Greek yogurt with honey and almonds (1.5 cups Greek yogurt, 1 tablespoon honey, 2 tablespoons almonds) Calories: ~300, Proteins: ~30g, Carbohydrates: ~25g, Fats: ~10g

Dinner: Baked salmon with lemon and dill (8 ounces salmon) Calories: ~400, Proteins: ~48g, Carbohydrates: ~0g, Fats: ~24g, Steamed broccoli (2 cups), Calories: ~60, Proteins: ~5g, Carbohydrates: ~12g, Fats: ~0.5g, Mashed cauliflower with butter (1.5 cups cauliflower, 1 tablespoon butter), Calories: ~120, Proteins: ~3g, Carbohydrates: ~10g, Fats: ~8g

Total for Day 1: Calories: ~1840, Proteins: ~152g, Carbohydrates: ~90g, Fats: ~86.5g

Day 2: Breakfast: Greek yogurt parfait with berries and almonds (1.5 cups Greek yogurt, 1/2 cup mixed berries, 2 tablespoons almonds) Calories: ~350 Proteins: ~30g Carbohydrates: ~45g Fats: ~5g

Lunch (Prepped for 2-3 days): Grilled chicken breast with mixed greens, cherry tomatoes, and vinaigrette dressing (6 ounces chicken, 2 cups mixed greens, 1/2 cup cherry tomatoes, 2 tablespoons vinaigrette) Calories: ~400 Proteins: ~45g Carbohydrates: ~10g Fats: ~20g

Snack: Cottage cheese with pineapple chunks (1.5 cups cottage cheese, 1/2 cup pineapple chunks) Calories: ~300 Proteins: ~46g Carbohydrates: ~18g Fats: ~5g

Dinner: Grilled chicken thighs with rosemary and garlic (8 ounces chicken thighs) Calories: ~400 Proteins: ~40g Carbohydrates: ~0g Fats: ~25g Steamed asparagus (2 cups) Calories: ~60 Proteins: ~5g Carbohydrates: ~12g Fats: ~0.5g Quinoa (1 cup cooked) Calories: ~220 Proteins: ~8g Carbohydrates: ~39g Fats: ~3.5g

Total for Day 2: Calories: ~1870 Proteins: ~169g Carbohydrates: ~114g Fats: ~90.5g

Day 3: Breakfast: Whole-grain oatmeal with sliced bananas and almond butter (1 cup cooked oatmeal, 1 medium banana, 1 tablespoon almond butter) Calories: ~350 Proteins: ~10g Carbohydrates: ~60g Fats: ~10g

Lunch (Prepped for 2-3 days): Grilled chicken breast with mixed greens, cherry tomatoes, and vinaigrette dressing (6 ounces chicken, 2 cups mixed greens, 1/2 cup cherry tomatoes, 2 tablespoons vinaigrette) Calories: ~400 Proteins: ~45g Carbohydrates: ~10g Fats: ~20g

Snack: Handful of mixed nuts (about 1/3 cup) Calories: ~250 Proteins: ~7g Carbohydrates: ~8g Fats: ~22g

Dinner: Grilled chicken breast on mixed greens salad (6 ounces chicken, 2 cups mixed greens) Calories: ~350 Proteins: ~45g Carbohydrates: ~10g Fats: ~10g Olive oil and balsamic vinegar dressing (2 tablespoons) Calories: ~140 Proteins: ~0g Carbohydrates: ~0g Fats: ~16g

Total for Day 3: Calories: ~2040 Proteins: ~157g Carbohydrates: ~88g Fats: ~94g

Day 4: Breakfast: Scrambled eggs with spinach and mushrooms (3 eggs, 1 cup spinach, 1/2 cup mushrooms) Calories: ~300 Proteins: ~21g Carbohydrates: ~10g Fats: ~18g Sliced avocado (1/4 avocado) Calories: ~60 Proteins: ~1g Carbohydrates: ~3g Fats: ~6g

Lunch: Turkey and avocado wrap with mixed greens (4 ounces turkey, 1/4 avocado, 1 whole-grain wrap, 2 cups mixed greens) Calories: ~400 Proteins: ~35g Carbohydrates: ~40g Fats: ~15g

