

# 25 HABITS

That  
**SKYROCKET**  
Your  
**FAT LOSS**  
AND  
**MUSCLE GAINING**

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## Disclaimer

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## Foreword

Before I show you what I've learned through my years of training, I want to take a moment and give you a friendly suggestion.

The very first thing you have to understand is that I am giving you these tips (that I constantly use) to help you get better with your fat loss or muscle gaining.

I learned them through trial and error and they are a compilation of my preferred rules to training and dieting.

If you take them and put them in practice starting with your next gym appointment, I promise you will get stronger, better, leaner, easier.

If you will enjoy my tips and believe they should be applied by everyone, don't hesitate to share this book with your friends. I believe they could use some good advice. Send them to [this page](http://www.nobsbb.com/free-book-offer) and they will be able to download the book free of charge (I wanted to publish it on amazon kindle but I changed my mind. I don't know how long I'll keep it free though)

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# Introduction

Hello everyone!

I first wanted to say I am excited for you today. Why?

After you will finish reading my report, you will know exactly what you have to do to optimize your training and dieting for more fat loss or muscle gaining.

My only regret is that I didn't had a report like this back in the time when I first started. It would have helped me understand some of the fundamentals regarding bodybuilding/fat loss, and also stop me from wasting money on all of these "diet books" written by "fat loss and muscle gaining gurus"

I am just like you. Interested in making my body look better and healthier.

The biggest mistake we make when we start bodybuilding is reading too much and fail to account for what is good information, and what is bad information.

It is not your fault!

It's the fault of the internet era. In this era where available information is too diverse and freely shared. Everyone can read about everything but only a few of you (I was one of those few) will get to the next level and filter that information.

I've read so many books in my life that try to teach you how to gain muscle or how to lose fat. Most of them fail to answer to two crucial questions in an easy to understand way:

Why I don't gain muscle and how can I do it?

Why I don't lose fat and how can I do it?

Let's imagine a scenario:

You go to a website that has information regarding nutrition/dieting/muscle gaining.

You find out that guy is selling a book that should give you "the ubersecretz" to muscle mass and fat loss.

You buy it. You get it and see that it has like 300 pages of information. You read it all and realize that book could be summarized in just 50 useful pages.

From all those 300 pages, you will most likely fail to find the answer to all these three questions (most books on fat loss don't even teach you how to properly do it).

Here is where I come in with my no nonsense battle axe, and offer you no fluff information on losing fat or gaining muscle. My advice is proven to work by research, personal experience and my clients.

This report will be extremely useful for you, and can be used as a go to manual in case you have problems with gaining muscle mass or losing fat.

I will talk about the different situations that might be responsible for your lack of muscle mass increase or fat loss, and what to do to counter that effect.

So here I present you my 25 rules to weight loss and muscle gaining success:

# 1. Eat The Right Quantity Of Food

Inadequate caloric intake is one of the main culprits that can ruin your fat loss efforts.

The good thing with our bodies is that energy balance equation is the king over any other process when it comes to fat loss.

Fat loss is as easy as it gets:

**Calorie Intake – Calorie Expenditure = Outcome**

- If calorie intake > calorie expenditure => weight gain
- If calorie Intake = calorie expenditure => weight maintenance
- If calorie intake < calorie expenditure => weight loss

The main reason you are not losing weight is simpler than you might think. It is just a matter of eating the right kind of food in the right quantities. Without overcomplicating this matter, here's what you should do to lose weight:

**Stay in caloric deficit and lose weight.**

It sounds easy on paper but when we practice it, it gets harder. There are many situations in which even if you think you are in a caloric deficit, the weight simply doesn't go off...

Here's why most people get frustrated and don't know what to do to continue losing fat. Most of the time, they put a stop sign to their diet, and give up to any further efforts to lose weight.

There are two possible explanations why weight loss has come to a halt:

1. Caloric Deficit < Caloric Intake
2. Water Retention > Weight Loss

**Caloric Deficit Solution:** What matters the most is the net caloric deficit you maintain through the week.

A pound of fat = approximately 3500 calories

Losing a pound of fat weekly shouldn't be that hard. You can obtain that with a daily caloric deficit of 500 calories. Heck, I was able to lose 8.6 pounds in just 4 days with [my extreme weight loss diet](#) without losing and muscle mass. That strategy was more advanced than just playing with calories but it is easy and quick once you apply it.

Let's say you expend on average 3000 calories daily. Eating 2500 calories per day, for a week, would put you in the area of around 1 pound of fat loss every week.

**Water Retention Solution:** Depending on your individual body, sometimes there are certain problems regarding water retention that can mask your weight loss.

This is where most people do it wrong. When they observe their weight stalls, they lower their calories even more for a period. If weight loss still stalls, they just give up. They give up and simply say that weight loss is impossible for them, for whatever reason.

The reality is that women often have this problem because of their menstrual cycle. Their hormone levels fluctuate every month, and problems with water retention are quite frequent. Women retain water more often than men.

The good news is that women have nothing to fear because water retention is only temporary. Let's continue with what women need to do to overcome this water retention problem.

Women have two options:

<http://www.nobsbb.com/>

## **1. Check weight every week but compare the same week of the cycle:**

Example: Compare your weight in the week 1 of a cycle with your weight in the week 1 of the next cycle.

You can't compare week 1 with week 4 because your body may be holding water in week 1 and none during other week.

- If there are changes in body composition (weight loss shown on scale or looking better in the mirror), continue with the same calories for another month.
- If there are no changes in body composition or mirror, subtract 10% calories and continue like that until no progress is done.

## **2. Check weight every month**

Further reading: [How To Lose Weight – 112 Tips](#), [Why Can't I Lose Weight](#)

## **2. Don't Do Too Much Cardio**

Doing too much cardio can be detrimental to fat loss in certain conditions.

Fat people can get away with lots of activity because their metabolic perturbations are not big issues when comparing to leaner people.

The problems start to appear when you reach a lower level of body fat, and combine extreme training with excessive cardio. In combination, these two will most likely guide you to a total failure. What I mean by that?

- Doing too much cardio can mask your fat loss (you can retain more water because of doing excessive activity)
- Doing too much cardio can hit your recovery (making you feel tired and without energy)
- Doing too much cardio can make you lose muscle mass (in case you don't take care of your diet and training – I showed you how to protect

yourself against muscle mass loss while losing an extreme amount of fat in my [extreme fat loss diet](#))

**Solution:** If you want to lose weight, you should combine some low volume, high-intensity weight training, with low-medium intensity cardio (done 1-3 times/week).

Doing some walking or jogging should be enough. Don't stress yourself too much over this matter.

Further reading: [Can You Do Too Much Cardio?](#)

### 3. Eat Enough Protein

Adequate protein intake is a must if you want to build muscle mass or lose fat without losing muscle mass.

In order to build muscle mass, you must have sufficient calories, sufficient protein intake, and an adequate training program.

I have found that many people underestimate their needs when it comes to protein intake. Most people don't really know how much protein they should eat in order to build muscle or lose fat.

Vegetarians are more susceptible to low protein intakes. They have these problems because of a lack of high-protein foods in their diet. Imagine yourself eating vegetables and legumes all day long. From where can you take your protein?

Of course, vegetables have a certain amount of protein but most of it is incomplete and low in quantity. You don't want to do that if you are seeking to lose fat and build muscle.

**Solution:** Raise your protein intake to 1-1.5 g/lb. It can have a benefit in terms of maintaining body composition or gaining muscle mass. It all depends on your goals.

If you are natural like me, going past 1.5 g/lb of protein is simply not necessary. You won't have any added benefits. When I did [my extreme fat loss diet](#) in which I lost 8.6 pounds in 4 days, I was eating close to that just to maintain my muscle mass. You can read more about it, [here](#).

## 4. Eat Enough Calories

You can gain some muscle mass (quite inefficient) with an average training program and a caloric surplus.

In a caloric deficit, even with the "perfect" training program, the possibility of gaining muscle mass is probably null.

There are some people that can gain muscle even if they are in caloric deficit but this doesn't apply to everyone.

Some people are more genetically gifted. They can gain some small amounts of muscle mass while losing some fat.

Other people are beginners and can gain muscle mass while losing fat at the same time.

Most people that don't eat enough swear they eat a ton but no matter what they do, they can't gain weight.

Basically, it is the same issue just like when they want to lose fat. They swear they eat little to no food but when you check their caloric intake, it is almost double than what they reported.

What happens to hard gainers and overweight people?

1. Research has shown that these "hard gainers" typically over-estimate their caloric intake. They think they eat a lot of food but it's quite the opposite. They don't gain weight because they don't eat enough.
2. Overweight people under-estimate their caloric intake. They think they don't eat much food. They are getting fatter because they eat too much.

Furthermore, even if these hard gainers eat enough food for a day to trigger some weight gain, they usually compensate with eating less the next day. Or they start compensating for that increased food intake with more activity so at the end of the day, they still can't gain weight.

These people are often called under-eaters. They eat small amounts of food and train too hard. On top of that they expect to gain weight.

**Solution:** When you want to gain muscle mass, make sure you are in a net caloric surplus.

I don't recommend going for a big caloric surplus. Doing so, will most likely get you fat. A net +500 caloric intake over maintenance will suffice in most cases.

## 5. Train Correctly

Most problems related to gaining muscle mass start either at home or in the gym. I talked about calories and protein intake. Next on my list is the training program.

The sad reality is that most training programs you can find on the internet or hear from a gym buddy, are nonsense. Most available training programs you can find on the internet are used by elite drugged bodybuilders. These programs won't work on you. Why?

First of all, most bodybuilders use steroids. You don't (I hope so). You can't expect to train the same way and get like them. Training programs used by bodybuilders that use steroids are badly adapted to natural lifters like you and me.

Most bodybuilders that use steroids, play with nonsense training strategies like the pump, the squeeze, partial reps or other things that don't really matter so much when it comes to gaining muscle mass.

The number one reason that makes a muscle grow is progressive overload (along with some other components like volume, etc.).

**Solution:** In most cases, when you want to gain muscle mass, training each body part twice/week with 3-4 training sessions is usually good for everyone.

