

Lean Muscle Building

Hypertrophy and Strength



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Disclaimer

Hey, guys!

Listen up...

I know you're ready to get strong, big, and more dynamic physically, but if you have some health issues or injuries it's important that you heal up first and get in a good physical state before you begin and engage with this *Lean Muscle Building* program.

I hate to say that because I'm excited to see what you can do with it, but the last thing I want is to have you injure or hurt yourself in any way because this program is a little out of your reach at the moment.

If you have any prior injuries, such as any severe injuries to your back, shoulder(s), neck, or any medical conditions like diabetes, lupus, or other ailments, it's in your best interest to consult with your physician, or primary health care provider, before you begin and engage with this program, and are cleared for rigorous physical activity.

Until you are cleared by a medical professional, don't start this program!

Also, note that I do not make any guarantees with this program, but only that in some way you will get stronger, given that you follow this program as closely as you can and remain committed to it. The process is entirely up to you, and this is not in any way a magic solution to any health or fitness related problems, issues, or concerns you may have.

*The **goal of this program** is to build functional, strong, dense, and lean muscle that makes you more dynamic in the things you are physically capable to do (sports, recreation, playing with your friends/family, moving around, etc.), and to enhance your physique more to what you may be seeking (lean, dense, and strong muscle). That's it!*

With that said, if you have any questions about this program, or wish to talk, consult, or work with me, feel free to email me at builtfromstrength@gmail.com, or visit my website at www.codycordeiro.com and I will respond to you as soon as I can.

Now that we have the "disclaimer" out of the way, let's get started!

I. *Introduction to Muscle Building*

We all want to build muscle, but often times we lack the direction and know-how of where to get started, and how to navigate the journey.

Often times, we ask questions like: what exercises should I do...how many reps is the best...how much protein do I really need...should I train to failure? These questions arise as soon as we start to get serious about building muscle, and can leave us paralyzed and discouraged.

Lucky for you, I'm going to break it down with this *Lean Muscle Building Program* to put you in a position to succeed, and resolve these questions.

Although muscle building is a complex process physiologically, it's a simple process in nature. Building muscle will never happen unless you put in the time, effort, energy, and dedication on your part to achieve. Consistency, I think, is the best ingredient for success in this endeavor, and without it you will fail to see the best results you can achieve. Thus, success is all upon you in building a lean, strong, and structurally sound, muscular body, but it doesn't hurt to have a guide to get you there efficiently and effectively.

One of those guides is this muscle building program you have in front of you.

This program will teach you the principles of muscle building, in addition to how to structure your weekly and monthly workouts on an ongoing basis to be successful in your initiation to muscle building and strength training.

This program will primarily focus on resistance training through free weights, the barbell, cable work, and calisthenics as the main mode to accomplish strength and muscle gains. Depending on your current fitness level, variations to the program may have to be made in regards to preparing your body for certain exercises and routines, but as a whole, you will follow this program as closely as possible.

What is most important, however, regardless of the contents of this program, or any other, is that you are 100% committed to it and the process of change—physically, mentally, and your lifestyle in general. Without it, you will not experience any real results and develop workout and lifestyle habits that ensure success for the long haul.

Following this program will help set you up for success in the gym, but it's your commitment to it and the process that will lead to getting the results you're looking for (i.e. building muscle and strength).

If you're ready to get strong and put on lean amounts of muscle, let's get to it!

II. Principles of Building Muscle

In order to build muscle, you have to put them to work—literally. Without challenging your muscle in different ways, either through weights, cables, your body-weight, or other means, your muscle will not develop, grow, and get strong. Hence, it's important to follow a few key muscle and strength training principles to get you there.

Here are the big three:

1. *Overload*
2. *Progression*
3. *Time under tension*

1. *Overload*

The first principle is the **overload principle**.

This principle states that in order for muscle to grow there must be a reason for it to grow. In our case, overloading the muscle with an ever increasing higher form of resistance, such as through increased weights, sets/reps, or variations of an exercise, will challenge the muscle to work even further, forcing it to adapt and grow. This adaptation to a new stimulus (i.e. heavier weight) is called the **Specific Adaptations to Imposed Demands (SAID) principle**.

This *SAID principle* states that you get what you train for. For example, if you're training for muscle strength you'll get stronger because you'll be doing things like heavy squats and deadlifts. On the other hand, if you're an athlete, training for muscle endurance will help you sustain your base level of strength in order to achieve greater performance on the field, court, etc., for a longer period of time. Regardless, the point is that we want a progression of overload to get where we want to go: stronger, denser, and more functional muscle.

This is why the overload principle is so important.

2. *Progression*

The second principle is **progression**.

This principle states that as muscles adapt through the SAID principle, in order to move further and get increased results (i.e. stronger, denser, and bigger muscles), that a progression must be used within training cycles to get there. This is done using a **periodized** model of training.

This concept of *periodicity* will allow you to get to where you want to be in the most efficient and effective way possible by continuing to respond to adaptations that cause plateaus, by using higher forms of challenge and resistance to avoid and overcome them. These new challenges can be thought of as new variables in your training that lead to enhanced results.

Some of these new variables can be increased resistance (heavier weights), variations of an exercise, and/or new challenging exercises and/or modes of training, like high intensity interval training (HIIT). All these new variables will be introduced in a timely manner over the course of a training cycle, typically week-to-week, which challenges your body further, forcing it to adapt to a new stimulus (all these new variables) and grow.

This program will follow a periodized model of training, in which a periodized progression will be our main outline for the duration of the program.

3. *Time under tension*

The third principle is **time under tension**.

Time under tension is the amount of time your muscles are working during an exercise. A simple example is thinking of the bench press.

Visualize how you would perform the movement.

First, you would control the weight down, touch your chest while remaining maximally tight in your body, and explode up. But, what about if you played with the tempo (speed) of the exercise and performed paused reps?

Well, you would slow the tempo down by lowering the bar in a count of three (down, 2, 3), perform a static hold at the bottom position with the bar on your chest (hold, 1, 2), and then press up as explosive as you can.

This would increase the time under tension, resulting in muscles working longer, which leads to increased muscle gains (hypertrophy, endurance, strength, etc.) and neuromuscular control (coordination, balance, and stability).

It's great to lift heavy, but if you don't have any control over the weight by bouncing and swinging your body, you'll lack time under tension, which will not lead to optimal results, on top of risking injury. That's why time under tension is so important because that is literally how your muscles, along with your body in general, get stronger.

Hence, it's principle number 3.

III. Program Design

Program design depends on the muscle and strength training principles discussed in the last section (“Principles of Building Muscle”) along with a few other key ideas and parameters listed below.

- *Training frequency*
- *Rest Intervals*
- *Training Volume*

These training notions and principles in totality provide the framework for our program and they will be discussed individually below.

Training Frequency

The first concept is **training frequency**.

Training frequency is how many times per week, and even daily, that you work out.

Why this is important is because it will affect how your body is able to perform in the gym and whether or not you can recover effectively and avoid overtraining. It would appear common sense that if you’re in the gym more that means you’ll get better results. The answer is a resounding “**NO.**” That’s just not how the body works.

There’s a point of diminishing returns when working out, so you have to be aware of how often your training (frequency) or you will over train.

The body needs adequate amounts of rest in order to repair and recuperate from the stress and damage you put your body through in the gym, in addition to everyday life stress, so recovery is just as important as hard workouts.

If proper and sufficient rest is not attained overtraining will result, which means *no more progress!*

We don’t want that so pay attention...

Overtraining can cause some serious detrimental effects over prolonged periods of time if not addressed, and can severely disrupt your bodily functions, such as the endocrine system, which regulates important hormones for growth and repair and organ function. This can eventually lead to insulin resistance (diabetes), irregular heartbeat, hypothyroidism, chronic disease, and a myriad of other health abnormalities caused from [overtraining syndrome](#).