Dinner: Grilled salmon with a lemon-dill sauce (8 ounces salmon) Calories: ~400 Proteins: ~48g Carbohydrates: ~0g Fats: ~24g Steamed broccoli (2 cups) Calories: ~60 Proteins: ~5g Carbohydrates: ~12g Fats: ~0.5g Mashed cauliflower with butter (1.5 cups cauliflower, 1 tablespoon butter) Calories: ~120 Proteins: ~3g Carbohydrates: ~10g Fats: ~8g

Total for Day 4: Calories: ~1340 Proteins: ~118g Carbohydrates: ~75g Fats: ~71.5g

Day 5: Breakfast: Scrambled eggs with spinach and feta cheese (3 eggs, 1 cup spinach, 1 ounce feta cheese) Calories: ~300 Proteins: ~21g Carbohydrates: ~10g Fats: ~18g Sliced avocado (1/4 avocado) Calories: ~60 Proteins: ~1g Carbohydrates: ~3g Fats: ~6g

Lunch: Turkey and avocado wrap with mixed greens (4 ounces turkey, 1/4 avocado, 1 whole-grain wrap, 2 cups mixed greens) Calories: ~400 Proteins: ~35g Carbohydrates: ~40g Fats: ~15g

Snack: Greek yogurt with honey and almonds (1.5 cups Greek yogurt, 1 tablespoon honey, 2 tablespoons almonds) Calories: ~300 Proteins: ~30g Carbohydrates: ~25g Fats: ~10g

Dinner: Grilled lean steak with sautéed spinach and mushrooms (8 ounces steak, 2 cups spinach, 1 cup mushrooms) Calories: ~450 Proteins: ~70g Carbohydrates: ~10g Fats: ~15g Cauliflower rice with Parmesan (2 cups cauliflower rice, 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan) Calories: ~100 Proteins: ~8g Carbohydrates: ~12g Fats: ~5g

Total for Day 5: Calories: ~2140 Proteins: ~160g Carbohydrates: ~123g Fats: ~94g

Day 6: Breakfast: Whole-grain toast with mashed avocado and poached eggs (2 slices whole-grain bread, 1/2 avocado, 2 poached eggs) Calories: ~350 Proteins: ~18g Carbohydrates: ~30g Fats: ~18g

Lunch: Turkey and avocado wrap with mixed greens (4 ounces turkey, 1/4 avocado, 1 whole-grain wrap, 2 cups mixed greens) Calories: ~400 Proteins: ~35g Carbohydrates: ~40g Fats: ~15g

Snack: Cottage cheese with pineapple chunks (1.5 cups cottage cheese, 1/2 cup pineapple chunks) Calories: ~300 Proteins: ~46g Carbohydrates: ~18g Fats: ~5g

Dinner: Grilled chicken thighs with rosemary and garlic (8 ounces chicken thighs) Calories: ~400 Proteins: ~40g Carbohydrates: ~0g Fats: ~25g Steamed asparagus (2 cups) Calories: ~60 Proteins: ~5g Carbohydrates: ~12g Fats: ~0.5g Quinoa (1 cup cooked) Calories: ~220 Proteins: ~8g Carbohydrates: ~39g Fats: ~3.5g

Total for Day 6: Calories: ~2080 Proteins: ~165g Carbohydrates: ~108g Fats: ~65g

Day 7 (Cheat Meal Lunch): Breakfast: Veggie omelette with cheese (3 eggs, 1/2 cup mixed vegetables, 1 ounce cheddar cheese) Calories: ~350 Proteins: ~25g Carbohydrates: ~8g Fats: ~25g

Lunch: Pizza (2 slices) Calories: ~600 Proteins: ~24g Carbohydrates: ~60g Fats: ~24g

Snack: Handful of mixed nuts (about 1/3 cup) Calories: ~250 Proteins: ~7g Carbohydrates: ~8g Fats: ~22g

Dinner: Grilled shrimp and vegetable skewers (6 ounces shrimp, 1 cup mixed vegetables) Calories: ~250 Proteins: ~30g Carbohydrates: ~10g Fats: ~10g Brown rice (1 cup cooked) Calories: ~215 Proteins: ~5g Carbohydrates: ~45g Fats: ~1.6g Garlic butter sauce for dipping (2 tablespoons) Calories: ~200 Proteins: ~0g Carbohydrates: ~2g Fats: ~22g

Total for Day 7: Calories: ~2265 Proteins: ~91g Carbohydrates: ~133g Fats: ~105.6g

8-Week Exercise Routine

You can watch [our video on this section here](#).