[Click here for good training programs along with some gold gems](#)

## 6. Learn And Perform The Big 3 Olympic Lifts

When it comes to weight training, the squat, deadlift, and bench press are the best movements you can learn to perform correctly.

While there are many other exercises out there that target the same muscles, there are no exercises that are as good as these three.

There is a saying: "you can get huge and ripped only with the big 3's". It is true, believe me. I don't want you to put your trust blindly in what I am saying. I want you to see for yourself based on what happens in the real world. Based on my experience. Based on how others succeeded.

If you go to a normal commercial gym, you agree that you don't really see many people squatting, deadlifting, and bench pressing. Maybe you can see everyone bench pressing. Yes?

They only do the bench press because it is one of the most over used exercise ever. I mean, this is why the Monday is usually named the "chest day".

Every newbie starts by training its chest and biceps. I am not saying there is something wrong with that approach. It is actually good. But what happens frequently is that people are only training the bench press while forgetting about the rest.

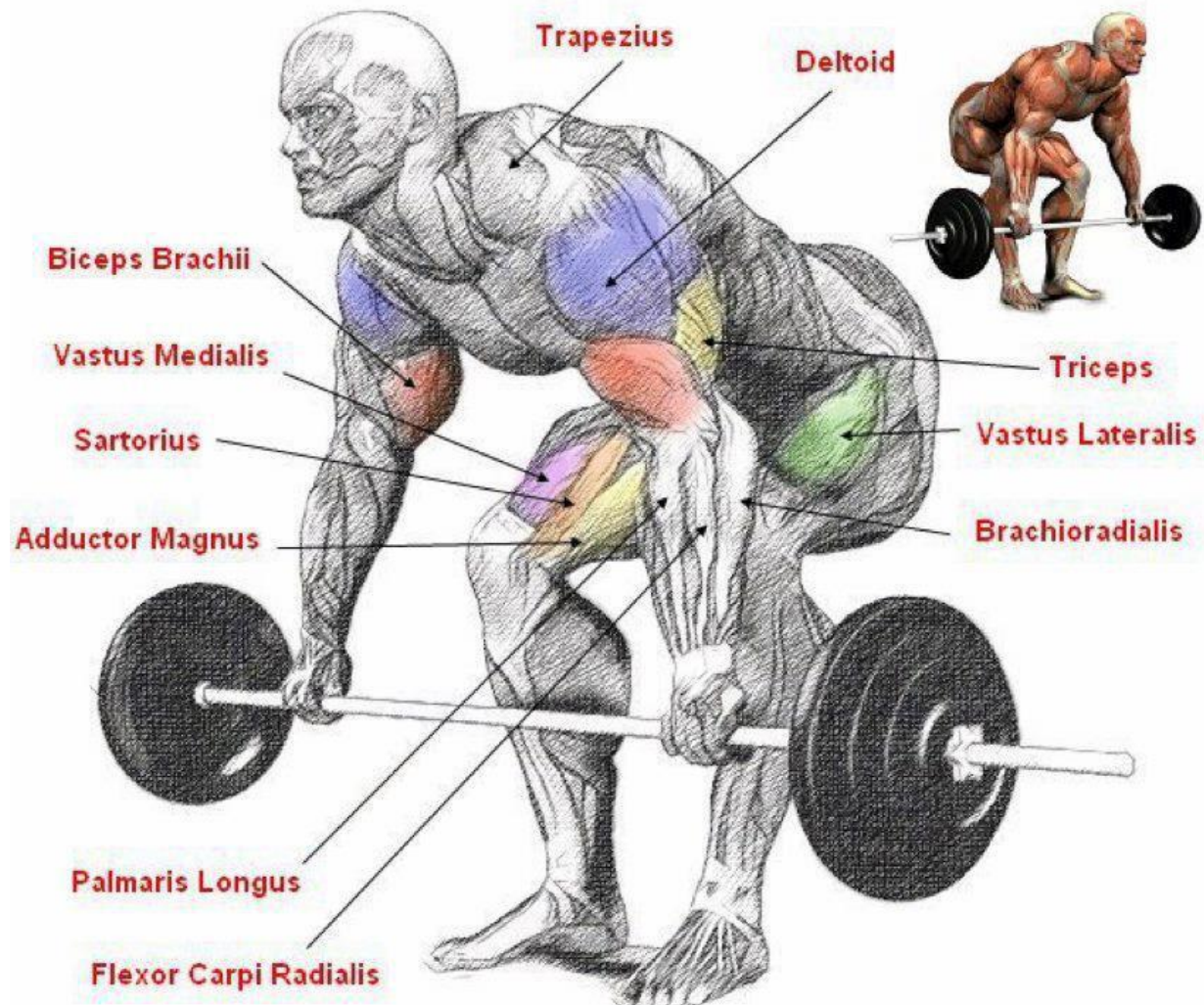
Nobody should skip deadlifts and squats. Why?

These two exercises completely train your lower body strength along with some upper body. They put muscle mass on your back, legs, arms, and shoulders. They make you big and strong.

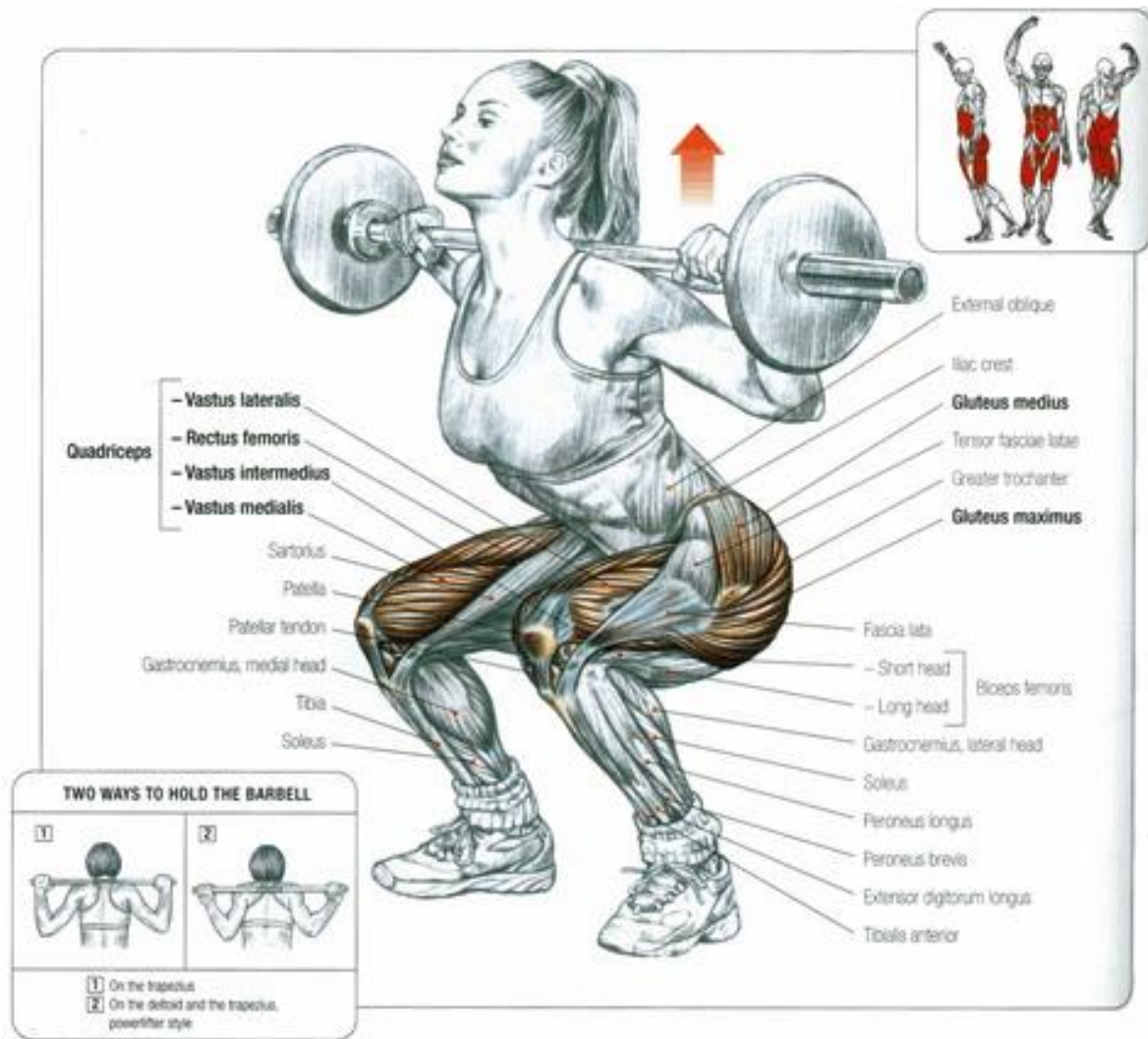
Just look at how many muscles these 3 lifts train:

