How to Get the Body You've Always Wanted

As the title suggests, this article describes in detail what it takes to finally get the body you've always wanted, but never been able to achieve.

Ready? Let's Goooo!

Introduction

Let's be clear, if you're one of my awesome training clients, this article won't throw any curveballs your way. But since this article will get shared, and found on the interweb, I'll break it down step by step for everyone.

The only truly new thing here is your determination and commitment to pushing yourself into uncharted territory, getting uncomfortable, and out of your comfort zone.

Again, there's nothing groundbreaking in this article. No "secrets'' or "magical info", just a request. Over the next four months, I'm asking you to do one thing that will make all the difference:

TAKE MASSIVE ACTION.

Every day, DO what it takes (the large and small actions) to get the body you want:

This includes:

- Stretching, warm-up, cool down, and recovery to maximize your training.
- Lifting, running, (or walking) to build muscle, endurance, and boost your metabolism.
- Eat clean and stay hydrated to fuel your body.

Deal? Alright, thanks!

Let's get started with nutrition.

Nutrition: Matching your calories to your activity

Your diet plays a significant role in your overall health, energy levels, appearance, athletic performance, and *response to training*, (which is the part we're interested in).

I found that the best way to get superior results from your training routine is ensuring that your diet (I'm referring to how humans eat) matches your physical activity.

It's called "Nutrition Matching."

And in order to make sure you're getting the most from your diet, we'll start by finding out how much you're consuming per day.

The best and easiest way to do this is by figuring out your TDEE or Total Daily Energy Expenditure

How to find your TDEE

Let's break it down step by step:

1. What is TDEE?

- Your Total Daily Energy Expenditure (TDEE) is an estimate of how many calories your body burns in a day, taking into account your physical activity.

2. How to Calculate TDEE:

- First, you need your Basal Metabolic Rate (BMR), instructions below.

- Next, you multiply your BMR by an activity multiplier. This multiplier considers how active you are during the day.

3. Why Activity Multiplier Matters:

- Even if you have a mostly sedentary lifestyle, you still burn calories through daily activities like walking and moving around. The activity multiplier accounts for these calories burned.

4. Using the TDEE Chart:

- To make this process easier, you can use a TDEE chart. Look at the chart and choose the activity level that best matches your daily life. This will help you determine the right multiplier to use in the calculation in the next step.

Activity Level Chart

Sedentary	Lightly Active	Moderately Active	Very Active
Multiply your BMR x 1.2	Multiply your BMR x 1.375	Multiply your BMR x 1.55	Multiply your BMR x 1.725
You get little to no exercise in a typical day. A sedentary lifestyle involves sitting most of the time, with minimal walking or exertion. Examples include: Office job with mostly sitting, retired/ unemployed with minimal physical activity, using a wheelchair/very limited mobility, driving most places instead of walking, leisure time mostly spent sitting, watching TV, on the computer, reading, etc., 10,000 steps or less average per day. A sedentary lifestyle can contribute to health issues like back pain, weight gain and poor cardiovascular health.	You get light exercise or activity 1-3 days per week. A lightly active lifestyle involves some physical activity but nothing too strenuous or sustained. Examples include: Taking a walk 1-3 times per week, using stairs instead of elevators/ escalators, gardening or doing yard-work once or twice a week, actively playing with kids/ family once or twice a week , retail job with walking around for short periods, 10,000-12,500 steps average per day. This level promotes some cardiovascular health and basic fitness.	You get moderate exercise 3-5 days per week. A moderately active lifestyle involves dedicated exercise sessions 3-5 days per week. Examples include: Jogging, cycling or swimming 3-5 days per week for at least 30 minutes, team sports a few times a week, physically demanding job like construction, farming, strength training or interval training sessions 3-5 days per week, 12,500-15,000 steps average per day. This level contributes to improved cardiovascular health, muscle tone, and overall fitness.	You get intense exercise 6-7 days per week. A very active lifestyle involves high-intensity, sustained physical activity almost every day. Examples include: High-intensity exercise like HIIT, or strength training workouts 6-7 days per week, endurance training, running/cycling 6-7 days per week, hiking on a regular basis, 15,000+ steps and exercise for 60+ minutes per day. This level leads to excellent cardiovascular health, muscular strength, and a high calorie burn rate.

In a nutshell, calculating your TDEE helps you figure out how many calories you need to maintain your current weight, considering your daily activity level. It's a useful tool for managing your diet and fitness goals.