In order to prevent this from ever happening, look for these warning signs of overtraining:

- Excessive fatigue
- Poor sleep/insomnia
- Low testosterone
- Frequent illnesses (like colds and constant runny nose)
- Prolonged muscle soreness
- Lack of motivation and sluggishness
- Constant thirst
- Depression/personality changes
- Never ending injuries
- **NO PROGRESS!**

That's why it's paramount to closely monitor training frequency on a weekly basis to avoid overtraining.

This program will focus on training in the gym 4-5 times per week, with varying levels of intensity that help prevent overtraining. In reality, 4-5 times/week is all you need. Training in the gym everyday sounds cool, but in reality is not sustainable in the long-term and your results will hit a wall and eventually start to regress.

Rest Intervals

The next important concept is **rest intervals**.

Rest intervals is how long you rest between sets during an exercise, between exercises, and between rounds of exercises (like if you were doing a circuit).

For this program, you will use varying rest intervals from 2-4 minutes for higher intensity exercises, like during heavy lifts, down to 60 seconds between sets for auxiliary exercises, like dumbbell rows. The variation all depends on what exercise being performed and what goal or objective is being pursued (like muscle power, strength, hypertrophy, or endurance).

In this program, elements of a traditional 5x5 strength training model will be incorporated, which uses the 5 basic compound exercises (the squat, deadlift, bench press, overhead press, and barbell row) for 5 sets, with 5 reps for each set, at 70-85% of your 1 rep max. In this mode of exercising, you will rest 2-4 minutes, in order to sufficiently recover from training at these higher intensities.

On the other hand, for more traditional bodybuilding elements of this program, you will only rest 90 seconds, or less, between sets in order to increase time under tension.

Regardless, rest intervals are crucial in attaining your desired results and table III-A below represents how long you should rest given the target of your workout for that particular exercise.

Table III-A: Rest Interval Parameters

REST INTERVAL	ADAPTATION
0-1 MINUTE	Muscle Endurance
1-2 MINUTES USING MODERATE LOADS, 2-3 MINUTES USING HEAVY LOADS	Strength
1-2 MINUTES USING MODERATE LOADS, 2-3 MINUTES USING HEAVY LOADS	Hypertrophy
3-5 MINUTES DEPENDING ON LOAD	Maximal Strength ($\geq 90\%$ of your maximal effort)
2-5 MINUTES DEPENDING ON LOAD	Power

Training Volume

Training volume is our next parameter in our program design. It can be defined as the total amount of repetitions you perform in a workout for your “working sets”.

Working sets is defined as the total amount of repetitions you perform at the sets you actual train your body at in a particular weight(s) or mode of resistance for a desired adaptation, like muscle hypertrophy, endurance, or strength.

The reason is that most lifts, especially the more demanding compound movements like the squat, deadlift, or bench press, require you to start with a series of “warm-up” sets in a progression of weights leading up to your workout weight. This is so your body is completely warmed-up and primed to perform at heavier or desired weights, so that you don’t do too much too soon and cause injury.

For example, you can perform a total of 40 repetitions for the bench press, but only have 25 of those reps actually be “working sets”.

This would be because you would have about 3 warm-up sets to put your body in the best position to workout at your desired weight (or level of intensity). Warm-up sets are critical for this program because for much of it the working sets will be in the 20-25 rep zone at 65% to 85% of your 1RM. This is high intensity, so working your way up to that level first is critical.

Table III-B below demonstrates the typical repetitions you want to perform at “working sets” for a particular body adaptation.

Table III-B: Training Volume Adaptations

TRAINING VOLUME (TOTAL REPETITIONS)	MUSCLE ADAPTATION
36-75	Muscle Endurance
18-30	Strength
25-40	Hypertrophy
10-20	Maximal Strength

You'll notice from the table above that there is some overlap between some of the ranges, which is perfectly natural. That's because all of these adaptations, especially muscle hypertrophy (the size/volume of the muscle) and strength (ability of the body to produce its maximum force against a particular resistance through proper neuromuscular activation and control) are closely correlated with one other. An increase in one can have a significant and positive impact on the other.

This program will primarily focus on these two adaptations primarily—muscle hypertrophy and strength—in order to build lean, strong, and functional muscle on your body, and the right training volume will be an integral part of this process.

IV. Lean Muscle Program

Workout Schedule

As mentioned previously, this program calls for training only 4 or 5 days a week depending on your schedule and personal preferences. There will be no full body workouts to avoid overtraining, but instead splits that work your upper and lower body in separate parts, with the exception of circuit day.

Tables IV-A and IV-B below describe which lifts to focus on during each workout you have on a weekly basis, and the order to which it is to be performed. I'll repeat that: follow the order of workouts to be performed, in order, as listed in tables IV-A and IV-B below.

Table IV-A: 4-Day

4-Day Breakdown		
	<i>Main Lift(s)</i>	<i>Main Muscle Groups</i>
<i>Day 1</i>	Deadlift and barbell/dumbbell rows	Legs, back, core
<i>Day 2</i>	Bench Press and overhead press	Chest, back, shoulders, arms, core
<i>Day 3</i>	Squat	Legs, core
<i>Day 4</i>	Circuit	Whole body

Table IV-B: 5-Day

5-Day Breakdown		
	<i>Main Lift(s)</i>	<i>Main Muscle Groups</i>
<i>Day 1</i>	Deadlifts	Legs, back, core
<i>Day 2</i>	Bench press and barbell/dumbbell rows	Chest, back, shoulders, arms, core
<i>Day 3</i>	Circuit	Whole Body
<i>Day 4</i>	Overhead press	Back, arms, core
<i>Day 5</i>	Squat	Legs, core

Once you get used to this workout schedule on a weekly basis, and you feel comfortable, you can switch the order of lifts. With that said, however, I put each workout day and its associated lifts in that particular order *to avoid overtraining and to maximize your results.*

Following your particular weekly workout routine, as outlined above, Table IV-C and IV-D below contains two example schedules for the 4-day and 5-day per week schedules. You can arrange the days you workout differently to your preferences, but stick to the guidelines for each workout day from tables IV-A and IV-B.

Table IV-C: Example of 4-Day Split Schedule

4 Days/Week							
	<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
<i>Main Lifts</i>	OFF	Deadlift, barbell/dumbbell rows	Bench press, overhead press, arms	Squat	OFF	Circuit (high-intensity)	OFF
<i>Main Muscle Groups</i>	N/A	Legs, back, shoulders, core	Chest, shoulders, back, arms, core	Legs, core	N/A	Whole Body	N/A

Table IV-D: Example of 5-Day Split Schedule

5 Days/Week							
	<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
<i>Main Lifts</i>	OFF	Deadlifts	Bench press and barbell rows	Circuit	Overhead press and arms	Squats	OFF
<i>Main Muscle Groups</i>	N/A	Legs, back, core	Chest, back, core	Whole Body	Shoulders, back, arms, core	Legs, core	N/A

Workout Split Breakdowns

This is what you've been waiting for!

The two tables below, tables IV-E and IV-F, will outline your weekly routine of what to focus on. They will include the core of your exercises that will allow you to develop a strong and balanced body with their respective sets/reps and rest intervals to take your fitness to the next level.