RPE stands for Rate of Perceived Exertion

RPE is a subjective scale used to measure an individual's perception of the intensity of physical activity. I will refer to this later on specific exercises, so it's important to understand. It provides a way to gauge how hard you feel like you're working during exercise, regardless of specific metrics like heart rate, speed, or weight lifted. The RPE scale typically ranges from 1 to 10, with 1 being extremely easy (like sitting at rest) and 10 being maximum effort (like an all-out sprint or lifting the heaviest weight possible). Instead of defining exercise by pace, RPE allows people to decide based on what *they* can do.

Here's a breakdown of the RPE scale:

- RPE 1-2: Very light - This level of exertion feels extremely easy, almost like doing nothing at all.
- RPE 3-4: Light to moderate - You're starting to feel some effort, but it's still relatively easy to continue for an extended period.
- RPE 5-6: Moderate - You're working noticeably, but you can still maintain the activity comfortably.
- RPE 7-8: Hard - You're putting in a significant effort and starting to feel some discomfort. Conversation becomes challenging.
- RPE 9: Very hard - This level is approaching maximum effort. You can only sustain this level of exertion for a short period.
- RPE 10: Maximum effort - This is an all-out, maximal effort. You can't continue at this intensity for long.

Using RPE can be particularly useful when you may not have access to precise measurements of heart rate, distance, or weight or when these metrics aren't reliable indicators of your effort level (for example, during activities like yoga or swimming).

It's important to note that RPE is a subjective measure and can vary from person to person based on factors like fitness level, age, and individual perceptions. It's always a good idea to listen to your body and adjust your intensity based on how you feel. I'm 48 and can't push myself as hard as I could when I was 20. A few years ago, I tried to work out like I was 20 and ended up with multiple injuries. Now, I just focus on form and doing things correctly, which has paid off tremendously. Listen to your body and ease into things to avoid injuries.

Week 1

Monday - Strength Building

Let's start with warm ups. This is the same Warm Up Routine you did at the beginning of the Baseline tests. Each day we work out this week will begin with the same Warm-Up Routine Refer to this routine at the beginning of this document. We'll spend roughly 10 to 12 minutes on this part. If at any time the warm up exercise is too much for you to do, that's ok. Do as much as you can. We're just trying to get our heart rate elevated and ready.

These exercises should utilize heavier weight and more deliberate movements, focusing on form. Take rest as needed. We'll do 4 sets of each of these exercises. I'll post links in the description and comment section for each exercise so it's clear how to do them. We covered them all in detail in our second video, along with variations, so you may want to go back and review that video. For a few of the exercises, we'll be lifting an object. When it comes to weight, if you have any, such as dumbbells or kettlebells, great...use them! But if you don't, a 1-gallon jug of water, a 2.5-gallon water container, a #10 can of food, or anything you can hold steadily in front of you works fine.

Again, you will do 4 sets of each of these exercises. Finish with one exercise before moving to the other. So here are the exercises:

- 4-6 push-ups. Scale as needed...if you can do more in each set, go for it, or if you need to reduce the reps, that's ok too. Then rest for 30 to 45 seconds and do another set for a total of 4.
- 4-6 Goblet Squats. Scale the weight you hold in front of your chest as needed.
- 4-6 Ground to Overhead. When doing this for the first time, I would recommend a lightweight. As you grow stronger, you can increase the weight of the object you pick up.
- 4-6 Step-ups. You can use stairs, a curb on the street, or a chair. The goal is to increase the weight that you're holding in order to increase your ability to step up with weight. Just be careful when stepping up on a tall surface like a chair.

After completing these 4 workouts, take time to cool down and stretch.

Tuesday - Jogging/Walking

Before you start today's exercises, do the warm-up routine.

For this workout, your goal is to jog or run for 20 minutes. The goal is not to stop but to move at an RPE of ideally 4-6. If you are jogging and need to slow down to a walk, that is OK! The goal is to keep moving. If you have not run or jogged for a long time, IT IS ADVISED that you try a slow jog, power walk, or just plain walking first and that you bring a friend or let someone know where you're going.

Wednesday - Rest Day!

Today, we'll do nothing. Give your body a rest.

Thursday - Functional Fitness

Before you start today's exercises, do the warm-up routines.