Basal Metabolic Rate (BMR)

Your Basal Metabolic Rate (BMR) is the number of calories your body needs to perform its most essential functions to stay alive. These functions include things like your heart beating, breathing, making new cells, processing nutrients, building proteins, and moving ions around in your body.

In other words, it's the number of calories you would burn if you were just resting all day, doing nothing active. Your BMR forms the foundation for calculating your daily calorie needs.

Use this BMR Calculator then write it down.

Let’s finish up.

Calculate your TDEE

In order to calculate your TDEE, you’ll need to multiply your BMR by your activity level.

Example: BMR of 1,415 (kcals/day) x Activity Level of 1.375 = TDEE of 1,945 (kcals/day).

Using this example, if I continue to consume 1,945 kcals per day, I would simply “maintain” my current weight and body composition.

But, I want to drop some weight, and reduce my body fat %, so the process is dead simple.

I need to create a caloric deficit by reducing my TDEE. That’s why knowing exactly how much you’re eating on average per day is so important.

Let’s get to it.

Reducing your TDEE to create a caloric deficit

Take your TDEE and subtract a percentage (typically 15% to 30%) of calories, and that number becomes your new TDEE or Daily Maintenance Calories (DMC going forward).

Your current TDEE	1,945 (kcals/day)
Goal (to reduce your body fat)	-20% (389 kcals)
New DMC	1,556 (kcals/day)

NOTE: There is no magic percentage that works for everyone. Beware – reducing your calories by too much may cause your metabolism to slow down, so start on the lower end if you're new to this.

Your 80/20 calculation

From the example above

Your DMC	1,556 (kcals/day)
80% (whole foods)	1,245 (kcals/day)
20% (other food)	311 (kcals/day)

It's a good idea to prioritize the consumption of the 80% from whole foods first. This ensures you have sustained energy throughout the day and provides your body with the necessary fuel for physical activity.

Helpful tip - Food Journaling

I've found that keeping a food journal is one of the best ways to keep you on track and focused on your diet. If you're a beginner, the focus should be on creating the habit of tracking and reviewing (maybe not counting macros).

As you progress, you may start to follow a macronutrient profile for simplicity and energy tracking. I use the MyFitnessPal app.

If you don't already have MyFitnessPal, you can download it from the ***Apple Store or Play Store***.

How to make sure you’re eating enough

One of the easiest ways to make sure you’re consuming the right amount of calories is by dividing your DMC by the amount of meals you plan to eat that day. Super simple.

Daily Maintenance Calories	Meals per day	kcals per meal
1,556 (kcals/day)	4	389 (kcals)

Another option is tracking nutrition with a Macronutrient Profile

Tracking your macros (macronutrients) instead of just calories has several benefits:

Balanced Diet: Focusing on macros ensures a more balanced diet. It means you're paying attention to the nutrients your body needs for energy and overall health.

Understanding Caloric Sources: Macro counting helps you know where your calories come from and how they impact your body. Not all calories are the same, and macro tracking helps you see that.

Fun Fact: If you want to dive deeper, you can explore the science of the thermic effect of food (TEF).

A quick overview of macronutrients

Macronutrients are the three major nutrients your body uses or stores for energy: Carbohydrates, Fats, and Proteins. Each of these has a specific number of calories per gram:

- Protein and carbs have 4 calories per gram
- Alcohol has 7 calories per gram (yes, really!)
- Fat has the most, with 9 calories per gram

Here's a bit more detail:

Protein: It's essential for building and repairing muscles, tissues, and hormones.

Carbohydrates: These come in different forms like sugars, starches, and fiber. They provide quick energy.

Fats: They're a concentrated source of energy and also help with vitamin absorption.

High Protein Macronutrient Profile

For this style of training, I recommend:

- High Protein Macronutrient Profile (40/30/30)

Protein: Get 40% of your daily calories from protein. It's crucial for muscle growth and burns more calories during digestion.

Carbs: Carbs make up 30% of your daily calories. This keeps blood sugar stable and helps with satiety.

Fats: The remaining 30% comes from healthy fats, which are essential for hormones and energy.

Here's the breakdown

40%	30%	30%
156g protein per day	116g carbs per day	52g fats per day

NOTE: This is provided you aren't already on a specific diet from your doctor or dietician.

Doing some math

Want to make tracking macros easier? Divide each macro total by the number of meals you plan to eat in a day.