Table IV-E: 4-Day Program Breakdown

Workout Program 4-Day Split						
	<i>Exercise</i>	<i>Sets</i>	<i>Reps</i>	<i>Weight/Resistance</i>	<i>Tempo</i>	<i>Rest Interval</i>
<i>Day 1</i>	1. Deadlift	5	5	65-75% of 1RM	Normal	2-3 minutes
	2. BB/DB Rows	3 to 5	6 to 8	BB row: 45-65% of 1RM DB row 45-65% of 1RM	Normal	1-2 minutes
	3. Goblet Squat	3	8 to 10	50-65% of 1RM	Normal	1-2 minutes
	4. Pull-ups	3	6 to 10	BW	Normal	60-90 seconds
	5. Lat row/lat pull-down	3 to 4	6 to 10	50-65% of 1RM	Normal	60-90 seconds
	6. Glute Ham Raise (or back extension)	3	8 to 10	BW	Down, 2, 3, hold, up 1	60 seconds
	7. Core circuit (3-5 exercises from Appendix B under "core")	2-3/exercise	6 to 12 or 15-60 seconds depending on exercise	BW, Med Ball, etc. where appropriate	Normal	90 seconds or less b/w rounds
Day 1 Notes:						
<p>Today is all about the deadlift, but we'll also incorporate other exercises that focus on the back, legs, and core. Since the deadlift is a very demanding exercise, and arguably the best overall exercise for your whole body strength from head-to-toe, it's very important that you develop the proper movement pattern for the deadlift in order to work all your muscles most effectively, and, of course, prevent injury (we do not want snap city!).</p> <p>If you're unfamiliar with the deadlift it is recommended that you only work on technique for the lift until you can get strong enough to actually lift the bar with weight. If you need help with doing the deadlift correctly visit my website at www.codycordeiro.com and search for deadlifts under the "lifting tab" or click HERE. Also, Mark Bell from Supertraining Gym is also a great resource, and that goals for all the main lifts. Check out his YouTube channel HERE.</p> <p>Once you set the ego aside and build a strong foundation for the deadlift with proper movement patterns, positioning, and strength, then you can start progressing in weight. If you want to get strong as hell the deadlift will get you there.</p> <p>Following the completion of the deadlift, perform the rows with either the barbell or with dumbbells (your choice), or both, and work within each set/rep range. Next, do the goblet squat, pull-ups, lat pull-down and row, glute ham raise (or back extension), and a core circuit for the specific sets/reps and resistance. Once completed you are done, but if you're still feeling good!</p>						

recommend doing some accessory work, like with certain exercises, such as a sumo, stiff-legged, or Romanian deadlift (RDL), and/or leg curls to strengthen your hamstrings and glutes for the deadlift. You can also work on movement patterns with any of the exercises you feel weak or uncomfortable with to develop better skill in that exercise.

(Also, please reference Appendix B for additional exercises for upper and lower body, core, and functional movements.)

Lastly, remember to cool-down with some low intensity cardio, foam rolling, and stretching to assist you in your recovery.

	<i>Exercise</i>	<i>Sets</i>	<i>Reps</i>	<i>Weight/Resistance</i>	<i>Tempo</i>	<i>Rest Interval</i>
<i>Day 2</i>	1. Barbell Bench Press (flat or incline)	5	5	65-75% of 1RM	Normal	2-3 minutes
	2. Barbell Overhead Press	5	3 to 5	50-70% of 1RM	Normal	2-3 minutes
	3. Incline DB BP	3	8 to 10	45-65% of 1RM	Normal	1.5-2 minutes
	4. Low Cable Row	3	8 to 10	45-65% of 1RM	Normal	60-90 seconds
	5. Pause Push-ups	3	5 to 10	BW	Pause (hold, 1, 2 at bottom position then explode up)	60-90 seconds
	6. Lateral/Forward single arm DB raises	3	8-10	45-55% of 1RM	Normal	60-90 seconds
	7. Hammer curls (with DB)	3	8 to 10	35-55% of 1RM	Normal	60-90 seconds
	8. Reverse Curls (with curl bar)	3	8 to 10	45-55% of 1RM	Normal	60-90 seconds
	9. Triceps pushdown	3 to 4	8 to 12	40-50% of 1RM	Normal	60-90 seconds
	10. Core circuit (3-5 exercises from Appendix B under "core")	2-3/exercise	6 to 12 or 15-60 seconds depending on exercise	BW, Med Ball, etc. where appropriate	Normal	90 seconds or less b/w rounds

Day 2 Notes:

Today is all about upper body, and it's with everyone's favorite exercise as the star: the bench press. After your warm-up, you'll start with the bench press. Like with all the big lifts, if you're unfamiliar with the bench press, or any lift, it's vital that you develop proper movement and breathing patterns, and starting positions to activate your core and body to perform the movement correctly and effectively to prevent injury and to work all the muscles involved. (If you need help with the bench press visit my website at www.codycordeiro.com and search bench press under the "lifting tab" or click [HERE](#)).

You'll notice I included two forms of the bench press: flat and incline. I encourage you to do both, but do not do both in the same session; just focus on one (that's why I added incline DB BP later on in the workout as a complement to the flat bench press). You can alternate week-to-week, switching between flat and incline, but keep the same progression as outlined in Table V-A if you do both variations. In addition, if you have a history of shoulder problems, the incline bench press is more forgiving on your shoulders and won't stress it as much as the flat bench press.

Once you do complete the bench press, you move on to another big lift called the overhead press. This lift works on shoulder stability, balance, and core strength to press the barbell over your head. It's important that you can activate your core effectively by breathing deep to create pressure and squeezing your glutes, in order to protect your lower back. Shoulder mobility is also important in this exercise, so accessory work may be needed before starting this exercise, like stretching with a PVC pipe.

Once those two lifts are completed, move on to incline dumbbell bench press, low cable rows, pause push-ups, hammer and reverse curls, with triceps pushdowns to finish working your chest, back, and arms. Like with any day, if you're feeling good and have time, feel free to add in any accessory exercises or technique work to finish your workout, in addition to your cool-down of low-intensity cardio, foam rolling, and stretching. Please refer to *Appendix B* for more upper body exercises.

	<i>Exercise</i>	<i>Sets</i>	<i>Reps</i>	<i>Weight/Resistance</i>	<i>Tempo</i>	<i>Rest Interval</i>
<i>Day 3</i>	1. Back Squat	5	5	65-75% of 1RM	Normal	2-3 minutes
	2. Front Squat	3 to 4	6 to 8	40-50% of 1RM	Normal	2-3 minutes
	3. Leg Press	3 to 4	6 to 8	2-4 times BW	Normal	2-3 minutes
	4. DB/KB Forward and/or backward lunge	3 to 4	6 to 8 (each leg)	50% of 1RM	Normal	2 minutes
	5. KB swing (double or single)	3	8 to 12	50-65% of 1RM	Explosive	60-90 seconds
	6. Box/High Jumps or step-ups	3	6 to 10	BW for jumps DBs for step-ups	Explosive	60-90 seconds
	7. Core circuit (3-5 exercises from Appendix B under "core")	2-3/exercise	6 to 12 or 15-60 seconds depending on exercise	BW, Med Ball, etc. where appropriate	Normal	90 seconds or less b/w rounds

Day 3 Notes:

Today is day 3 and that means it's leg day. The squat will be the main exercise of choice, with both the back and front squat. Larger emphasis will be given to the back squat, since the movement pattern is more natural, but the front squat will be pivotal as well by stressing thoracic extension of the spine while stressing core strength and stability (good for posture). As with any lift, if you're unfamiliar or unsure of how to do the back squat, spend a few sessions just working on technique and movement patterns first and then add weight. Feel free to stop by my website at www.codycordeiro.com and look up back squat for a tutorial on how to do it, or click [HERE](#).

Following the completion of the front and back squats, move on to the leg press, dumbbell/kettlebell lunge, and KB swings. The last exercise listed is a plyometric exercise which focuses on explosive power in the box/high jumps. If you're uncomfortable with box/high jumps, step-ups are a great replacement to perform instead. This will apply your lower body strength into an athletic movement that will put your hard work into something more dynamic.