# The Deadlift

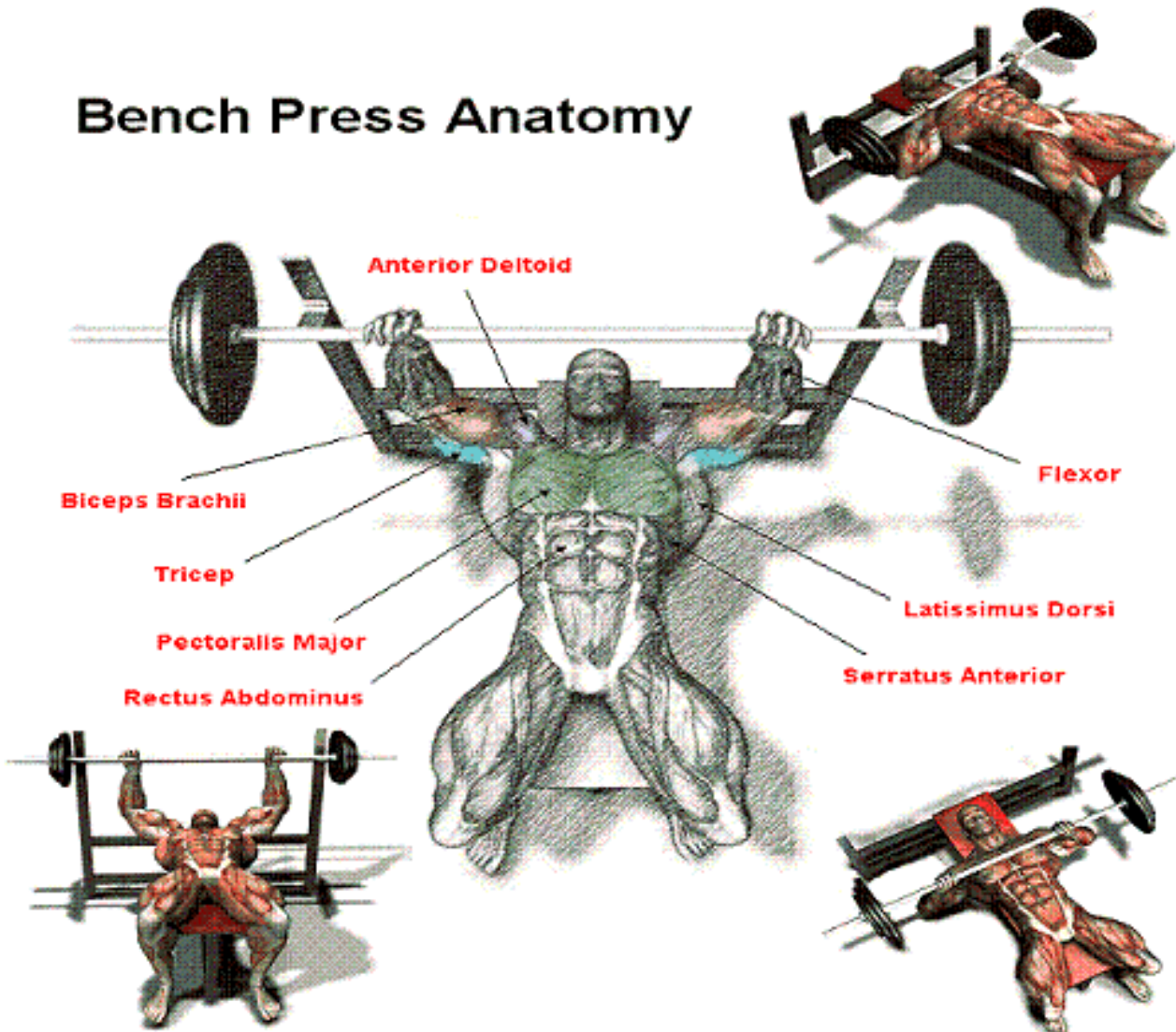
## Deadlift Anatomy



# The Squat



# The Bench Press



Tell me three movements that train almost all the muscles in your body or even something close to that. No ordinary movements.

Are they necessary?

Most people would answer with yes at this question. Even if they are the best movements you can do in the gym, they are not an absolute requirement.

If you can't do these movements safely, you don't have to do them. There are people that have shoulder injuries, back injuries, knee injuries, and can't really perform these movements safely.

If you can't perform them safely or without pain, I recommend you to try some alternative movements.

If you don't have any significant problems whatsoever then by all means do these movements. Grow strong doing these movements. Getting stronger will also make you bigger.

Take it from someone that trained for years without doing them. I regret not doing them when I first started. At first, I was mostly doing isolation exercises and the most common ones I saw in the gym. When I started to squat and deadlift, all my lifts went up as well. The reality is that I had lower back problems before doing deadlifts. Every night I went to bed, it took me 5 to 10 minutes for the pain to settle.

After I started deadlifting, my back grew stronger. I believe I had some muscle imbalances that were causing the pain. Going forward a few years, I am pain free and my back thanks me every time I deadlift. My knees thank me for squatting (they are healthy). My chest is stronger than ever (I only use flat bench press for chest).

My entire body is well proportioned because of these three important lifts.

### **Summary**

- The squat, bench press, and deadlift are the 3 most important lifts you can do because they train almost all the muscles in your body
- People who are new to the gym should learn the moves as soon as possible with light weight
- If you can't do them safely (you have an injury or any other reason), don't do them
- If you don't have any problems, then by all means perform them weekly

## **7. Use Perfect Exercise Form**

When I think about exercise form, two different approaches come into my mind. There are usually two schools of thought when talking about exercise form.

Some personal trainers or "fitness experts" constantly preach that you should use light-moderate weight with slow and controlled movement.

Strength athletes constantly preach more explosive movements, heavier weights, and looser training form.

Alright, but which one of them is right?

When we talk about exercising, proper form is the very first step to build a good fitness foundation (especially when talking about beginners).

Why proper form is the key to your fitness goals?

We can compare two different situations:

1. Squatting with mediocre form (with big weights)
2. Squatting with perfect form (lower weights)

Which of these two situations will allow you to train safely for a long period of time, and with constant progress?

I believe you will choose the second situation.

Training the squat or any movement with incorrect form will invariably lead to an injury in the future. I suggest you not to fall into the trap of believing that if you got away this time with bench pressing a huge weight with poor form, you will get away next time. You can never know when it hits you. And when it does, you might get a nasty injury that will prevent you from doing that movement again.

I always believe there's a middle way in almost anything we do. I like to think about a middle way.

In my opinion, none of them are right. Instead, I like you to get the best out of these two "worlds".

My take?

1. You should use a moderate-heavy weight (70-85%) of your 1 repetition maximum (1 rep max is a weight with which you can only do 1 repetition).
2. You should always strive to learn and use as perfect form as you can do (performing with good form will ensure you won't get injuries, and also develop your muscle mass in a safe way).

## 8. Full Range Of Motion

Before I get into this matter, I want to set the notion of full range of motion. For me, range of motion is defined as the distance a lever travels while it is attached to a fixed point.

Why is range of motion important?

I won't go in useless details so let's get straight to the point. Full range of motion is very important because it creates great joint mobility and flexibility.

Exercising with full range of motion is the best way to create a strong joint. It is also the best way to exercise because you will create a safe movement pattern.

Why I stress so much over full range of motion?

The reason is simple. It is not only because I always put a great emphasis on form, and range of motion. If you take a look at people that are training with limited range of motion, you can see examples of people that can't get their arms overhead or squat low enough without rounding their back.

These people have lost their mobility and flexibility because they exercised with a limited range of motion. Using limited range of motion is also more dangerous for your joints.

If you want to avoid almost any kind of potential injury to your body or joints, always use full range of movement when training.

It is demonstrated by research and real life application that training your muscles and joints in a full range of motion is the safest way. You prevent any unwanted injury.

Also, if you are currently training some exercises with limited range of motion, you have to realize that your muscles will tighten in that range. You will become strong within the distance you always use in that movement.

A good example is people that bench press without lowering the bar until it touches their chest. They lower the bar without touching their chest. They will only get strong in that limited range.

If you will constantly train through a limited range of motion, you will lose flexibility. When you find yourself in real life situations where you need a large range of motion, you will be more susceptible to injury compared to someone who trains with a full range of motion, and maintains/increases his flexibility.

If you currently train with limited range of motion in a specific exercise, just try to use the same weight, and get it through the full range of motion. You will be surprised to find out that you won't be able to use the same weight. Or even get the same weight through the full range of motion.

You will most likely have to lower the weights to get them through a full range of motion.

The good thing is that you can correct these instabilities. Just lower the weight and work through the full range of motion until you become strong enough in the full range of motion.

A full range of motion will ensure your joints safety, get your tendons stronger, train the targeted muscle in the best way.

### **Summary**

- Full range of motion is important for injury prevention
- Training with limited range of motion for a long period of time will take away some flexibility
- Always train with a full range of motion because it increases your flexibility, keeps your joints healthy, and allow you to train safely without injury

## **9. Train With High Intensity**

Before I start talking about strength, I want to make a small correction when it comes to strength and intensity.

Many people don't really know the difference between strength and intensity. The reality is there is no difference. Intensity is also the weight on the bar.

Many people make the common mistake of confusing the term intensity with the way they work in the gym. They use intensity to gauge the work they do in the gym. You can hear common words like "it was intense", everywhere.

Intensity is weight on the bar. High intensity means heavy weights.

Why I am talking about strength?

Most people are only interested in fat loss or muscle gaining. What strength has to do with all of this?

Well, my friend, it has everything to do with.

If you make a search at a dictionary, you will find the following explanation for strength:

*"The quality or state of being strong; bodily or muscular power; vigor."*

Even the dictionary makes a good point. Strong body and muscular power. Indeed, it sounds good.

I wanted to talk about strength because most common bodybuilder routines focus on high repetitions and short rest pauses. The basic principle on which these programs were constructed is that your muscles grow because of the high repetition range.

While it is not entirely false, you need way more elements for your muscles to grow. You need a good nutritional plan (eat enough calories and protein), a good training program, rest, and supplementation (you can find supplements I also use by [clicking here](#)).

So, why is strength important?

Based on research and real life application, strength is one of the prime factors that dictate the state of your body:

- If your strength goes up, your muscle mass will also get bigger.
- If your strength goes down, you will most likely lose muscle mass.
- If your strength goes up when you are on a diet and caloric deficit, then my friend, you just discovered a way to lose fat and gain muscle at the same time.
- If your strength goes down when you are dieting, you are losing muscle mass.

As you can see, strength has everything to do with the way your body looks. While you may be tempted to try all sorts of training programs, specially created for “muscle mass gaining”, most of them are a total joke.

Check out my tutorials and go to the training programs section. Those are tested and proven programs that will definitely help you get stronger and more muscular. [Click here](#) to read more.

Strength is not only useful when it comes to your body composition. Strength is also useful in real life. Strength will make you feel better, perform better, move better, help yourself better.

Everything that requires physical work will be easier for you compared to a normal person.

Now you know why I like strength. I like to be strong and muscular. The only people that are muscular and get away with lifting small weights are probably on steroids. As a little summary, the reality is that using steroids will make the weights you lift irrelevant. People on steroids gain muscle mass without even training hard.