Thursdays will be more of a functional fitness/work capacity workout, built to make you do higher-intensity work for short durations. This, coupled with the Monday more "Strength" based workouts, will give you a more complete fitness build.

Today's workout will utilize the TABATA workout approach, which for each exercise we're about to list out, you'll do a total of **8 rounds of 20 seconds of working out and 10 seconds resting**, which means you'll spend a total of 4 minutes on each of these exercises. So for these 5 exercises, that would be 20 minutes in total. Tabata looks easy on paper, but it's designed to push you...you'll see.

Tabata is a high-intensity interval training (HIIT) workout developed by Dr. Izumi Tabata and his team, consisting of 20 seconds of intense exercise followed by 10 seconds of rest, repeated for a total of 4 minutes or 8 rounds. This efficient and time-sensitive protocol aims to improve cardiovascular fitness and anaerobic capacity.

Typically lasting around 20 minutes, Tabata workouts involve various exercises like squats, burpees, push-ups, or sprints, with a focus on engaging multiple muscle groups. Choosing exercises that allow maximum effort during short work intervals is crucial. Individuals should be cautious and seek advice from fitness professionals or healthcare providers, especially if they are beginners or have underlying health conditions.

Before starting, get everything together because this is going to move fast. Be sure to have a stopwatch app or stopwatch to track your time on this. We will do as many reps as possible for 20 seconds for each of these exercises. But remember, we are going to do these over 8 sets each, so pace yourself by focusing on good form...don't overdo it. So let's say for pushups, you can do 5 pushups in 20 seconds; your goal is to do 5 pushups in each of the 8 sets we're going to do. I am not a physical trainer, so for each exercise, I link to a video demonstrating proper form.

- [Pushups](#)
- [Goblet Squats](#)
- [Ground to overhead](#)
- [Step-ups](#)
- [Front Plank](#) (hold position for 20 seconds)

Cool Down: After completing these 4 workouts, take time to cool down and stretch.

Friday - Ruck

Before you start today's exercises, do the warm-up routine.

Take a light pack, maybe a stripped-down version of your bug out back, anywhere between 5-35lbs, and walk for 30-60 mins. This is your Week 1 ruck. If you've never rucked, go light, and take an easy pace. Let's avoid an injury. Be sure to wear shoes or boots with ankle support.

Saturday - Mobility Exercises

Today's goal is to stretch and work on our mobility. If you prefer Yoga, go for it. Pick a mobility exercise routine or several of the [exercises found here](#). You should do 30 minutes of [mobility exercises](#).

Sunday

Today, we'll do nothing. Give your body a rest. Consider prepping your week's meals.

Week 2

<p>MONDAY Warm-Up Routine 6rds of each: 4-6 Push-ups (Scale as needed, rest as needed) 4-6 Goblet Squats (Scale weight as needed, Rest as needed) 4-6 Lunges (Scale weight as needed, Rest as needed) 4-6 Ground to Overhead (Scale as needed, rest as needed) 4-6 Step-ups (Scale box height as needed, weight as needed, rest as needed) 30 Sec Front plank Hold Cool Down: Light Stretching</p>	<p>TUESDAY Warm-Up Routine Workout: A HITT (High-Intensity Interval Training) run is meant to briefly spike your heart rate and then bring it down in a period of low-intensity active recovery. It is designed to challenge your cardiovascular system. This is scalable based on your ability or RPE 8-10 rounds of the following: Sprint Interval (30 Seconds) Sprint (Fast Walk) at a RPE of 7-9 Active Recovery (60 Seconds) Jog or Walk at a RPE of 2-4 Listen to your body, if you are unconditioned, have a friend come with you or let someone know you are going to do this. If you have the ability to, you can do this on a treadmill. Remember RPE is different for everyone, but this should be challenging, that is how the body is able to change and become more physically fit. Cool Down: 2-4 min walk or jog, Light stretching</p>	<p>WEDNESDAY Rest and recover</p>	<p>THURSDAY Warm-Up Routine 10 Min: EMOM (Every Min, on the Minute) of the following: 1-3 Pushups 1-3 Goblet Squats 1-3 Ground to overhead 1-3 Step-ups (Scale box height as needed, weight as needed, rest as needed) Remaining time, REST 1 Tabata (20 secs on/10 sec rest) Plank Cool Down: Light Stretching</p>
<p>FRIDAY Warm-Up Routine A ladder running workout is structured to gradually increase and then decrease the duration and intensity of a workout like a step ladder. This is effective for improving both speed and endurance. 1st ladder 30 sec run/jog (RPE 3-5) 1 min light walk or jog (RPE 1-2) 45 sec run/jog (RPE 3-5) 1 min Light walk or jog (RPE 1-2) 1 min run/jog (RPE 3-5) 45 sec walk or jog (RPE 1-2) 2nd Ladder 45 sec Run/Jog (RPE 4-6) 1 min walk or jog (RPE 2-3) 60 sec run/jog (RPE 4-6) 1 min walk or jog (RPE 2-3) 75 sec run/jog (RPE 4-6) 1 min walk or Jog (RPE 2-3)</p>	<p>SATURDAY Warm-Up Routine 30- Minutes Mobility Exercises</p>	<p>SUNDAY Rest and meal prep. Use this space for notes or meal plans for next week.</p>	