Once you complete those 6 exercises with the required sets, reps, weight, etc., you can now focus on working on technique, or other auxiliary exercises to aid any one exercise or area of your body that you lack strength or mobility in. Please refer to *Appendix B* with additional lower body exercises to perform. As always, remember to do a proper cool-down with some light cardio, as well as stretching and foam rolling.

	<i>Circuit</i>	<i># of Rounds</i>	<i>Exercise</i>	<i>Reps</i>	<i>Weight/Resistance</i>	<i>Tempo</i>	<i>Rest Interval</i>
<i>Day 4</i>	1	3 to 5	1. Push-ups	10	BW	Normal	90 seconds or less b/w rounds
			2. Goblet Squat	10	50-60% of 1RM	Normal	
			3. KB Swings	10	45-55% of 1RM	Normal	
			4. Kb Clean & Jerk	5x5	45-55% of 1RM	Normal	
	2	3 to 5	1. KB Deadlift	10	50-60% of 1RM	Normal	90 seconds or less b/w rounds
			2. KB/DB Lunge	5x5	45-55% of 1RM	Normal	
			3. Pull-ups	6 to 10	BW	Normal	

		4. Flutter Kicks	20 to 30 seconds	BW	Normal
<p>Day 4 Notes: Circuit day is all about high intensity interval training (HIIT) to get your body working to its limits ($\geq 90\%$ of you max effort) to build muscular strength and endurance, increase cardiorespiratory fitness, burn fat, and test you physically and mentally. You'll begin with <i>Circuit 1</i> that starts with push-ups, but before you do, however, it's vital more so on this day that you perform a complete and proper warm-up, which includes elevating your body temperature through light cardio and/or dynamic movements, stretching, and foam rolling to have your body primed for your HIIT workout. Once you begin your circuit, your goal is to complete all exercises in a round (1-4) in order with little to no rest between exercises (<15 seconds). After you complete a round, rest for 90 seconds or less, and then do another round. You can either do 3 or 5 rounds per circuit based on your current conditioning and overall fitness level, but don't be afraid to push yourself within reason. If you start to feel dizzy, lightheaded, or like you're going to black out, stop immediately. The goal is to push yourself without killing yourself, so don't go to any extremes. And, remember...the above exercises are not at all comprehensive for what you could do for a circuit day. <i>Appendix B</i> has a great list of additional exercises to perform on a circuit day under "functional movements". After you've completed the above circuits a few times, you are free to switch the exercises above with the ones listed in <i>Appendix B</i> as you see fit. Just remember to group exercises that contrast each other well, in order to hit every part of your body, as well as keep reps high in the 8 to 12 range. Regardless, circuit day is challenging, but very rewarding once completed.</p>					

With the 4-Day split breakdown, you'll notice there are individual notes for each day. Follow them the best you can and always stay as close to them as possible, in addition to the given reps, sets, weight/resistance, rest interval, and tempo parameters. They are there for a reason, so make sure to follow them as closely as possible to get maximal results. Jump down to the notes after the "Day-5 Breakdown" in Table IV-E for more notes that'll answer more of your questions.

Table IV-F: 5-Day Program Breakdown

Workout Program 5-Day Split (first 9-12 weeks)						
	<i>Exercise</i>	<i>Sets</i>	<i>Reps</i>	<i>Weight/Resistance</i>	<i>Tempo</i>	<i>Rest Interval</i>
<i>Day 1</i>	1. Deadlift	5	5	65-75% of 1RM	Normal	2-3 minutes
	2. Goblet Squat	3	8 to 10	50-65% of 1RM	Normal	1-2 minutes
	3. Pull-ups (wide, narrow, neutral)	3	6 to 10	BW	Normal	60-90 seconds
	4. Lat row/lat pull-down	3 to 4	6 to 10	50-65% of 1RM	Normal	60-90 seconds
	5. Glute Ham Raise (or back extension)	3	8 to 10	BW	Down, 2, 3, hold, 1, up 1-	60 seconds
	6. Leg Curl	3	6 to 10	45-65% of 1RM	Normal	60-90 seconds
	7. Core circuit (3-5 exercises from Appendix B under "core")	2-3/exercise	6 to 12 or 15-60 seconds depending on exercise	BW, Med Ball, etc. where appropriate	Normal	90 seconds or less b/w rounds
See the notes for the 4-Day Split breakdown for specific exercise notes.						
<i>Day 2</i>	<i>Exercise</i>	<i>Sets</i>	<i>Reps</i>	<i>Weight/Resistance</i>	<i>Tempo</i>	<i>Rest Interval</i>
	1. Bench Press (flat or incline)	5	5	65-75% of 1RM	Normal	2-3 minutes
	2. BB/DB Rows	5	5 to 8	50-70% of 1RM	Normal	2-3 minutes
	3. Incline DB BP	3	8-10	50% of 1RM	Normal	1-2 minutes
	4. Low Cable Row	3	8-10	50% of 1RM	Normal	60-90 seconds
	5. Pause Push-ups	3	5 to 10	BW	Pause (hold, 1, 2 at bottom position)	60-90 seconds
6. Triceps pushdown	3 to 4	8 to 12	40-50% of 1RM	Normal	60-90 seconds	

	7. Core circuit (3-5 exercises from Appendix B under "core")	2-3/exercise	6 to 12 or 15-60 seconds depending on exercise	BW, Med Ball, etc. where appropriate	Normal	90 seconds or less b/w rounds	
See the notes for the 4-Day Split breakdown for specific exercise notes.							
Day 3	<i>Circuit</i>	<i># of Rounds</i>	<i>Exercise</i>	<i>Reps</i>	<i>Weight/Resistance</i>	<i>Tempo</i>	<i>Rest Interval</i>
	1	3 to 5	1. Push-ups	10	BW	Normal	90 seconds or less b/w rounds
			2. Goblet Squat	10	50-60% of 1RM	Normal	
			3. KB Swings	10	45-55% of 1RM	Normal	
			4. KB Clean & Jerk	5x5	45-55% of 1RM	Normal	
	2	3 to 5	1. KB Deadlift	10	50-60% of 1RM	Normal	90 seconds or less b/w rounds
			2. KB/DB Lunge	5x5	40-50% of 1RM	Normal	
			3. Pull-ups	6 to 10	BW	Normal	
4. Flutter Kicks			20 to 30 seconds	BW	Normal		
See the notes for the 4-Day Split breakdown for specific exercise notes.							
Day 4	<i>Exercise</i>	<i>Sets</i>	<i>Reps</i>	<i>Weight/Resistance</i>	<i>Tempo</i>	<i>Rest Interval</i>	
	1. Overhead Press	5	3 to 5	65-75% of 1RM	Normal	2-3 minutes	
	2. DB Shoulder Press	3	8 to 10	55-65% of 1RM	Normal	1-2 minutes	
	3. Single-Arm Cable Row	3 to 4	6 to 10	45 to 65% of 1RM (weight increasing gradually w/each set)	Normal	1-2 minutes	
	4. Pull-ups (wide, narrow, or neutral)	3	6 to 10	BW	Normal	1-2 minutes	
	5. Lateral/Forward single arm DB raises	3	8-10	45-55% of 1RM	Normal	60-90 seconds	
	6. Hammer Curls	3	8 to 10	35-55% of 1RM	Normal	60-90 seconds	
	7. Reverse Curl (with curl bar)	3	8 to 10	35-55% of 1RM	Normal	60-90 seconds	
8. Core circuit (3-5 exercises from Appendix B under "core")	2-3/exercise	6 to 12 reps or 15-60 seconds depending on exercise	BW, Med Ball, etc. where appropriate	Normal	90 seconds or less b/w rounds		

See the notes for the 4-Day Split breakdown for specific exercise notes.						
	Exercise	Sets	Reps	Weight/Resistance	Tempo	Rest Interval
Day 5	1. Back Squat	5	5	65-75% of 1RM	Normal	2-3 minutes
	2. Front Squat	3 to 4	6 to 8	40-50% of 1RM	Normal	1.5 -3 minutes
	3. Leg Press	3 to 4	6 to 8	55-70% of 1RM	Normal	2-3 minutes
	4. DB/KB Forward lunge	3 to 4	6 to 8 (each leg)	45-65% of 1RM	Normal	2 minutes
	5. KB swing (double or single)	3	8 to 12	50-65% of 1RM	Explosive	60-90 seconds
	6. Box/High Jumps or step-ups	3	6 to 10	BW for jumps BW/DBs for step-ups	Explosive	60-90 Seconds
	7. Core circuit (3-5 exercises from Appendix B under "core")	2-3/exercise	6 to 12 or 15-60 seconds depending on exercise	BW, Med Ball, etc. where appropriate	Normal	90 seconds or less b/w rounds
See the notes for the 4-Day Split breakdown for specific exercise notes.						