This is why you see huge bodybuilders training with small weights. This is why you see clips on Youtube with huge bodybuilders, using tiny dumbbells.

They put an emphasis on feeling the muscle or doing pump work. For them, it doesn't matter how they train. They will still grow. You on the other hand, won't.

For you and me, getting stronger in an exercise is the only way to get bigger. Trust me. I tried the other way for years and the results were not there.

Don't make the same mistakes as I did, and learn from me.

## **Summary**

- Strength is important in your life: it will make you feel better, perform better, take care of physical jobs easier
- Strength is an absolute requirement for any gym progress, be it fat loss or muscle gaining (if you are natural)

## 10. Take Your Rest Day

Many people don't like to talk or even think about rest days. Most people believe that by training as frequent as possible, they will reach their body goals faster.

They want a six pack, they want a better looking body, they want to get stronger. They believe that by training as frequent as possible, they will achieve this in a shorter period of time.

What is the truth?

First, I want you to do a small exercise. When you get to the gym, in a normal day, just look right and left. Look for people that have wrist wraps, knee braces, elbow braces, and other "assistance" material.

Take a look if they can train with heavy weights. Just look at them. Maybe, you are one of them.

I want you to put yourself an easy question: how many days off you take each week?

When I talk about days off, I mean days without any kind of physical activity like cardio or weight training. One, two, three?

Maybe not even that many.

Believe me, I was one of the guys that were in the gym 6 days every week. I did this for over 1 year.

I was hitting the gym hard almost every day and also doing cardio. After a while, I wondered why I was always feeling burnt out (I detailed the story in my [extreme fat loss diet journal](#)). I was unable to perform well, and get a good feeling of the weights that time.

The only people that can effectively train 6 days per week for long periods of time are elite athletes, and people using steroids. Some of these people are also overtrained even if they are elite.

This is why you see so many huge guys in your gym wearing knee, elbow, and all sorts of wraps. They are overtrained. They are injured.

If you are a natural bodybuilder, you are probably already doing too much. You probably train too many days per week, and take too few days off. You are probably lifting 3-4 days/week and also trying to add additional cardio 2-4 times/week (I may be mistaken in some cases but most of you are doing this).

You wonder why your joints are sore, and try to find out the reason why you don't really look forward to your next workouts.

If you are a beginner, I want you to take at least 1 full day of rest every week. This is the minimum I am recommending. In this day off, you should do nothing all day long. Remember, don't do anything. Just sit around. This is called passive rest.

At least another 2 days every week should be used as an active rest (you can do some light activity to improve your recovery). Just take a walk or light activity to pump some blood and help with recovery.

Even the most advanced power lifters usually train 4 times/week. Why do you think that you need more training than them?

As a friendly recommendation, I advise you to cut down your training to 3-4 times/week, and take 1 full day of rest. The other 2-3 days of rest can be used as passive rest or some light activity to get some blood flow moving.

Wait a bit. I hope you didn't thought I was finished with this.

If you are training for a while, I wonder when was the last time you took a full rest away from gym for 1-2 weeks?

Chances are, a long time ago or never. You probably don't want to take a break because your fear of muscle mass loss or something along these lines. Believe me, your muscle mass comes off quite hard if you are natural.

If you spent 1 year trying to get in shape, just how much fitness you think you can lose in 1-2 weeks?

The answer is simple: not very much to none

The reality is that people that are in this situation are almost always overtrained. The nice thing about it is that if they take a break, they usually come back even stronger.

When it comes to fat loss, I've seen people that were training too much, doing excessive cardio, and eating too little. I saw them get even leaner when they took a break from all that exaggeration. They got leaner even if they ate more in that rest period.

Almost all professional athletes have periods of break in their training (it is called deloading).

Most athletes train intensely for 3-4 weeks and then take an easy week where they reduce the volume and intensity. Other athletes can go 6-8 weeks training intensively, and take a week of rest afterwards. It all depends on how you are feeling.

If you are currently training for a long period of time, without any considerable rest, please do yourself a favor and take 5-7 days of complete rest. Just go outside and do what you like. Go take a walk, go to a movie, hiking or anything else.

If you like training so much, just go into a park and hit some bodyweight exercises. Just keep it cool and don't exaggerate it. Do it for the pleasure of training.

You will not lose any muscle mass if you keep your diet in check, and you might even come back physically and mentally stronger. Just refresh your mind and body for a few days and get back.

## **Summary**

- People that don't take rest periods, and train for a long time are almost always using knee and elbow wraps or are injured
- Having active and passive rest days is crucial for your long term progress
- You should always take a period of rest after a long period of training (most athletes train for 5-8 weeks and get 1 week off).

## **11. Don't Jerk Weights**

Even if I have many years of training behind me, I am still sometimes tempted to jerk the weight. What I mean by jerking the weight?

Ever saw a guy doing bicep curls with a big weight? (a good example is the guy in this picture)



Have you seen the same guy doing it with improper form, mainly trying to jerk the weight up by bending at his knees and lower back?

If you are going to the gym for a while, I bet you saw at least one person jerking the weight.

Or maybe you are also doing this. Without even realizing. I am not blaming you for trying to lift heavy weights. I know I am also tempted to fill that bar with pure weight and jerk it up as fast as I can.

While this is ineffective for building a well rounded muscular body, it is also dangerous. It is dangerous for you to go with bigger weights that you can't safely handle with good form because you can get injured.

Not only injured but you don't train the muscles you are supposed to train with that exercise. For example, if you try to do a bicep curl with too much weight, you will also use your back and legs. This will take the tension from the muscle. You won't progress with your bicep muscles. Then you will wonder why you are not growing.

Lower the weight and do the exercise with proper form. Your muscles will thank you for this. Your tendons will thank you for this. Your joints will thank you for this.

The best example I can give you is when doing squats and deadlifts. I see so many people trying to deadlift a weight too big for their current condition. My back hurts when I see them. [I also deadlift](#). I like deadlifting. But the difference between my form and the one I commonly see is from ground to the sky.

I always keep my back straight, and my form as good as I can. But I can always see people coming to the same gym and trying to deadlift with bad form.

They try to jerk the weight up. They bend their backs so much that it makes me wonder when it will snap.

This point is also a reminder for myself to always use perfect form, and not try to lift weights I cannot handle.

Stay safe, don't try to jerk a weight you can't handle with perfect form.

### **Summary**

- Jerking a weight is always a bad thing when it comes to growing muscle mass
- Jerking a weight won't train the muscles you are supposed to train with the same exercise
- Jerking a weight is dangerous to your joints and tendons
- Use a weight you can handle to lift with good form and controlled movement

## **12. Don't Overtrain Yourself**

Everybody talks about overtraining nowadays but do they really know what it means exactly?

To get this started, I made a short explanation of what overtraining means.

Overtraining is a situation in which there is a long term imbalance between the recovery processes and training load.

This imbalance leads to a steady decrement in performance that takes more than 1-3 weeks to return to normal levels.

Overtraining is present in every gym nowadays. Because we live in a stressful daily life, and we also exercise ourselves into the ground. You can see guys training for 2-3 hours, 6 days/week with high intensity all the time.

How much it will take before he breaks. How much recovery will he need then?

First, I want you to make a small distinction between overtraining and overreaching.

Both are a problem for you but you have to analyze the way you feel, and the way your body recuperates to see in which state you might be at that respective moment.

Summarizing this, overreaching occurs when you see a drop or plateau in performance for some time. You feel tired all the time, you don't really have the strength and will to get back in the gym. You want to quit. But the thing is that it takes 1-3 weeks of rest for you to fully recover from that situation, and feel like new.

With overtraining, the situation is different. It will take you more than 1-3 weeks of rest. It will make a bigger mark on your nervous system. It will also put you down for quite a while.

The reality is that overtraining is quite rare. I never really saw true overtraining symptoms on other people except me (I was really obsessed with going to the gym when I was younger. I was training 6 days/week, and eating too little. When I got overtrained, I was unable to go to the gym for a few months).

Getting back to overtraining & overreaching, what usually happens is that we have a person that has normally lifted and performed at a certain level. All of the sudden, they will simply not be able to hit their numbers (be it weight on bar, time in track, reps, etc.).

Now, some of you might be tempted to believe you are overtrained or overreached just because you missed your last workout. You can have the same [symptoms an overtrained person](#) have (inability to lift the same weight, tiredness, low morale), but the difference is the period of time you are feeling like this.

You can pretty much be just tired for that workout. The best thing to do when you feel tired for a day is to just take it as a lighter day, finish the workout fast. Go home.

You don't need to worry about overtraining or overreaching just because you had one bad day.

What causes overtraining?

There are some variables that influence the way you perform in the long term in the gym. They dictate if you will get overtrained, and when.

They are: training load and recovery processes.

Using a constant high load, repetitions to failure, not getting enough rest, not getting enough nutrition, will most likely put a mark on your body.

You can also add lifestyle factors like: stress, job, family, etc.

All of these can get you to overreaching fast, and even overtraining if you are not careful.

Before getting ahead into overtraining, I want you to make a few notes about when true overtraining occurs:

- You cannot overtrain from a single workout
- You cannot overtrain in 1-2 weeks of hard training
- When you get to a month, you can experience the early signs of overtraining
- Go further into training 2-3 months with imbalanced nutrition and training, and things will get serious
- Continue like that for a longer period of time and you know what is next

Common symptoms that show you true overtraining is coming:

- Higher frequency of illness
- Lack of motivation
- Inability of sleep
- Lack of appetite
- Constant muscular fatigue
- Lack of motivation to train
- Increased resting blood pressure and heart rate

Overtraining is a serious matter. My primary focus is to help you acknowledge it and also teach you what you have to do in order to avoid it.

How do you prevent overtraining?

The very first thing you have to do to prevent overtraining is to make sure your training program is set right.

I see too many coaches using the same training program they use for a 20 year old male, with a 40 year old women. This is not only inappropriate but also dangerous when it comes to overreaching & overtraining. It is dumb but it happens all the time.

I will look into various rules you can apply right now to help you prevent any kind of overreaching or overtraining. Before you apply these rules, make sure your diet, supplementation, recovery, and sleep are in check. You don't want to skip these.