For example:
Let's use the daily maintenance calories from above of 1,556 kcals/day, and I eat 4 times per day.

Daily Maintenance Calories	Macronutrient Profile	Meals per day
1,556 kcals/day	(40/30/30)	4

Then my macros would be: 156g protein, 116g carbs, 52g fats, and each one divided by 4.

Protein	Carbs	Fats
156g protein / 4 meals	116g carbs / 4 meals	52g fats / 4 meals
39g per meal	29g per meal	13g per meal

This ensures I stay on track for each meal.

Alternatively, you can adjust your macros in apps like MyFitnessPal and divide by the number of meals, but where's the fun in that? 😉

The most effective method of cardio for fat loss: LISS

“Train hard, eat clean, run slow, and recover fast” is my motto.

Oh, you're not a runner? That's okay (just kidding, just kidding). Being a runner isn't necessary, but cardio (along with your diet) is key to speeding up your progress.

So, what's your alternative? LISS cardio. It stands for “low intensity steady state”. (it’s also known as Zone 2 cardio)

So why is the method of cardio better than something like HIIT for reducing body fat and helping you get your sexy back?

When you do low-intensity exercises like walking, bike riding, or light jogging, your body prefers to use stored fat as its energy source rather than carbohydrates.

Here's how it works:

Stored Fat

Your body has fat stored in different places, like your belly and thighs. During LISS type exercises, it starts using these fat stores for energy.

Fat Breakdown

As you exercise at this easy pace, your body breaks down the fat into small pieces called free fatty acids.

Into the Cells

These free fatty acids then enter your muscle cells.

Cell Powerhouses

Inside these muscle cells, there are tiny powerhouses called mitochondria. Think of them as the energy factories of your cells.

Fuel Conversion

The mitochondria take those free fatty acids and convert them into a special fuel called acetyl-CoA.

Energy Production

Acetyl-CoA is like the fuel that goes into a machine, called the Krebs cycle, to create energy molecules called ATP. ATP is what your body uses to function.

Oxygen Matters

This process needs more oxygen compared to using carbs. The good thing is that during low-intensity exercise, you have plenty of oxygen available.

So, the more of these cardio sessions you get in per week, the more fat stores are used, (like belly and thigh fat) as fuel.

I recommend:

- 40 to 120 minute sessions per day
- Know your Zone 2 heart rate range (220 - your age, multiplied by .5 and .65)
- Use a fitness tracker (Garmin is awesome) to measure distance, time and heart rate
- Wear proper shoes
- Take hydration before, during and after. Especially if you're exercising over 45 mins

Check out this short video by Dr. Peter Attia explaining what Zone 2 (LISS) should feel like.
How to find your "Zone 2" without using a lactate meter | The Peter Attia Drive Podcast

Spicing it up

Ready to take your training to the next level?

In addition to the steady-paced LISS cardio that taps into stored fat for fuel, let's add a dash of high-intensity sprints.

Benefits of sprints workouts

- Improved Cardiovascular Health: Sprinting challenges your heart and lungs, leading to improved cardiovascular fitness. It can help lower your risk of heart disease, lower blood pressure, and enhance your overall heart health.

- Increased Metabolism: High-intensity sprinting can boost your metabolism, it’s essentially like a leg workout. This means you burn more calories even after you've finished your workout, helping with weight management.

- Fat Loss: Sprints are highly effective for burning fat. They target stubborn fat stores and can contribute to a leaner body composition. Google an image of a sprinter...

- Enhanced Athletic Performance: Sprinting can improve your speed, agility, and power. This is valuable for athletes in various sports, from track and field to team sports like soccer and basketball.

- Mental Toughness: Pushing yourself to sprint at high intensity requires mental resilience. It can help you develop mental toughness and discipline. “Who gone carry the boats?”

- Improved Anaerobic Fitness: Sprinting is an anaerobic activity, which means it improves your body's ability to perform short bursts of intense effort without oxygen. This can benefit activities like weightlifting and HIIT training.

- Better Insulin Sensitivity: Sprint workouts can enhance insulin sensitivity, which is crucial for managing blood sugar levels and reducing the risk of type 2 diabetes.

Remember that sprinting is high-intensity and can be demanding on the body. So make sure you warm up properly, maintain good form, and progress gradually to prevent injuries.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If you're new to sprinting or have any underlying health concerns, it's a good idea to consult with a fitness professional or healthcare provider before starting a sprint workout routine.