3rd Ladder 30 sec run/jog (RPE 5-7) 1 min walk or jog (RPE 3-4) 45 sec Run/Jog (RPE 5-7) 1 min walk or Jog (RPE 3-4) 60 sec run/jog (RPE 5-7) 1 min walk or jog (RPE 2-3) Cool Down: 2-4 min walk or jog Light stretching		
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Week 3

<p>MONDAY Warm-Up Routine 6rds of each: 5-7 Push ups (Scale as needed, rest as needed) 5-7 Goblet Squats (Scale weight as needed, Rest as needed) 5-7 Lunges (Scale weight as needed, Rest as needed) 5-7 Ground to Overhead (Scale as needed, rest as needed) 5-7 Step-ups (Scale box height as needed, weight as needed, rest as needed) 45 Sec Front plank Hold Cool Down: Light Stretching</p>	<p>TUESDAY Warm-Up Routine Temp Interval Running: is a structured training session that combines periods of higher intensity exercise with periods of lower intensity or rest. This session will be asking you to do longer intervals of work but will also give you longer intervals of recovery 5 Intervals of 2 min Run/Jog (RPE 4-6) 2 min Walk/Jog (RPE 1-2) Cool Down: 2-4 min walk or jog Light stretching</p>	<p>WEDNESDAY Rest and recover</p>	<p>THURSDAY Warm-Up Routine TABATA of each: (8rds of 20s on/10s off) Pushups (as many as possible) Goblet Squats (lighter weight than on Monday, if needed, simply do air squats) Ground to overhead (lighter weight than on Monday) Step-ups (Scale box height as needed, weight as needed, rest as needed) Front Plank</p>
<p>FRIDAY Warm-Up Routine Ruck Take a Light pack (5-35lbs) and walk for 30-60 mins. Goal is to meet or exceed the distance from the initial ruck 2 weeks ago.</p>	<p>SATURDAY Warm-Up Routine 30- Minutes Mobility Exercises</p>	<p>SUNDAY Rest and meal prep. Use this space for notes or meal plans for next week.</p>	