Rules of preventing overtraining & overreaching:

1. Limit the number of high intensity workouts every week – when you train with big weights, 2-4 high intensity workouts every week are enough. This is especially true when you are also dieting.
2. Cycle your training – while you can try training all day long with big weights, you will eventually plateau. Many athletes back off the weight and try to get it slowly back and over what they used to lift. Avoid training for months with high intensity without backing off a little bit. This is also known as deloading.
3. Schedule your workouts accordingly – if you train 4 days per week, don't try to train day after day. Instead, you can train 2 days, take 1 day off, continue training for 2 days, take 2 days off. This is just an example. As a rule of thumb, after 2 days of training, take 1 day of rest.
4. Listen to your body – usually, if you feel very tired at the start of a workout, and you finished warming up but you still feel like crap, the best thing to do is to call it a day and go home. Eat well, rest well, and come back the next workout stronger. Most people fail to listen to their body because they believe that skipping a workout will make a huge impact on their progress. That tired day will make a negative impact on your progress if you don't listen to your body. There is a reason your body tells you to go home. Listen to your body.

Now that you know what overtraining means, and how you can prevent it I hope you will be more careful with what you are doing.

One last thing. What do you do if you overtrain?

If you feel the effects of overtraining, it is a little more complicated to get rid of them.

A strategy that always works is to start by first taking 5-7 days off from training. Just do your normal things, take some brisk walks, enjoy some free time, eat, and recover. If you also afford massage, go and enjoy some. Sauna maybe. Salt baths, and relaxation.

If you don't normally stretch, it would be a good time to incorporate it.

Another point I want to make is to never try to diet during the recovery period. You need all the calories you can get. Just eat well and don't overstress about it. You are not going to recover from overtraining if you keep pushing yourself. Make sure you eat a good amount of carbohydrates to keep your hormones and glycogen restocked.

How to get back into training after the recovery period?

This is another area where many people do mistakes. They get right back into training with the same volume and weights they previously used. Don't do that.

If it took you 4 weeks to get back on your feet, your work capacity and fitness will be down. The nice thing about the rest period is muscle memory. Even if you've lost some muscle (which is slight to none because you should eat well), you will recover the muscle mass faster than usual.

How fast?

Well, from my experience, it should take you double the rest period to get back on track. If it took you 2 weeks of rest to be completely recovered, it will take you 4 weeks to be right back on track.

This is not a long period even if you might see it like that now. Think about it. If you continue training even if you are overtrained, and don't take this rest period seriously, you will have to sit back a longer period of time to be fully recovered.

This is all about overreaching and overtraining. Take them serious and watch out what you are doing in the gym. Remember, more is not always necessarily better.

## **Summary**

- Overtraining and overreaching have similar effects on you: impaired capacity to train, no will to train, constant muscular fatigue, inability to sleep well, increased heart rate and blood pressure
- Overreaching is an easy version of overtraining. Overreaching should go away in 5-7 days most of the time

- Overtraining is an exaggerate version of overreaching and is real. If you train too intense, with too much volume, for long period of times, and without sufficient caloric intake, you might be susceptible to overtraining.
- Overtraining should take 2-6 weeks of rest before it is completely gone

## 13. Drink Water

In my opinion, water is highly underestimated by many people doing weight training and aerobics.

Hydration is very important because every single cell in your body is made up of water for the most part. If you are training with weights, you are sweating and losing water.

You need to drink enough water to replace the lost one so you don't become dehydrated (this is especially important if you are also supplementing with creatine). Taking creating will require you to drink more water to keep your hydration status up.

If you don't drink enough water and deprive your body of it, it will fight back. Your body will sense you are not drinking enough water and will try to hold on the water you will drink next time. That's how you will essentially hold water and that's a bit dangerous for your mindset especially when going on a fat loss diet. It can mask your fat loss. It can play with your mind.

When I did [my extreme fat loss diet on which I lost 8.6 pounds in just 4 days](#), I was drinking water in excess of 3 to 5 liters. Why?

I had to make sure I won't retain water in the 4<sup>th</sup> day of my extreme fat loss dieting. In the last day, I modified my training and what I ate so I could hit that fat loss jackpot. If I had not drunk enough water, I would've probably masked some of my weight loss.

The water intake you have to get also depends on what you are eating that day. While it is almost impossible for anyone to tell you exactly how much water you should drink, there are some small guidelines I always use with me and my clients.

It is demonstrated by research and real life application that if you get dehydrated, your performance in gym or outside, suffers. You won't perform as well as when you are hydrated enough.

I don't want to go on talking too much about water because everybody knows water intake is important. If you want to help your body progress easier, if you want to feel good in the gym, if you want to perform optimal and have the highest chances of succeeding, drinking water is a top priority.

How much water?

A basic guideline for you is to first listen to your body. Your body will tell you when to drink water and when you should not.

Although this is the best advice I can give you, there are people that don't get thirsty even if working out for extended periods of time (I have met plenty of them).

If you are in this situation, I would recommend you to drink 0.5-2 L of water each training sessions (I usually drink over 1 L with ease each time I train).

The easiest guideline is to make sure you have at least 5 urinations each day.

This is all you have to know about water intake and weight training. Now, go and drink some water to replenish your stores.

### **Summary**

- Water intake is important for exercise performance and general health
- When you train, you lose water through urination and sweat
- Replenish water by listening to your body. If your body doesn't tell you to drink water, drink 0.5-2 L of water each training session. If this doesn't work, just make sure you have 5 urinations per day.

## **14. Don't Undertrain**

Undertraining is an area not so discussed when it comes to bodybuilding. Even if not so many people talk about it, it is surely an important matter. I mean, I don't think you would want to waste your time doing useless training and diet programs without any results.

Undertraining occurs when you exercise at a constant pace during every training session and you don't even try to progress. This basically means that you consciously stall your progress indefinitely. I see so many people doing that. They always come to the gym and do the same stuff over and over again without thinking about progression.

Remember, progression in weights is one of the prime factors of gaining muscle mass and strength. If you are always keeping yourself in the comfort zone, and don't train with enough intensity to overcome your current adaptations, you will remain the same for a long period of time.

I am sure you also want to be healthy, and you are taking a good step towards being healthy by training. But if you want to progress, you must get out of your comfort zone. Fortunately, here are no health risks when it comes to undertraining. It can only slow down your progress be it fat loss, muscle or strength gaining.

There isn't much to be discussed about undertraining, aside the fact that you have to acknowledge it exists. Women are more susceptible to undertraining. You can't believe how frequently I see girls coming at my gym and doing the same stuff over and over again.

They fear progress, they fear they will get muscles, and look undesirable. The sad reality is that these girls don't know the truth about muscle gaining when you are a woman.

Women have very low testosterone levels, and this is one of the main reasons why women won't get bulky. Like never.

The only women you can see bulky are the ones using steroids. Yes, there are women out there that use steroids. Plenty women that get on fitness magazine covers use steroids. Many women that promote supplements do the same.

If you want to lose fat faster, build muscle mass faster or even gain some strength, make sure you take your training and diet seriously.

What to do to avoid undertraining?

- Make sure you always seek progress: more repetitions, more weight or both

- Make sure you get the intensity of your workouts higher, don't waste time in the gym
- If a specific exercise or training routine feels too easy, change it
- If you don't progress with a diet or training program, change it (with my diet and training you will always progress until you will get lean)

## **Summary**

- Undertraining is a serious matter. You can consciously stay in your comfort zone with training and dieting and you won't progress.
- Undertraining has no negative effects. The only negative effect is that you won't see any visible progression in a timely manner
- You can avoid undertraining by changing your training program, keep the intensity of your workouts high, and seek progression in the form of more weight on the bar or repetitions

## **15. Always Be Progressing**

As we talked in the undertraining part, the efficiency of your program is mainly determined by the way it makes an impact on your body.

I believe that you train to get better, look better, feel stronger, be healthier. If you can't achieve these things with a training program, I don't really see any reason to keep doing it.

Of course, you will get positive health effects by incorporating weight training in your life but to what good if you don't see any visible progress? While there are people doing weight training just for general health, I believe that the main majority of people are also looking for visual progress.

I always try to go with a training program that allows me to progress. For me, progression means a better looking body as time passes. Simple as that.

This is how I assess if a training program is good or bad for me, in my current condition. I watch results. You should also do that.

How do you assess the efficiency of your training program?

Well, this is an easy matter. The easiest way to assess the efficiency of the training program you are currently doing is to look at how you progress.

When you are looking to build muscle mass, progressive overload is the main principle you should look after in case you want to assess the efficiency of your program.

Let's assume that you just started training and you changed your training program.

What you should look after?

1. In case of a strength training program, you should always watch if your strength is going up. If your strength is going up in time, then the efficiency is there, and you can continue using that specific training program for as long as it works.
2. In case you want to build muscle mass, your training program should look different than a normal strength training program. Gaining muscle mass involves more volume and lower intensity. In case you see good visual changes in the mirror, most of the times it means the training program selected, works. You should also see an increase in weights when it comes to gaining muscle. If progression isn't there, check your diet and rethink your training program. Something might be wrong.
3. In case you want to lose fat, the efficiency of your current training program is determined by how well it allows you to keep all your muscle mass while you are losing fat. You don't want to lose muscle mass when you lose fat. This is the main reason you want to lose fat. So your muscles get visible. Just like I did in [my extreme fat loss diet](#). As noted in my journal days, I didn't lose any muscle mass.

I don't really think you need a summary here because you have it right above. Always be conscious about your training program efficiency, and change it if it doesn't work.

## 16. Don't Train To Failure

Training to failure is almost a default thing nowadays in every gym I go. This especially happens in the case of bench press. I enjoy seeing two people trying hard to move a weight when bench pressing.

I was joking with a gym partner of mine. We saw two people at a bench press. One was deadlifting the weight while the other struggled to push for

reps. Both of them were training. While it is laughable to see people doing this, it is a serious matter.

Why do they do this?

The person trying to bench press, will put too much weight, and try to do too many repetitions. When he won't be able to do the desired repetitions, he will ask his partner to help him lift the weight. What happens here is that two people are wasting time while looking weird.