Weight training: Mo muscle, less problems

Building or increasing your lean muscle mass isn’t just about looking good naked, it's also a potent tool for long-term fat loss.

Why? More lean muscle speeds up your metabolism, leading to increased calorie burning and enhanced fat utilization.

Beyond the aesthetic rewards, a higher muscle-to-fat ratio translates to improved overall health, as it can mitigate various health issues and contribute to a healthier, more active lifestyle.

So buckle up buttercup, because in this section, I’ll layout training splits, gym workouts, supplemental workouts, and recovery/mobility workouts.

How to Read the Workouts

Read the workouts as: **Sets / Reps / Rest Time**

Example: Squat 4/10/60 → (4 sets of 10 reps with a 60 second rest between each set)

Warm-up Sets

Some movements may require a “warm-up” set or two. With the goal being to prime the body and add less joint-stressful volume to your lifts.

Keep in mind that your warm-up sets are based on how you feel when performing your lifts. If you’re experiencing discomfort or stiffness, be sure to address it by foam-rolling, self-myofascial release, active stretching, or mobility drills.

Pre-Training Routine

Let’s prime the body for movement!

Remember, a proper warm-up should gradually prime the body for movement by increasing the heart rate and circulation; this will loosen the joints, increase blood flow to the muscles, prepare them for physical activity and prevent injuries. 😠 **So don’t skip your warm-up.**

Dynamic Stretching

You can also perform this routine in place if space is limited.

Walking Knee Hugs
Sets: 1 / Reps: 10 on each leg
This exercise is used to warm-up/stretch the hips, quads, calves, glutes and hamstrings. Walk forward and alternate raising your right or left leg. Grab your right or left upper shin with both hands and pull the knee towards their chest.

Walking Quad Stretch
Sets: 1 / Reps: 10 on each leg
This exercise is used to warm-up/stretch the quads. Walk forward and alternate grabbing your right or foot leg from behind and gently pull the foot towards your body.

Walking Lunge w/ Twist
Sets: 1 - Reps: 10 on each leg
This exercise is used to warm-up/stretch the hips, groin, quads and calves. Stand with feet about shoulder-width apart. With your elbows bent about 90 degrees, step forward with your left foot into a lunge position. Be sure to keep your knee over your left foot; don't twist at the knee. From your torso, twist your upper body to the left. Repeat on the opposite side.

Walking Frankenstein
Sets: 1 / Reps: 10 on each leg
This exercise is used to warm-up/stretch the hips, quads and hamstrings. Keeping your left leg straight, kick it up in front of you as high as you can, trying to touch the fingertips of the opposite arm. Repeat with the right leg.

Butt Kicks
Sets: 1 / Reps: 25 yards
Stand with your legs shoulder-width apart. Your arms should be bent at your sides. With your thighs perpendicular to the ground, kick your right heel up towards your glutes. Bring that foot back down. As the right leg comes down, flex your left knee and kick your left foot up toward your glutes.

Jumping Jacks
Sets: 1 / Reps: 25 - 50
This exercise is used to warm-up the body. The wider you get with your feet...the better.

Air Squats
Sets: 1 / Reps: 10 - 25
With your hands out in front of you, squat down and explode up. Drop to parallel or just below.

Arm Circles
Sets: 1 / Reps: 20 each direction
Stand with your arms out to your side, and palms facing down. Begin to make small circles with your arms going forward. Turn your palms up, and make small circles going backwards.

Pause Push-ups
Sets: 1 - Reps: 10
This exercise is used to warm the entire body. Start in a high plank position. Place hands firmly on the ground, directly under shoulders. Make sure you are firing your butt, legs and core throughout to connect all body regions. Begin to slowly lower your body—keeping back flat and eyes focused about three feet in front of you to maintain a neutral neck. Allow the chest to graze the floor and pause for (2) seconds. Don’t let your butt dip or stick out at any point during the move; your body should remain in a straight line from head to toe. Explode up and repeat.

Half Kneeling Psoas Stretch
Sets: 1 - Reps: 1 x 45 seconds
Hold for 45 seconds per leg. Keep your spine neutral and focus on deep breathing. Make sure to fire your butt on the backside hip to stabilize the pelvis.

Dynamic Lunge with Spinal Twist
Sets: 1 - Reps: 15 on each leg
This exercise is used to warm-up/stretch the hip flexors, quads and back. Start standing with your feet together. Take a big step forward with your left foot, so that you are in a staggered stance. Bend your left knee and drop into a lunge, keeping your right leg straight behind you with your toes on the ground, so you feel a stretch at the front of your right thigh. Place your right hand on the floor and twist your upper body to the left as you extend your left arm toward the ceiling. Hold for 2 seconds and alternate side to side.