Week 4

<p>MONDAY Warm-Up Routine 8rds of each: 4-6 Push-ups (Scale as needed, rest as needed) 4-6 Goblet Squats (Scale weight as needed, Rest as needed) 4-6 Lunges (Scale weight as needed, Rest as needed) 4-6 Ground to Overhead (Scale as needed, rest as needed) 4-6 Step-ups (Scale box height as needed, weight as needed, rest as needed) 30 Sec Front plank Hold</p> <p>Cooldown: Light stretching</p>	<p>TUESDAY Warm-Up Routine Run Day Descending Intervals: A descending interval workout is a structured training session in which the intervals gradually decrease in duration or intensity as the workout progresses. This type of workout helps build endurance and speed over shorter distances. Our session today will be broken into 3 groups.</p> <p>Interval 1: 2 min Run/Jog (RPE 4-6) 1 min Jog/Walk (RPE 1-3) 90 Sec Run/Jog (RPE 4-6) 1 min Jog/Walk (RPE 1-3) 60 sec Run/Jog (RPE 4-6) 1 min Jog/Walk (RPE 1-3)</p> <p>Interval 2: 90 Sec Run/Jog (RPE 5-6) 1 min Jog/Walk (RPE 2-3) 60 sec Run/Jog (RPE 5-6) 1 min Jog/Walk (RPE 2-3) 45 sec Run/Jog (RPE 5-6) 1 min Jog/Walk (RPE 2-3)</p> <p>Interval 3: 60 sec Run/Jog (RPE 6-7) 1 min Jog/Walk (RPE 2-4)) 45 sec Run/Jog (RPE 6-7)) 1 min Jog/Walk (RPE 2-4)) 30 Sec Run/Jog (RPE 6-7)</p> <p>Cool Down: 2-4 min walk or jog Light stretching</p>	<p>WEDNESDAY Rest and recover</p>	<p>THURSDAY Warm-Up Routine 12 Min: EMOM (Every Min, on the Minute) of the following: 1-3 Pushups 1-3 Goblet Squats 1-3 Ground to overhead 1-3 Step-ups (Scale box height as needed, weight as needed, rest as needed) Remaining time, REST 1 Tabata (20 secs on/10 sec rest) Plank</p> <p>Cooldown: Light stretching</p>
<p>FRIDAY Warm-Up Routine Run Day Fartlek Run (Sweedish for Speed Play). Fartlek running workout is a type of training that combines both continuous and interval training. It involves varying your pace and intensity throughout the run, which can be a “fun” and effective way to improve both speed and endurance.</p> <p>6 Intervals of 30 sec Sprint/run/Jog (RPE 6-8) 90 Sec Run/jog/Walk (RPE 3-5)</p> <p>Cool Down: 2-4 min walk or jog</p>	<p>SATURDAY Warm-Up Routine 30- Minutes Mobility Exercises</p>	<p>SUNDAY Rest and meal prep. Use this space for notes or meal plans for next week.</p>	

<p>Light stretching</p> <p>This can be a very challenging workout, remember RPE is a varying scale, that can change in your workout. It should be challenging but also it shouldn't hurt you. Listen to your body and understand that if you need to slow down, slow down but also that sometimes we can push ourselves a little. If you are still adapting to working out, Get a buddy, let someone know you are running, or if possible, go to a gym and use a treadmill.</p>		
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Week 5

<p>MONDAY Warm-Up Routine 4rds of each: 8-10 Push ups (Scale as needed, rest as needed) 8-10 Goblet Squats (Scale weight as needed, Rest as needed) 8-10 Lunges (Scale weight as needed, Rest as needed) 8-10 Ground to Overhead (Scale as needed, rest as needed) 8-10 Step-ups (Scale box height as needed, weight as needed, rest as needed) 60 Sec Front plank Hold</p> <p>Cool Down: Light Stretching</p>	<p>TUESDAY Warm-Up Routine Run day</p> <p>A progressive buildup workout is a structured training session designed to gradually increase intensity or duration over the course of the session. This type of workout helps build endurance, strength, and stamina over time</p> <p>Interval 1: 3 rounds of 30 secs Run/Jog (RPE 4-6) 30 sec Jog/Walk (RPE 1-3)</p> <p>Interval 2: 3 Rounds of 45 sec Run/Jog (RPE 5-6) 45 Sec Jog/Walk (RPE 1-3)</p> <p>Interval 3: 3 rounds of 60 sec Run/Jog (RPE 5-6) 60 Sec Jog/Walk (RPE 1-3)</p> <p>Cool Down: 2-4 min walk or jog Light stretching</p>	<p>WEDNESDAY Rest and recover</p>	<p>THURSDAY Warm-Up Routine 2 rounds of TABATA of each: (8rds of 20s on/10s off) Pushups (as many as possible) Goblet Squats (lighter weight than on monday, if needed, simply do air squats) Ground to overhead (lighter weight than on monday) Step-ups (Scale box height as needed, weight as needed, rest as needed) Front Plank Repeat</p> <p>Cool Down: Light Stretching</p>
<p>FRIDAY Warm-Up Routine Run Day Take a Medium pack (10-45lbs) and walk for 30-60 mins. The goal is to meet the Baseline Test ruck distance.</p> <p>Cool Down: Light Stretching</p>	<p>SATURDAY Warm-Up Routine 30- Minutes Mobility Exercises</p>	<p>SUNDAY Rest and meal prep. Use this space for notes or meal plans for next week.</p>	