The spotter is wasting time and potentially getting tired. The person bench pressing is wasting time because the only thing he accomplishes is getting his nervous system tired and making himself susceptible to injury.

What is failure?

For many people, training to failure means their last repetition is a mess. They will train until they are unable to complete the last repetition without help. They are effectively putting themselves at a great risk of hurting themselves, and thus delaying their progress.

More generally, training to failure occurs when the force output of a specific part of the movement is lower than the force required to go through that point in the movement.

To get an easier perspective of this, if the midpoint of your bench press requires 150 lbs of force output and you can only generate 140 lbs, then it means you just hit "failure".

There are many types of failure:

- Concentric failure: you stop when you can't get another full rep
- Technical failure: you stop when form breaks
- Eccentric failure: you stop when you can't control the weight down
- Isometric failure: you stop when you can't hold the weight any further
- Total muscle failure: you go and go until your muscles can't physically contract

Now you know what failure means but what are the exact implications?

Going to failure all the time is a bad idea for most people. Failure is definitely NOT a requirement to stimulate muscle growth. While some people

will tolerate training to failure for longer period of times compared to others, most people will just burn out.

You can pretty much accumulate too much stress and fatigue by constantly training to failure. Your body will automatically try to limit volume and/or frequency to cope with the extended stress levels. This means you will eventually feel tired and you won't be able to perform well in the gym or in your life activities.

The only people that can train to failure all the time without severe negative effects, are bodybuilders that use drugs. This is why you always see them in Youtube videos grinding weights all day long, looking better day by day.

Their hormones are optimized, they are over what you currently have. Their recovery is also in another league. They don't get negatively affected by training to failure all the time.

Instead, you will surely get hit negatively if you insist on training to failure all the time. Training to failure all the time will invariably make you feel tired, even if you feel physically prepared to lift. It is demonstrated by research that training to failure is not a requirement for muscle growth.

Quite the opposite. There are plenty of research studies showing positive effects associated with training with 1 repetition left in "your tank" training. This means you will do just enough repetitions so you are left with the last one and just stop the exercise.

My take?

After I learned about this and studies research, I applied on myself, and my clients and I always see more positive effects when we train without failure.

My recommendation is to always train 1 repetition short of failure. Just make sure you gauge this well. Not so many people are conscious enough so to make a good estimation on how many repetitions they can really do.

Remember, training to failure means that you are unable to perform another repetition by yourself.

Stopping 1 repetition short to failure means just exactly as named.

## **Summary**

- Training to failure has no long term positive effects
- Training to failure is NOT a requirement if you want to build muscle or lose fat
- Training 1 repetition short to failure is always better because it allows you to successfully train your muscles and recover better for the next workout (you don't tire your nervous system)

## 17. Weight Training Machines Vs. Free Weights

You know what is a weight training machine. Is a machine especially invented to copy a certain movement pattern of a free weight exercise.

For example, we have the flat bench press. You do the movement with just an Olympic bar, and some weight. The machine alternative to bench pressing is a flat bench smith machine.

The difference between these two is not staggering if you look at the movement. You may say this if you don't really know some small details.

The reality is that your body is a great machine. It adjusts a certain movement after your own flexibility, muscle development, the way your joint function, and also force.

Comparing the flat bench press with a smith machine bench press is easy. With the flat bench press, you will be mostly using your anterior deltoid and pectorals. Not only these but also some stabilizer muscles that need to work perfectly to maintain a good bar trajectory.

In the case of using smith machine, the machine itself forces you on a certain trajectory. Your body can't move the bar the way it was design. The movement pattern is limited to how the machine was built.

The same is true with other movements. Take dumbbell shoulder press and compare it with machine shoulder press. And many other movements.

Are weight training machines dangerous?

Some people say yes, some people say no. The truth is somewhere in the middle. In my opinion, if you can safely do an exercise with a machine without pain, then you are good to go. As long as you progress safely on a certain exercise by using a machine, then by all means go for it.

If a weight training machine is limiting the movement, causes you any sort of pain, or you can't progress by training that way then by all means change it.

When machines are preferred?

The best example I can give you is in the case of the squat and leg press.

Many people preach that the squat is the king of leg exercises. While I don't really disagree with this, I also take a look at the risks involved in squatting.

The squat is a technical movement that needs to be learned the right way before executed. Performing the squat with big weights but improper form can put you at risk of injury. I believe that you don't want to get your lower back or knees injured. If you can't perform the squat safely, and without pain then by all means switch to a leg press.

The leg press is the perfect squat alternative because it allows you to safely train your lower body without too many risks. Of course, you can pretty much get injured because of improper usage of a leg press. You can damage your lower back just as easy as with the squat. Keep your back in the leg press machine all the time. Don't round it!

Before you even consider leg pressing, learn to do the movement in the right way. As long as a leg press allows you to progress and train with progressive weights, go with it.

How to choose between the squat and leg press?

The choice is purely yours. While the squat is one of the best leg exercises you can do, it is not an absolute requirement. Not doing the squat will not necessarily stop you from putting muscle mass on your legs.

You can get big legs by using the leg press easily.

The main determinant of what exercise you have to use is the progressive overload principle:

*Choose the exercise that allows you to safely train the movement pattern safely, without pain whatsoever, and which allows you to progress in time –*  
Marinas Florin

This is all you have to know about machines vs. free weights. It is not such a big deal.

## **18. Don't Copy Steroid Bodybuilder's Workouts**

I see this all the time. Most people in the gym are doing cookie cutter training programs molded by steroid bodybuilders.

Before we get into more details about why this is wrong, I want to tell you something about bodybuilders that use steroids. Some of these facts are well known by everyone.

Bodybuilders that use steroids are bigger, stronger, faster, have better recovery than any natural out there. They can pretty much get away with any kind of training program.

In all seriousness, even if they train only with their bodyweight, they will gain more muscle mass in 1 month than you can get in 6 months using weight training.

These same bodybuilders can even do nothing, take testosterone shots, and get bigger than you even if you train hard all this time. I know, it is a little weird but this is how it works.

Now, I don't really want to make steroids look as a good thing because they have their risks. I don't really know all their risks because I am not interested in this area but I saw many serious side effects of steroid usage on other people. You can easily use Google or Youtube and search for steroid side effects.

Another point I want to make is that these people will only maintain their muscle mass as long as they train intensively. This is also a side effect. A natural bodybuilder (like you and me), will keep his muscle mass for a longer period of time after ceasing weight training.

A bodybuilder that uses steroids will quickly "deflate" to a smaller frame.

Anyways, let's get back to the main matter of this sub chapter.

A typical weight training program done by a bodybuilder that uses steroids can look like this:

Monday: Chest

Incline DB  
DB Flyes  
Flat BB  
Decline DB  
Butterflys  
Pushups

Tuesday: Legs

Calf Raise  
Curl  
Extension  
Squats  
Hack Squat/Trap Bar

Wednesday: Back/Traps

Deadlift  
Shrugs  
One Arm DB Row  
Bent BB Rows  
Lat Pulldown  
T-Bar Row

Thursday: Arms

Preacher Curls  
Standing French Press  
Push Downs  
Hammer Curls  
BB Curls  
Close Grip Bench  
Chin-ups

Friday: Shoulders

Military Press  
Seated DB Press  
Arnold Press  
Front Raise

## Upright DB Rows

Saturday: Rest or train

Sunday: Rest or train

Each exercise is done in 3-5 sets of 6-12 reps.

Why this is not a good program for a natural bodybuilder?

The first thing that pops into my mind is the total workout volume. It is just too high for you to be doing it long term. You will definitely get overtrained if you do this program too much. As you can see, the rest days are almost nonexistent.

Bodybuilders that use steroids can use these kinds of programs because their work capacity is way above yours, their recovery is also many times better than yours, and all their hormones are at huge levels compared to yours (and mine).

I also see girls trying to copy bikini fitness competitors. They come into the gym and do all sorts of crazy looking workouts that involve countless minutes of cardio, abs, and huge volume. These girls hope that by copying these fitness models programs, they will get to look like that.

My answer?

Not even close to that. The results will come but they will not look like they imagine. Instead of progressing, these men and women that copy workouts from people using steroids, either plateau or burn themselves by doing these workouts.

They sit and wonder why they don't have similar results as all these fitness competitors. They fail to take into account that these competitors are using drugs.

What you should do?

Try to either copy a natural bodybuilder's program (hard thing to find these days) or use an existing and effective training program. I wrote some articles on some of the most effective training programs out there for natural people like you and me. You can find them here:

Learn from my mistakes and stick to a good program for a while:

<http://www.nobsbb.com/>

1. If you want to gain strength, one of the best training program: [Starting strength routine](#)
2. A combination of strength and size: [Madcow 5x5 routine](#), [The texas method](#)
3. Mainly for muscle gaining: [Upper lower split routine](#)

If you want to start with the right foot into getting towards your fitness goal, check out [my new starting page](#).

Further reading: [Exposed – Hypes and lies of the fitness industry](#)

### **Summary**

- The usual bodybuilder's training programs are highly ineffective for natural people like you and me
- Don't try to copy steroid bodybuilder's programs because you will most likely get burn out from all the intensity and volume, without an effective rest strategy
- Check out my articles on effective bodybuilding programs for natural people in the links above

## **19. Don't Train Too Much**

While I wrote about this matter in detail when I talked about overreaching and overtraining, I want to make a small note here just to make sure you understand the risks of exaggerating with weight training.

Too much of anything is bad for you. This also includes exercise. Don't try to believe that by doing more exercise, you will reach your body goals faster.

Most of the time, quite the opposite happens.

People get into the gym, they workout for 2-3 hours daily and get home trashed. The only thing they are capable to do then is to eat, and go to sleep. They are just too deprived of energy.

I know I was the same when I first started bodybuilding. I literally trashed my body with long workouts 6 days per week. I was sitting around 2-3 hours every day in the gym, and I did everything I could.

My basic belief was that if I work out as much as I can, my body will grow bigger, and I lose fat faster. Boy oh boy, how wrong I was.