Quick Workout Program Notes:

- You'll notice much of the weight/resistance parameters are based on your *one repetition maximum* (1RM). A 1RM is the maximal weight or resistance you can move in a particular exercise. This is important because it determines what training or working weight you should train at. For example, if your 1RM in the bench press is 200 pounds, your working range would be in the neighborhood of about 130 to 150 pounds (65-75%).
- Work as closely within the range parameters as possible for the sets/reps, and adjust the weight within the weight/resistance ranges listed (i.e. 30-50% of 1RM) as you see fit, depending on your energy levels and how you feel overall for that particular day (if you've only had 4 hours of sleep either don't go as hard that day or rest that day and come back stronger the next day after proper rest has been attained to prevent excess catabolic stress which leads to muscle loss, and not muscle gain).
- If you don't want to physically perform a 1RM for any of the main lifts, for whatever reason, you can determine your 1RM by using a 1RM calculator by clicking [HERE](#), or doing a google search of "one rep max calculator" and plugging your numbers in. For all the other exercises besides the main lifts, from goblet squats to hammer curls, determine your 1RM and rep ranges based on your best guess through experimentation.
- Make sure to always go in order of the exercises listed. The main lifts are at the start because they are the most complex exercises and require the most muscle groups and effort, and where most of your lean body mass and strength will develop from. Hence, they are first.
- Although I have included a set amount of specific exercises to do with each main lift that constitute your entire workout, if you feel that you can do more, and/or feeling adventurous, you are free to add "new" or "additional" exercises listed in *Appendix B*. All I ask is that these "new" or "additional" exercises target the muscle groups you are doing that day, like legs for squat day or chest/shoulders for bench press and overhead press day.

- Before you add any “new” or “additional” exercises, make sure to wait at least 2-3 weeks until you become familiar with the program and understand the progress and impact of the program on your body. We do not want to burn the body out with too much work and induce excess catabolic stress, which stops or severely slows muscle growth and progress.
- Any auxiliary or accessory exercises you perform, like isolation exercises (i.e. bicep curls), should be performed toward the end of your workout because they are not the point of emphasis—building balanced and pure strength and muscle are. These exercises come in handy to strengthen a weak part of your body, like if you have a muscle imbalance or injury, and/or shape a muscle for aesthetics (a.k.a. bodybuilding). If done too much, however, they can cause decreased mobility and muscle imbalances that lead to injury, so be prudent in your approach with the strength training principles from sections II and III.
- When an exercise calls for a “normal” tempo, that means it should be controlled more during the eccentric portion of the movement (think lowering a dumbbell) and more explosive on the concentric contraction (like when you press the barbell up during a benchpress).
- For information about program progression, refer to section VI.

V. Warm-up, Cool-down, and Body Maintenance

Warm-up

At this point, I know you're excited to hit the gym, especially since you know your routines to follow, but we have to talk about a few things first.

One of those things is warming-up properly.

Your warm-up should include the following:

1. *Elevating your core body temperature and facilitating proprioception*
2. *Self myofascial release (SMR) (a.k.a. foam rolling)*
3. *Static/Dynamic Stretching*
4. *Main exercise warm-up/practice*

1. *Elevating your core body temperature*

The first component of a good warm-up routine is elevating your core body temperature and heart rate. This means doing some form of low intensity cardio (treadmill, bike, elliptical, jump rope, etc.), and/or dynamic exercises, like air squats, push-ups, pull-ups, lunges, and other types of callisthenic exercises, to get the body moving and muscles starting to fire and respond like they should.

This will increase blood flow to the muscles, in addition to increasing the body's heart rate and facilitating proper neuromuscular control. This is also critical to increase synovial fluid in joints, as well as allowing the connective tissues, like tendons and ligaments to have greater blood flow.

This process should not be exhausting on the body, but just enough to get the body primed to workout, typically lasting 5 to 10 minutes.

2. *SMR or Foam Rolling*

The second component of a good warm-up routine is SMR, or more commonly known, as foam rolling. Foam rolling serves different purposes and benefits, and is an activity essential for every training session.

Whether you realize it or not, our muscles (some more than others) can become overactive and result in *hypertonicity*. This *hypertonicity*, causes muscles to be overactive causing continuous partial contractions. This results in the muscles becoming shortened and tense, often caused by things, such as poor posture, sitting all day, and the like, resulting in restricted *range of motion* (ROM). This restricted ROM increases the likelihood of movement compensations, poor activation of muscles by reduced elasticity, decreasing performance capabilities, and increasing the chance of injury.

Foam rolling, along with using lacrosse balls (good for chest, feet, glute/hip), and a [Thera cane](#) (good for lower back, glute and hip), significantly relieves all of these muscular and connective tissue tension and issues, which increases performance and accelerates recovery.

Foam roll the following areas to relieve tension in the muscles:

- Calves
- Hamstrings
- Quads, IT Band and TFL (outer part of your upper leg)
- Hip flexors
- Piriformis (upper glute)
- Mid to upper back

If you want to foam roll correctly follow these guidelines:

- Foam roll slowly in short motions (north/south and east/west)
- Focus particularly on areas that feel tight (*where it hurts!!*)
- Avoid contracting a muscle that you are rolling out (don't tense up...relax instead)
- Avoid putting your whole body weight on one area (can cause nerve damage)
- Do one limb, or one side, at a time for increased pressure to relieve tension
- Foam roll as long as necessary until your muscles release and the tension, or most of it, is gone

Note: if you've never foam rolled before it's going to be an experience. If this is the case, I recommend that a time be blocked out during the day just for foam rolling because it'll take a good amount of time—up to 30 minutes or more. That doesn't sound like fun, but it will pay off in the end. Don't take any chances on your body, and if that means investing in one or going to the gym 30 minutes earlier then so be it.

At the end of the day, foam rolling will allow the body to perform better and recover faster. Do your best to make it a habit every time you go to the gym, and you'll be thankful.

3. *Stretching/Mobility work*

Stretching and mobility work is the next component in the warm-up routine and a necessity. Like foam rolling, stretching and mobility work relieves muscular and connective tissue tension, which helps the muscles attain their optimal state of elasticity, thus increasing its performance capabilities. Stretching and mobility work also helps the body increase its flexibility over time, which helps you achieve proper and full ROM when performing exercises. A great example is the squat and overhead press. These are two big exercises that require good flexibility and mobility, and stretching the calf, shoulder, and hip complexes will help you attain good and stable positioning to perform both exercises. Using a PVC pipe as a tool to accomplish this is great.