Week 6

<p>MONDAY Warm-Up Routine 6rds of each: 6-8 Push ups (Scale as needed, rest as needed) 6-8 Goblet Squats (Scale weight as needed, Rest as needed) 6-8 Lunges (Scale weight as needed, Rest as needed) 6-8 Ground to Overhead (Scale as needed, rest as needed) Step-ups (Scale box height as needed, weight as needed, rest as needed) 90 Sec Front plank Hold (if you fail, rest and resume the time) Cool Down: Light Stretching</p>	<p>TUESDAY Warm-Up Routine Run day Endurance Pyramid: An Endurance Pyramid running workout is a structured training session that combines periods of low-intensity running with progressively increasing intervals of higher intensity, followed by a decrease in intensity. This type of workout is designed to enhance your aerobic capacity, stamina, and overall endurance.</p> <p>Interval 1: 60 second Run/Jog (RPE 7-8) 1 min Jog/Walk (RPE 1-3) Interval 2: 90 Second Run/Jog (RPE 6-7) 1 min Jog/walk (RPE 1-3) Interval 3: 2 min Run/Jog (RPE 5-6) 1 min Jog/Walk (RPE 1-3) Interval 4: 2:30min Run/Jog (RPE 4-5) 1 min Jog/Walk Interval 5: 2 min Run/Jog (RPE 5-6) 1 min Jog/Walk (RPE 1-3) Interval 6: 90 Second Run/Jog (RPE 6-7) 1 min Jog/walk (RPE 1-3) Interval 7: 60 second Run/Jog (RPE 7-8) 1 min Jog/Walk (RPE 1-3)</p> <p>Cool Down: 2-4 min walk or jog Light stretching</p>	<p>WEDNESDAY Rest and recover</p>	<p>THURSDAY Warm-Up Routine 14 Min: EMOM (Every Min, on the Minute) of the following: 1-3 Pushups 1-3 Goblet Squats 1-3 Ground to overhead 1-3 Step-ups (Scale box height as needed, weight as needed, rest as needed) Remaining time, REST 1 Tabata (20 secs on/10 sec rest) Plank</p> <p>Cooldown: Light stretching</p>
<p>FRIDAY Warm-Up Routine Run Day Tempo run: A "Tempo Run" (short for "Threshold Run") is a type of training session designed to improve your lactate threshold, which is the point at which lactic acid starts to accumulate in your muscles.</p> <p>15 Min Run/Jog (RPE 4-6) this should be a comfortably hard pace (Hard but sustainable)</p> <p>Cool Down: 2-4 min walk or jog Light stretching</p>	<p>SATURDAY Warm-Up Routine 30- Minutes Mobility Exercises</p>	<p>SUNDAY Rest and meal prep. Use this space for notes or meal plans for next week.</p>	

Week 7

MONDAY Warm-Up Routine 8rds of each: 4-6 Push ups (Scale as needed, rest as needed) 4-6 Goblet Squats (Scale weight as needed, Rest as needed) 4-6 Lunges (Scale weight as needed, Rest as needed) 4-6 Ground to Overhead (Scale as needed, rest as needed) 4-6 Step-ups (Scale box height as needed, weight as needed, rest as needed) 120 Sec Front plank Hold (if you fail, rest and resume the time) Cool Down: Light Stretching	TUESDAY Warm-Up Routine Easy Run + Strides: An "Easy Run and Strides" workout combines a comfortable, relaxed-paced run with a series of short, fast bursts known as strides. This type of workout helps to improve running form, speed, and muscle recruitment while still allowing for active recovery. 20 min Easy Run/Jog (RPE 3-5) Strides 6-8 sets of 20-30s of short, fast build up runs, 10 secs jog, 10 secs run, 10 sec Sprint 1-2 min walk Cool Down: Light Stretching	WEDNESDAY Rest and recover	THURSDAY Warm-Up Routine 3 rounds of TABATA of each: (8rds of 20s on/10s off) Pushups (as many as possible) Goblet Squats (lighter weight than on Monday, if needed, simply do air squats) Ground to overhead (lighter weight than on Monday) Step-ups (Scale box height as needed, rest as needed) Front Plank Repeat Cool Down: Light Stretching
FRIDAY Warm-Up Routine Take a Medium pack (10-45lbs) and walk for 45-90 mins.	SATURDAY Warm-Up Routine 30- Minutes Mobility Exercises	SUNDAY Rest and meal prep. Use this space for notes or meal plans for next week.	