After a few months of pushing myself almost every day, my body began to fight back. I was constantly tired, without will to go to the gym, I stalled in every exercise, I was stressed, I couldn't sleep, and many more negative effects.

I don't want you to make the same mistake. This is why I am putting big emphasis on this point. It is very important for you to understand the risks you are subjecting yourself by trying to work out too much.

Your body needs time to recover from intense workouts, both physically and mentally. If you get over the board too frequently, expect your body to bring you back down. When this happens, the only thing you can do is to give up training and take a period of rest.

Why risk that?

Why don't you take the nice path of slow and steady instead of trying it fast and short term?

Sometimes, even if you try it fast, you might not even get the short term effects (look better faster), because you won't be able to train with enough intensity.

I remember when I first did [my extreme fat loss diet](#). For the first day of the diet I did just 10 minutes of weight training. Just 10 minutes. Imagine that. And at the end of my 4<sup>th</sup> day, I lost 8.6 pounds.

## **Summary**

- Too much of something ends most of the time badly. The same is true with weight training.
- Chose the slow and steady path of progression, and you will safely reach your body goals if you are consistent

Further reading: [How To Deload](#)

## 20. Set Goals

I considered that in order to create a complete handbook that can help you every time you read it, I had to write something about goal setting.

Goal setting is something I always do. I remember when I first started bodybuilding. Aside from the fact that I did everything completely backwards, I also failed to set up a goal.

What is a goal?

Taken from the dictionary, a goal is:

*"something that you are trying to do or achieve"*

Yes, a goal is something you want to achieve. Something that you believe you can achieve. It is like a task you want to reach in the near future.

Aside from the fact that you should be setting goals for yourself in other areas of your life, you should also make sure you set a goal when going to the gym.

Before setting a goal, I want to suggest you to be true with yourself. Don't try to exaggerate. In all seriousness, if you currently squat 200 lbs, and you set a goal of squatting 400 lbs the next week, the only thing you will achieve is fail.

You don't really want to disappoint yourself like that. Instead, try to make it easier. I will give you an example of how I set up my goals.

When I wanted to get to 6-7% body fat and I was sitting at around 10-12% body fat, I set up an 8 weeks goal.

I approximated that it should take me around 8 weeks to get to that body fat (taking into account that I wasn't extremely strict with my diet and training program – sadly, I occasionally go out in town and drink a bit).

But, I accounted for all of that when I set my goal. In the end, I succeeded to get my 8 pack (as you can see from the pictures posted here and also on my blog). I also succeeded losing 8.6 pounds in just 4 days because I created my definitive goals with my extreme diet. [Click here](#) to read more about it.

I always train my clients and help them set up a goal for themselves. I always try to motivate them to reach a goal. Most of the time I succeed (when they listen and apply my suggestions).

There are plenty of research studies and psychologists using goal setting methods with great success. Goals can make the difference between a success or failure. If you want to achieve something, then by all means set a goal.

It's like in life. If you want to get a nice house, you first have to set goals for yourself. First, you have to get a good paying job. Next, you should strive to maybe get a second one. Next, you should try to put aside a certain sum of money each month. And so on... You get the point.

For example, for a past bench press weight of 286 lbs x 3 repetitions, I set up a goal like this one:

In 1-2 months max, I wanted to get at least 3 repetitions with 295.

Goal setting is not rocket science. It is mainly a point that you should always consider in your life. Be it weight training or other things you want to acquire or do.

Further reading: [Do You Have Unrealistic Expectations?](#), [The Victim Mentality](#)

## **21. Avoid “Special” Training Techniques**

This will be a short sub chapter. You can see plenty of bodybuilders on Youtube or in your gym using all kind of “special techniques”.

These so called techniques involve drop sets, partial repetitions, circuits, pre-tiring a big group with a small exercise first, and many more.

What are these so called special techniques?

Drop sets are a situation in which you are doing as much repetitions as you can with one weight for a top set after which you won't take any rest and just move to a lower weight and continue doing repetitions. And so on until you feel like you can't do repetitions any more.

Partial repetitions are what they are just called. You simply do a repetition with limited range of motion. For example, you bench press but when you lower the weight, you don't touch your chest.

Pre-tiring a big group is just doing some kind of exercise for that group before the main one. So before you squat, you would get your legs tired by doing some sets of leg extensions.

Doing circuits means you will just chose some exercises and move from one to the other without any rest. Finish with one, move to the next and so on.

I seriously don't really know all of them. I used them in the past, I've read about them, I saw people doing them but I didn't grow too fond on using them. Why?

The reason is simple. Why should anyone use these kinds of techniques if they don't really offer you any advantage over the conventional way of training?

You can do a search on Google, and find all sorts of articles written by the so called "training guru's". You can see them preaching that drop sets, repetitions to failure or all kinds of mumbo jumbo techniques will get you bigger than by using a conventional training approach.

I am not buying into this. The main principle that dictates whenever you gain or lose muscle mass is progressive overload. It means that the weight you lift over time has to go up. The weight you lift using a movement that you efficiently and safely perform.

Many people fall into the trap of using these "special" techniques too often for the simple fact that they've read somewhere that these techniques will get them big.

True?

While I am not completely against them, I am completely against using them all the time. Of course, you can plateau (we all plateau at a certain time), but this doesn't mean you should try and use some "secret" techniques without wondering if they really work, just to try and get bigger. You can potentially make the matters worse by forcing yourself too much.

These techniques are not necessarily bad per se. They can be of help in certain situations but they should be limited.

How you should use these “special” training techniques?

The best example I can give you is my own. I almost never used any of these training “techniques” and I successfully got big and ripped. The same is true with many of my friends. The same is true with many people you can see in your gym, or on Youtube (I keep talking about Youtube because nowadays, Youtube is getting fuller and fuller workout videos – it is a good source for observing but not so good at taking advice from it).

When should you use drop sets, partial reps, circuits?

I only use these techniques at the end of my workout and only for the small muscle groups like biceps, triceps, shoulders, and calves. I am not really a fan of using drop sets on squats and deadlifts. Why?

Imagine me deadlifting 450 lbs with good form for a few repetitions until I can’t do anymore so I’ll have to stop. After that big set, I will be tired. If I would want to do fast drop set without proper rest, my lower back would most likely give up. What this means?

I would round my lower back, and put myself in the front of a potential injury.

Anyways, I don’t recommend you to use these techniques because if you are doing a good training program (as the ones I recommended you), you won’t need them. Your progress will be made based on the program itself, and the way you eat.

Train with a good training program, eat enough to grow or little to lose fat, and you should be fine. If you absolutely want to try some of these techniques, I recommend you to try them at the end of your workout. If you decide to do them, don’t do them daily.

They can put a mark on your recovery and nervous system. They will definitely tax your recovery. This is one of the main reasons I don’t use them. This is the main reasons I don’t recommend you to use them frequently.

## **Summary**

- Drop sets, partial reps, etc. have their place in a training program but not frequently. They can be used to get over a plateau but if you don't know what you are doing, it is better to continue training and eating the right way. Progress will come eventually.
- Using them too frequently is a sure recipe to overreaching and taxing your nervous system. This in turn will tax your recovery. Tiredness will be waiting you at the corner.
- I don't use them frequently. The only time I use drop sets is at the end of a workout (a few times/year).

## 22. Use No Nonsense Supplements

Supplements. Almost every person that set foot into a gym, thought about using a supplement to help them. You might be one of those people. You may want faster fat loss, easier training, more energy, or more muscle mass in less time.

While supplements definitely aid you, they are not the answer to your problems. They are not a "magic bullet". Sadly, most of them are marketed poorly, and they make you set high expectations from using them. In the end, the one disappointed will only be you.

Luckily, in all the years I trained myself, I used a wide range of supplements. I used supplements that worked fine. I used supplements that only wasted my money and time. I also used supplements that actually gave me an upper hand in the gym.

I want to show you the supplements that actually work (tested on me and my clients), and which can give you an aid towards your goal (don't forget to set it).

I talked more about these supplements [here](#) so there is no point in detailing them in this handbook. If you want to get an upper hand and progress easier towards your fitness goals, [click here to see the products that work.](#)

Further reading: [Exposed: Hype And Lies Of 35 Top Fat Burners And "SuperFoods"](#)

## 23. Control Your Ego

Every day I go to the gym, I see people letting their ego control them. I see many people training with weights that are obviously too heavy for them. In order to move that heavy weight, these people tend to use a swinging motion.

These people are relying on the momentum to get from the bottom to the top of each rep.

Is this a good strategy to building muscles or maintain those muscles when dieting?

No. Why?

While lifting heavy weights is a part of getting progression into your workout (and body), I want you to note this. When I talk about progression, I talk about progressing by lifting bigger weights through a full range of motion, with good form, without trying to swing the weight or use your joints to do the movement.

Every time you enter the gym, it is important to let your ego outside for the time you train, and focus on form and muscle contraction instead of worrying about what everyone else is doing. You shouldn't care of what other people are saying about you.

If you currently lift small weights, and you see plenty of big guys lifting big weights, keep your ego in check. Why?

I remember myself in my first months of lifting weights. It was the first time I saw someone in the gym lifting 50 lbs dumbbells above the head. I was astonished. They looked so heavy. Too heavy for me at that time. I was only lifting the 30 lb ones. I asked him a question:

*"I wonder when I will be able to lift so much weight above my head. I am weak compared to you."*

Do you know what he told me?

No.. of course not. Let me tell you. He told me this:

*"Florin, don't you worry too much about the weight. Just try to be consistent with your training, eat well, and you will reach these weights in no time."*

*Don't let your ego make you try to lift too heavy weights. You can injure yourself and stop progressing towards lifting the weight I currently lift."*

Luckily, this guy motivated me into continuing to train until I reached those weights. It wasn't long until I was able to lift 50 lbs over my head. Now, I can lift even more (it has no point to note my lifts here because they will be bigger as time passes by).

My suggestion for you?

Go with a good training program and make sure you keep your ego in check. Always use perfect form no matter what. Always try to perfect your form no matter what!