The following list is the big muscle groups you should be stretching, especially if you're working those muscles for the day:

- Chest

- Lats, shoulders, and back
- Triceps and biceps
- Hip complex
- Quads and Hamstrings
- Adductors (inner thighs)
- Calves

Just like foam rolling, spend as much time as you need stretching. Whether it's 5 or 15 minutes it doesn't matter. Stretch until you feel good, and you'll be in business to dominate your workout.

4. *Intra workout warm-up*

The last component of a good warm-up is an in-workout warm-up with a particular exercise. This will be most common for the main lift of the day, at the start or your *Lean Muscle Program* routine found in tables IV-E and IV-F.

For example, if you're doing the deadlift for the day as your main movement, then you're going to have to progress gradually in weight to reach your desired working weight over a series of 3-5 sets with ever increasing weight at lower reps. This will prime your body to lift heavy weight by preparing your neuromuscular system to work in synergy to lift the weight and prevent injury.

If I were going to be working at 315 pounds for the day, for instance, I would warm-up with 135, then go to 185, 225, 275, and then make the jump to 315. I wouldn't do more than 5 reps for any of those warm-up sets so I don't burn myself out before I actually work at 315 pounds. On each of those warm-up sets, however, I would focus on form and act like each of those warm-up weights was 315 pounds. This intensity would translate to the working weight once begun, and you'll be in a better position to complete all your working sets and reps.

For the other exercises, you can warm-up too, but probably won't need to because your body will already be fired-up and ready-to-go and hit all the other exercises at the given weight/resistance. The only exception is if you may be doing a new or newer exercise you're not that familiar with to either figure out how to do it with the right technique and/or find which weight or resistance to train at. Otherwise, keep going strong and listen to your body to tell how hard to push yourself.

Cool Down

Like the warm-up the cool-down is an important component of a complete workout, and plays an important role in overall progress and growth. Cool-downs are often neglected because many don't see a cool-down as that important. This is a false notion. Cool-downs help your body stop catabolic breakdown, while allowing the body to start the recovery process earlier and more efficiently.

This is because the body's heart and respiratory rate gradually return to normal, by preventing blood pooling in your legs while also signaling the body to start the anabolic recovery process. This is typically done with low intensity movements, or exercise, at the end of your workout. A great example is walking or biking at an easy pace, followed by foam rolling and good stretching.

The whole cool-down process should last anywhere from 10-15 minutes.

Once completed, this will help prevent the body from becoming overly tense while facilitating certain processes in the body that aid in recovery, like the prevention of excess lactic acid build-up that cause muscles to become tight and sore the next day (DOMs).

VI. Program Progression

Like with anything, as you get better you progress and this program is no different. This program calls for a biweekly progression that will peak in every 8 weeks for a new maximum effort repetition to be established in all five of the main lifts for the next cycle. Below in Table VI-A you will see Cycle 1's progression of what to increase for each main lift, and Table VI-B is an example progression of that cycle.

Table VI-A: Cycle 1 Program Progression

Program Progression										
	Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Exercise	Deadlift	Baseline	10lb ↑	No change	10-20lb ↑	No change	5-10lb ↑	No change	Max	De-load
	Squat	Baseline	10lb ↑	No change	10-20lb ↑	No change	5-10lb ↑	No change	Max	De-load
	Bench Press	Baseline	5lb ↑	No change	5-10lb ↑	No change	5lb ↑	No change	Max	De-load
	Overhead Press	Baseline	5lb ↑	No change	5-10lb ↑	No change	5lb ↑	No change	Max	De-load
	Barbell Row	Baseline	5lb ↑	No change	5-10lb ↑	No change	5lb ↑	No change	Max	De-load

Table VI-B: Example Cycle 1 Progression

Example Cycle 1 Program Progression											
	Week	Starting Max	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Exercise	Deadlift	205 (Baseline Max)	145 (Baseline ~70% 1RM)	155 (10lb ↑)	155 (No change)	175 (20lb ↑)	175 (No change)	185 (10lb ↑)	185 (No change)	275 (New Max)	De-load
	Squat	185 (Baseline Max)	135 (Baseline ~70% 1RM)	145 (10lb ↑)	145 (No change)	155 (10lb ↑)	155 (No change)	165 (10lb ↑)	165 (No change)	245 (New Max)	De-load
	Bench Press	135 (Baseline Max)	95 (Baseline ~70% 1RM)	100 (5lb ↑)	100 (No change)	105 (5lb ↑)	105 (No change)	110 (5lb ↑)	110 (No change)	170 (New Max)	De-load
	Overhead Press	85 (Baseline Max)	55 (Baseline ~70% 1RM)	60 (5lb ↑)	60 (No change)	65 (5lb ↑)	65 (No change)	70 (5lb ↑)	70 (No change)	110 (New Max)	De-load
	Barbell Row	95 (Baseline Max)	65 (Baseline ~70% 1RM)	70 (5lb ↑)	70 (No change)	75 (5lb ↑)	75 (No change)	80 (5lb ↑)	80 (No change)	115 (New Max)	De-load

Program Progression Notes: IMPORTANT!

Before you actually begin for week 1, it's paramount that you become familiar with the proper technique and movement patterns for each main lift before you begin them. I know I keep saying this, but that's only because it is *very important...*

UNTIL YOU ARE YOU WILL NOT OFFICIALLY BEGIN THIS PROGRAM.

If it takes 1 to 2 weeks, or even a month to feel comfortable and confident with all of the exercises then so be it. It's important to have a strong foundation first before you can start to run with it. The old adage: crawl before you walk, and walk before you run rings true here.

With that said, once you are ready and confident to begin you find your baseline by determining your 1RM to determine your percentages for your working weight. Note that the baseline in "week 1" is after you have performed a 1RM in each main lift to the best of your ability. After you determine that, then you begin "week 1" with your baseline weight, which is roughly 65-75% of your very first 1RM from Table IV-E and IV-F. Table VI-A is where you can see your weekly weight progression, and Table VI-B shows an example of how that progression might look.

Keep following the program progression cycle from table VI-A, and apply it to Tables IV-E or IV-F for each workout that you perform for your first cycle. As you increase the weight for your main lifts, it is also recommended that you progress in weight with all the other exercises you perform, and/or add varying styles to them, such as slightly increased sets and/or reps (in alignment with Table III-A and III-B), in addition to playing with the tempo of the exercise to increase its difficulty, within reason. This will further help you develop overall strength, balance, and stability within your body that will lead to achieving desired weight, body composition, and overall fitness goals.

After you complete the first 8 weeks and reach a new max and hit new personal records (we call them PRs in the fitness world), you have a **de-load week**.

A *de-load week* is where you step off the gas pedal for a moment and decrease the amount of weights you're working with, significantly, to around 50% or so. This will give your body an extra chance to recover from the stress you've put it through because of working so hard. This de-load week, which is scheduled for "Week 9", is your week to do so.

It's also an opportunity for you to work a lot more on technique of the exercises you're doing (especially the big ones like the deadlift), exploring other exercises to add to your arsenal (as found in *Appendix B*), and maybe training with more functional exercises (*Appendix B*), or more outside the gym that week with sport and recreation to just have fun.

Once you complete your de-load week, it's time to hop on the horse again and complete another cycle with renewed vigor. Keep the same progression outlined in Table V-A, but you'll notice that your baseline to start off with will be significantly higher than when you very first started.

All in all, it is recommended that you complete 3 to 4 cycles of this program to become an experienced lifter, along with becoming stronger, leaner, more functional, and odds are, more confident in who you are and what you can do.

VII. *Where's the cardio?*

I'm sure you're asking at this point where is all the cardio?

Isn't cardiovascular (cardio) training important for overall health and fitness levels, like weight and body fat percentage?

The answer is yes...of course it is.

With that said, however, this program primarily focuses on strength and lean muscle mass gains, so cardio is not a point of emphasis per se.