Week 8

<p>MONDAY Warm-Up Routine Monday: Strength and Power Circuit Test Strength and general Power Circuit (3 rounds): 1 min per exercise for 3 rounds, 1 min rest between exercises Push-ups: Score 1 point per push-up. Rest 1 min, right down score. Goblet Squats (or improvised weight):Score 1 point per squat. Rest 1 min, right down score. Ground to Overhead (or improvised weight):Score 2 points per successful repetition. Rest 1 min, right down score. Step-ups: Score 2 points per successful set. (A set is step up L/R foot, Step up opposite foot) Rest 1 min, right down score. Repeat 2 more rounds Cool Down: Light Stretching</p>	<p>TUESDAY Warm-Up Routine 30- Minutes Mobility Exercises</p>	<p>WEDNESDAY 1-Mile Run Test. Run/Jog, 1 mile for time. Cool Down: 2-4 min Jog/Walk Light Stretching</p>	<p>THURSDAY Warm-Up Routine 30- Minutes Mobility Exercises</p>
<p>FRIDAY Warm-Up Routine 3-Mile Ruck Evaluation Take a Ruck (35/55lbs, Scale as needed) and walk for 3 miles for time Cool Down: Light Stretching</p>	<p>SATURDAY Warm-Up Routine 30- Minutes Mobility Exercises</p>	<p>SUNDAY Rest and meal prep. Use this space for notes or meal plans for next week.</p>	

CONGRATULATIONS! You have finished the 1st cycle of this program.

So, once you finish the 8 weeks of training, I recommend you go back and take the Week 0 - Baseline Test again. This will help you to determine where you're at after 8 weeks of training. Also, after the 8-week cycle, you may want to weigh yourself and assess and record your resting heart rate. I like to not do these while I am in my 8-week cycle. It gives me something to look forward to during the 8-weeks.

Based on your test results, you can start the 8-week cycle over. Remember, this is a way of life. Over the last five months, I've gotten serious about weightlifting again. I've been lifting on a consistent basis each week, focusing on eating healthy, and I am seeing amazing results. But it has taken me time to get here. And this is not something I'm doing to get quick results, but this is now a way of life for me. My body is my number one prep, and I choose to focus on this.

Final Thoughts

Prioritizing health ensures the ability to fulfill responsibilities effectively and care for loved ones. Despite challenges like health issues or lack of motivation, strategies such as adapting workouts to accommodate limitations and removing barriers to fitness participation can help overcome obstacles and foster consistency. Devise a plan that works for you. Every night consider how you might make your plan just a little better. Take a moment and congratulate yourself for your successes, and forgive yourself for any missteps.

Set aside the time for your workouts and for your meal prep. Set aside some time, which we didn't really discuss here, to explore a new hobby, intentionally relax, or read—recharge. Let this plan be a little wake-up call for you no matter where you are in life. Remember that a million individual choices have brought you to where you are today. If you're lucky, you'll face millions more choices. The most important choice,

though, is the one you make in this moment. That choice is going to steer you on your future path.

Making fitness a priority involves recognizing its long-term significance. It's about being consistent over time and not getting discouraged when visible results are slow. There is no magical pill, so don't wait for one. You have to make the magic yourself by the constant application of work. I know that when I run or cycle, the first few miles my mind is trying to focus on every reason to quit. Afterall, it's hard work. It's work that doesn't pay you in cash. This guide and the videos aren't going to generate profit for me. I'm not selling it. I'm giving it to you to sort of pay it forward. I sincerely believe that your fitness and health is your number one prep. By the way, when I get to mile three or more, it doesn't get any easier (especially with my knee), but my mind stops wanting to quit.

By setting aside time for exercise and adopting habits that support healthy living, you can mitigate health risks and enhance overall well-being. Understanding the impact of lifestyle choices, such as diet, nutrition, exercise, alcohol or tobacco use, and prioritizing your time, empowers you to make informed decisions that contribute to longevity and resilience.

Ultimately, embracing a proactive approach to health and fitness yields benefits beyond physical well-being. By investing in personal wellness, you safeguard your future and reduce reliance on healthcare systems. Prioritizing fitness is not only a matter of personal responsibility but also a wise investment in your quality of life and future stability. I hope you will join me on this journey and comment on one of the videos or in our community at cityprepping.com about your successes and challenges. We are in this together.

As always, stay safe out there.

Kris

a.k.a. City Prepping