### **Summary**

- Keeping your ego in check is the first step you have to do when entering a gym
- Training with your current strength, while keeping a perfect form will ensure you will progress towards bigger weights incrementally

Further reading: [The Negative Feedback Cycle](#)

## **24. Get Motivated**

Having the proper mindset is always the first thing that needs to be fixed when you start a diet or muscle gaining phase.

Your mind has to be positive about that. If you don't have the will and the strength to keep yourself on the right track, you will only fail no matter how much effort you put into it.

There are many details that need to be considered when looking at a "perfect" diet or training program. Details like genetics, insulin resistance, training program, individual recovery capacity and many other.

The reality is that there is no perfect diet or training program.

They all work. Some of them work better than others. You have to stay on the diet or training program where you get the most out of it.

I am a perfectionist. I always wanted the perfect training or diet program. I discovered that in the long run, the fundamental principles that make a training or diet program work for every person, will also work with me. Basic principles and fundamentals will always help you in the long run. Stressing over small details will only make your consistency crumble.

The biggest problems you can encounter are lack of determination and consistency. If you want to do something like dieting down to 7% body fat, bench 300 lbs or squat 500 lbs, you have to start doing it. Eliminate the fear of failing. Always get a positive attitude. You can do everything you want. It just takes time and consistency.

It's like everything else in your life:

The first bike ride gave you the start. Ultimately, you learned how to ride the bike because of that first ride. You had the will to learn riding the bike so you just went on it (you can think of any other example of a taught skill).

Remember your first steps when you were a baby. If you didn't had the courage to try to walk when you were little, you'd probably be in a wheelchair now.

The real problem regarding fat loss or muscle gaining is the start:

1. Eat the right way
2. Keep eating the right way on long term
3. Choose a good training program that sticks to the basic principle of progressive overload.
4. Keep training
5. Include training and eating even in minimal amounts

My opinion is that long term adherence is one of the most important characteristic of people that succeed.

Be like that!

Further reading: [The Strangest Secret](#)

## 25. Believe In Yourself

This was my last point. I wanted to make it count. Now, as I am writing this, it is night outside. I live in a nice and peaceful neighbourhood. The only thing I hear is the wind. And the occasional cars that are passing by.

I was thinking about what to write at this point, to get you motivated, to get you to desire to attain your body goals. To be completely sincere, I didn't know how to start this. There are plenty of guides and tutorials that could help you believe in yourself.

The thing is that I've read a lot of this motivational stuff. In reality, all of them are just written words that arrive to the same conclusion. In order to succeed, you have to believe in yourself. Not only that, but you have to put work into your dream.

*"I'll do it no matter what because I want to show everyone I can do it. I'll give everyone the opportunity to do the same. I want to motivate people into losing weight the right way"*

This is what I said to myself when I first started my [extreme fat loss diet](#). You have an opportunity every time you talk with someone. You have an opportunity every time you go into the gym. When you diet. Take advantage and motivate yourself to succeed. This is how successful people do it.

Further reading: [The NWFM Mentality](#)

## My Other Books

### The No Bs Flexible Formula To Six Pack Abs

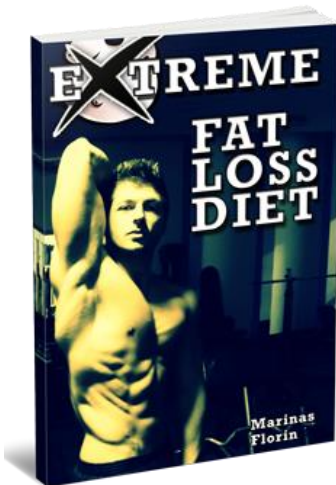


This 200+ page guide contains [my entire diet, and training principles](#). This is not just a diet book. It's a lifestyle. I simplified fat loss to the point it is automatic. It covers everything you have to do eating, and training wise to be successful at building your ultimate physique. You'll discover:

- How to eat the food you want, and still lose fat
- How to train less, and lose more fat
- How to stay flexible with your diet anywhere you go

[Click here to read more](#) (and how you can get it)

### Extreme Fat Loss Diet



How To Lose Up To 6.6 Pounds Of PURE Fat In 4 Days... I Lost 8.6 Pounds In Just 4 Days And I'll Show You How I Did It

This is not the usual nonsense diet that you can find on the internet. This is a step by step guide to achieve an extreme level of fat loss. The best part is that I will show you exactly what you have to do and you will see how I lost 8.6 pounds in just 4 days

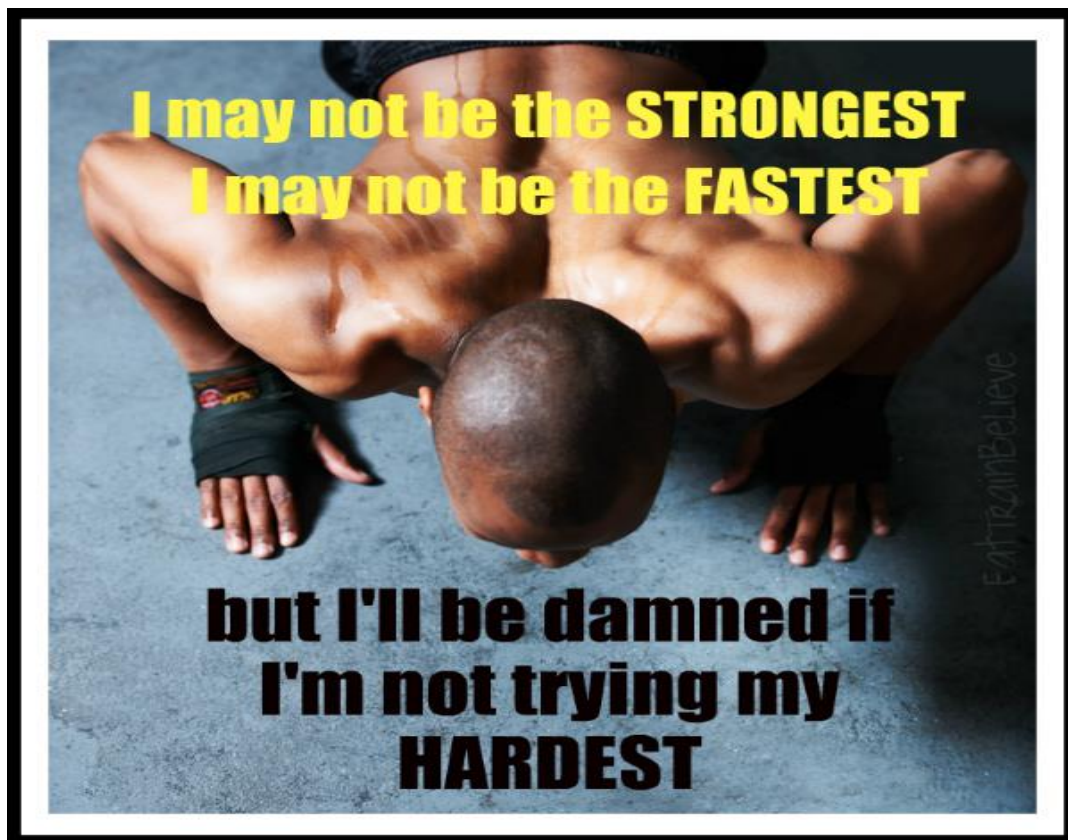
[Click here to read more](#) (and how you can get it)

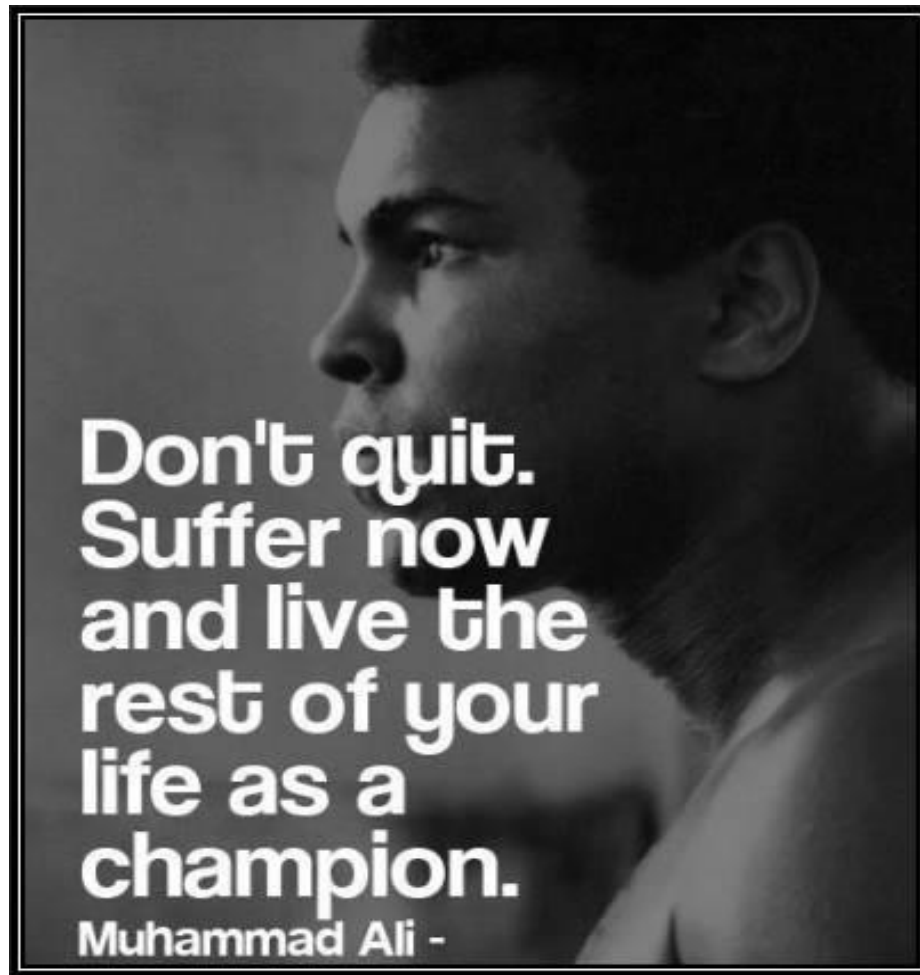
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