Now, what I will say about cardio in regards to this program is that you should be doing it as part of your warm-up and cool-down sessions. Warming up should be in the neighborhood of about 5-10 minutes and cool down should be about 10-15 minutes, both at low intensity, in addition to proper stretching and foam rolling.

The one area I have incorporated cardio respiratory training specifically in this program is on circuit day. On that day your body will be working at a very high level, forcing your cardio respiratory system to be fully engaged by working to its limits, adapting, and then progressing over time. Cardio is something that not all of us, including me, are that excited about, so I included it in a way that is more exciting than just the mundane treadmill or bike.

What I do encourage is that you get the bulk of your cardio training outside the gym, as with outdoor activities, recreation, and sport. Things like hiking, walking/jogging with your dog, playing a pick-up basketball or football game with your friends, or swimming at the YMCA down the street with your family, sounds much better and fun then going on the treadmill for 30-45 minutes at a 5% incline at 4.0 speed.

That doesn't mean you can't do that sort of traditional gym cardio, just pick something that you enjoy, gym or not, and try adding a day or two that specifically focuses on cardio respiratory training with that activity as the main mode of exercise. If that's swimming outside, hiking, or hopping on the elliptical and going for 30-45 minutes then so be it.

Just pick something.

And for whatever you pick, alternate the intensities from low-to-high, with varying intervals of those intensities to challenge your cardio system even further. A walking and sprinting combination is an example.

All I say is that you pick a day or two where that makes sense for you. I recommend it being on a day off day between workout days, and/or at the end of the week after the conclusion of all your workouts for the week.

And, remember...don't over think it. Something as simple as a morning walk on an empty stomach for 30-60 minutes qualifies just fine. Just do something.

VIII. Nutrition

Introduction to Nutrition

Nutrition is a significant component to your overall health and fitness and it's vital that you be eating foods that nourish you for performance and facilitate proper recovery.

As a result, you have to keep yourself accountable by tracking your macronutrients (carbohydrates, proteins, and fats) on a daily and weekly basis to see if you're eating too little, too much, or just the right amount to progress and reach your goals. Over time you'll get to the point where you can sense if you're eating just the right amount of food, but for now let's keep track of it.

One of the best ways to do this is through an app called "MyFitnessPal". In my opinion, I think this is the best app out there right now for keeping track of all the foods you eat on a daily basis. It will break down the macronutrient count of all the foods you consume, let you know if you're eating too much of a particular food, or just eating too little or too many calories for your goal weight given your initial data input, like goal weight, activity level, and so forth.

In addition, MyFitnessPal will also break-down important factors in your diet to be aware of, such as how many grams of sugars you're eating (this is a big one), your micronutrient consumption (vitamins and minerals), and other nutrition measurements, like fiber intake. All in all, it's important that you be keeping track of your calories, and it's even more important that you be eating the right foods.

Follow the guidelines below for a good, strong healthy diet:

- Drink tons of water.
- Eat a diverse range of vegetables in abundance on a daily basis (you cannot eat too many vegetables).
- Stick to lean meats, like poultry and fish, the majority of the time (red meat is okay in moderation).
- Eat complex carbohydrates the majority of the time, such as sweet potatoes/yams, brown rice, quinoa, and other whole grains.
- Avoid eating any and all types of junk and fast food as much as possible, but don't kill yourself if you do (*if you have to ask if it's good for you, odds are it's probably not, so avoid eating/drinking it*).
- Stick to the 5 ingredient rule if you buy something pre-packaged.
- Eat sources of wholesome fat, as from avocados, coconut oil, nuts and seeds, and saturated fat found from unadulterated (organic/no hormones and antibiotics, wild caught, etc.) meat and fish.
- Stick to fruit in moderation, and limit really sugary fruits like bananas, mangos, and dried fruit.
- Consume as many clean sources of probiotics, like organic yogurt (no added sugar), kefir, kimchi, sauerkraut, kombucha, Kevita, etc., as you can.
- When possible, buy organic, non-GMO types of food (click on this [LINK](#) and this [LINK](#) for more info on which produce to buy organic).

Following these guidelines will give you the boost you need to hit your weight, body fat, and performance goals.

With that said, the only thing you have to do is keep yourself accountable to eating within those guidelines and experimenting with the breakdown of macros that are right for you. Everybody is different, so there is no one-size fits all diet. Please don't listen to any fad diet nonsense out there because that's all it is: nonsense. We are all different shapes, sizes, and have different body and genetic make-ups, so all our individual macros will be different.

From personal experience (over a hundred pounds lost and keeping the weight off for 4 plus years), you just have to keep experimenting and come-up with what works for you and what doesn't.

A good rule of thumb to start off with is that you should eat more carbs on your workout days, consume .8 to 1.0 grams of protein per pound of body weight on a daily basis, and keep fats around 20-35% of your total caloric intake on the daily.

Those principles will give you really good results, but again, you have to experiment to see what works for you.

If you want to know more about nutrition, please visit my website by clicking [HERE](#), and you'll find lots of info on food, protein, and more.

Supplementation

Supplements...

Good 'ole supplements.

There are so many things to be said when it comes to the supplement industry inside the fitness arena that it can make you nauseous.

Every company claims to have that "secret formula", whether it's for a protein or pre-workout, that will give you that extra edge to get stronger, bigger, and faster. Their marketing campaigns are carefully crafted to entice you and I, the consumer, that we "need" this or that supplement to get strength and muscle gains.

I hate to break their bubble, but that is completely false.

You do not need to spend countless dollars on supplements to make progress to make strength and muscle gains. The only thing that can get you there is a strong, consistent effort on your part by training hard and smart, while taking care of your body with good nutrition, stretching, foam rolling, mobility work, and *good rest* that make up your core competencies of a healthy lifestyle. You can take all the supplements you want, but unless you fulfill those core competencies first, no improvements will happen...*period*.

Now, does that mean supplements can't help or enhance your performance and recovery? No, it doesn't. And, will consuming a protein shake after a workout hurt? No, but it won't do anything magical for you unless you put in the work and meet those core competencies first.

The benefit of supplements is so small in comparison to the core of what you do—hard and smart workouts, with proper nutrition and rest—that they won't do a thing unless you focus on those core competencies of your fitness regimen and routine, and overall healthy lifestyle.

Think about it like this...

If you were a smoker, but ran every day, you'll get a positive aerobic response for that time running, but the good you do with running for aerobic and cardiovascular health is heavily negated by a highly negative action in smoking. Same thing goes with any supplement you may take. If you take a supplement, yet ignore or fail to put effort into the core competencies for your health you'll get nowhere.

What I suggest, is that you take an audit of your lifestyle and pay close attention to see what's taking away or adding to your health and fitness level. Partying 2-3 times/week, being a frequent user of alcohol, surrounding yourself with negative people, and so on, takes a toll on your body (physically and mentally), and can severely stagnate and/or negate the good you do in the gym, eating right, let alone any supplement you may be taking to help with muscle, weight, or any other type of issue. You'll get nowhere near the gains or progress, especially long-term, you can be making with those negative influences.

That's why it's important to be smart first, and live the lifestyle that is conducive of growth and progress in and outside of the gym. Supplements are a component of that, albeit very small, but can be that extra push to get you there faster, given that you have satisfied your core competencies first, that are required for success to reach your strength, muscle, and fitness goals. That's what we want, and this program won't do as good as it can if you lack a strong effort to fulfill that obligation to yourself.

Supplements to Explore

Given that you have satisfied all those core competencies, here are some supplements I do recommend that are supported by research, and ones I take regularly to help reach optimal states of strength and muscle gains.

The first supplement is completely free, and it'll save you many headaches with disappointing expectations from supplements, as well as not digging a hole in your pocket.

What is it?

Sleep!!!