Band Pull-Apart
Sets: 1 - Reps: 15
This exercise is used to warm-up/stretch the rhomboids, deltoids and pecs. Begin with your arms extended straight out in front of you, holding the band with both hands. Start the movement by performing a reverse fly motion, moving your hands out laterally to your sides. Focus on keeping your shoulder blades down and back. Pause as you complete the movement, returning to the starting position under control.

Gym Training Cycle
This is a 16 week training cycle, designed to accelerate fat loss, build strength and alter your body composition.

Remember why you're training. To look, feel and perform like you never have.

So if you're not training with me, I want you to challenge yourself...get every single rep! And make sure you stick to the rest intervals...you gonna need it.

Gym Training Split

This is my current training split for weight training.

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Lower strength	Pull strength	OFF	Push strength	Lower hypertrophy	OFF	Upper hypertrophy
Long easy run	Easy run	Hike	Hike	Speed repeats	Hike	Sprints/Hike

Lower Body Strength	Sets | Reps | Rest
Dynamic Warm-up	
Leg Extensions	4 / 12 / 60
Hamstring Curls	4 / 12 / 60
Bulgarian Split Squats	4 / 8 / 60
Walking Lunges	3 / 10 / 60
Deadlifts	4 / 8 / 60
Calf-raises	3 / 15 / 60
Post-Training Recovery	

Pull Strength	Sets | Reps | Rest
Dynamic Warm-up	
Prone Rows Incline	4 | 8 | 45
Bent-Over Barbell Row	4 | 8 | 60
Single Arm Row	4 | 8 | 60
Wide Grip Pulldowns/Low Row	3 | 3, Max | 60
Chin Up	5 | 5 + Max | 75
Dumbbell Curls	4 / 12 / 60
Post-Training Recovery	

Push Strength	Sets | Reps | Rest
Dynamic Warm-up	
Incline Barbell Bench Press	4 / 8 / 60
Flat Bench Press	4 / 12 / 60
Pec Flyes	4 / 12 - 15 / 30
Close Grip Bench Press	4 / 15 / 30
Dips	4 / 12 / 60
Shoulder Press	4 / 5 - 8 / 30
Bent-over Rear Delt Flyes	3 / 10 / 60
Post-Training Recovery	

Lower Body Hypertrophy	Sets | Reps | Rest
Dynamic Warm-up	
Static Bear to Planks	4 / 30s / 30
Hanging Knee Raise	3 / 15 / 30
Leg Extensions	4 / 12 / 60
Leg Press	4 / 12 / 60
Dumbbell RDL	3 / 12 / 60
Sled work	4 / 30s / 75
Post-Training Recovery	

Upper Body Hypertrophy	Sets | Reps | Rest
Dynamic Warm-up	
Incline Dumbbell Bench Press	4 / 12 / 60
Dumbbell Chest Press	4 / 12 / 60
Triceps Pushdown/Extension	3 / 15 / 30 each
Push-ups	5 / 20 / 30
Dumbbell Biceps Curl	3 / 15 - 20 / 45
Preacher Curl	3 / 8 - 12 / 30
Dumbbell Shoulder Press	4 / 8 / 60
Scapation (front) + Side Raises	4 / 15 / 60
Post-Training Recovery	

Some accessory movements
Add these in place of, or in addition to your training.

Mobility exercises	Arnold Press
Single Leg Box Squats	Dumbbell Clean + Press
Barbell Hip Thrust	Upright Rows
Heel-Elevated Front Squat	Cleans
Reverse Lunges Non-alternating	Snatches
KB Swing	Shoulder Shrugs

Farmer's Walk	Single Arm TRX Row
Dynamic Push-ups	Single Arm Sled Row

Recovery and Mobility movements

Recovery	Mobility
Foam roll Quads and IT Band	Hip Flexor stretch and abduction
Foam roll Adductors	Hip Adductor Dynamics
Foam roll Glutes	Pigeon Pose
Foam roll Piriformis	Prone swimmers
Foam roll Calves	Rotator Cuff Int/Ext rotation
Foam roll Pecs	Band or TRX T, Y, I
Foam roll Upper/Mid Back	Cobra to Child pose
Trigger Point Piriformis	