Sleep...something that many of us forget to do as we take on more responsibility and life happens to us. People think you build muscle in the gym, but it's actually when you're resting that your muscles rebuild, and become more dense, strong, and bigger. Sleep/rest is an anabolic state where our bodies can repair and re-build themselves back up again stronger and better than before. That's why it's so, so important.

If you can't get more sleep, try to improve your quality of sleep, by doing such things as calming your mind before bed (reading a book helps), writing your worries for the next day down on a pad of paper, meditating or listening to calm music, and avoiding bright light and electronic media

that keep our brains in “work mode”. Do these practices 30 to 60 minutes before bed time and it'll probably help you destress and calm you for rest.

With that said, traditional supplements that actually do some good is a high quality protein isolate (it can be whey, vegetable, or animal based protein), creatine monohydrate, caffeine, branch chain amino acids (BCAAs), and beta-alanine.

Protein is obvious because that's literally what muscle is made of: amino acids; and that's what protein is. Pick one that is an isolate because it has a higher concentration, or percentage, that is bioavailable—meaning its ability to be absorbed by your body. Watch out for extra junk that may be in there too, like sugar, artificial flavors, colors, preservatives, etc. Check by looking at the ingredient list and

Creatine monohydrate is another one that has been tested repeatedly and been proven to be effective to lead to strength gains. Creatine helps your body be more efficient with oxygen and energy production. Essentially, it will help you go longer and harder by doing an extra rep or two in a set that challenges your muscle further.

Caffeine is another substance that has been proven to have significant and positive results on performance. It helps your body utilize fat for energy, and also helps your body perform better by having better mental focus and cognition efficiencies.

Branch chain amino acids, or *BCAAs*, are important for muscle function and performance. They help prevent muscle catabolism, or breakdown, by stopping your body's natural tendency to break down muscle, especially when you work out hard and long. Take these if you are training on an empty stomach or are having a long strenuous workout.

Lastly, **beta-alanine** has been effective to prevent muscle fatigue and pathways associated with it. This means that your muscles can work at a higher level and perform at better effectiveness over the course of a workout. You'll commonly see beta-alanine in pre-workout supplements, along with caffeine, *BCAAs*, and sometimes creatine monohydrate.

Those are the supplements I recommend that I have taken that have helped me over the years. For more info on supplements effectiveness, visit www.examine.com. This is a great website to look at hundreds of different supplements, fitness related or not, with data and useful information on whether they meet their claims, and its empirical evidence through clinical trials and studies.

IX. Conclusion

By now, you know that this program has an abundance of information that may take some time to completely digest. I suggest you review it a few times and print out the workouts and progression as outlined in this program for easy reference. This way you can make notes on the side or on the back of what tweaks you need to implement, or anything else you need to fit in.

At the end of the day, this program is a guide and foundation to either get you started or to take you to that next level of strength and fitness and development you seek. That's why I encourage you to make it your own by adding things that are a good fit for you. If you want more muscle endurance maybe add a circuit day and/or alternate certain training sessions week-to-week. Modify it as you see fit, but I encourage you to stick to it at least *1 to 2 times* as outlined, only making minor adjustments along the way.

After that, you can do things, like pyramid sets, heavy singles at 90% of your 1RM, or heavy triples to challenge your body in different ways as you progress from training cycle-to-cycle. If you're unfamiliar with those ideas I'll be adding more content over time through my website at www.codycordeiro.com, and you're always welcome to contact me for individual questions and if you would like me to personally train you.

With that said, this concludes this strength and muscle building program, and if you follow it closely, I believe that this program will be effective at meeting and have a good chance at surpassing your expectations of having a stronger body with better muscle. If you follow the principles and routines I have laid out for you, I believe that something positive will happen.

You may not gain 20 pounds of muscle and be at 10% body fat when you're done with the first cycle, especially depending on your starting point, but if you keep going and remain committed, consistent, and integrate these principles into your workout regimen and lifestyle, there's no doubt you'll get there.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me by email at builtfromstrength@gmail.com, or visit my website at www.codycordeiro.com for more fitness and related info. I look forward to hearing from you and the results you attain from this program!

Thanks for the download and I'll talk to you soon.

Until then, be strong and be you!

Best,

Cody

Appendix A: List of Baseline Program Exercises

Upper Body Emphasis:

- Barbell bench press
- Incline barbell bench press
- Overhead press
- Barbell rows
- Dumbbell rows
- Low cable rows
- Single-arm cable row
- KB clean & jerk
- Pull-ups
- Push-ups
- Hammer curl
- Reverse curl

Lower Body Emphasis:

- Barbell deadlift
- Barbell back squat
- Barbell front squat
- Goblet squat (KB/DB)
- Leg press
- Lunge (with & w/out DB/KB)
- Glute ham raise
- Leg curl
- KB swings
- KB clean & jerk
- KB deadlift
- Box jumps
- Step-ups

Appendix B: Additional Exercises (including advanced movements)

Upper Body Emphasis:

- Pause barbell bench press
- Decline barbell bench press
- Decline dumbbell bench press
- Incline/Decline push-ups
- Diamond push-ups
- Dumbbell/cable flies
- Standing/seated dumbbell shoulder press
- Face Pulls
- Rear delt flies
- Barbell/DB/KB floor press
- Curl with curl bar
- Dumbbell/cable triceps extensions
- Reverse barbell rows (supinated grip—palms facing up)
- BOSU ball push-ups
- KB/DB strict or push press
- Cable flies (any variation)
- Dips (with or w/out weight)
- Single forward DB raise
- Single lateral DB raise
- Arnold press
- Heavy Isometric DB holds

Lower Body Emphasis:

- Pause squats (any type: back, front, body, etc.)
- Barbell/KB good mornings (high technique required)
- Deadlift variations: Romanian, deficit, snatch-grip, stiff legged—barbell and dumbbell—pause
- Lateral and overhead lunges (with or w/out DB/KB)
- Body/Air squats
- Body jump squats
- Weighted step-ups with DBs or KBs
- Weighted box jumps with DBs or KBs
- Sled work (push/pull)
- Backward lunge
- Backward lunge to high knee
- Broad jump
- Lateral steps with resistance band
- Hip extension with cable
- Hip thrusts (with or w/out barbell or weights)
- BOSU ball squats (good for balance/stability)
- Pistol squat (very advanced...lifter caution)
- Heel touch

Functional Body Movements:

- Sled work (push/pull)
- Tire flips
- Farmer's walk (with any variations, heavy DBs, one arm, overhead, etc.)
- Barbell/KB clean & jerk
- Power cleans (with or w/out jerk)
- Squat chest press
- Step-up to shoulder press
- Barbell/KB/DB snatch (advanced)
- Turkish get-up (very advanced movement...lifter beware)
- Anything plyometric (box jumps, plyo push-ups, med ball throws, burpees, sprinter step-ups, jump squats, jump lunges, agility drills, etc.)
- Trap/Hex bar deadlift
- Sandbags
- Atlas stones
- Sprinting
- Dumbbell shoulders
- Muscle-ups
- Anything gymnastic or strongman

Core Emphasis:

- Dead bugs
- Bird dogs
- Jack knife (including any variation)
- Glute ham raise (with any variation, as with weights for resistance)
- Anti-rotation with cable or resistance band
- Rotation with cable or medicine ball (with or w/out any variation, as with a rotation from a lunged position)
- Planks (including any variation, like side planks)
- Leg raises (with any variation, as with a bench)
- Mountain climbers
- Flutter kicks
- Sprinter/bicycle sit-ups/crunches
- Cable pull downs
- Toe touch
- Knee tucks (with any variation, hanging, Swiss ball, jumping, etc.)
- Turkish get-up (lifter beware...very advanced movement)
- Bridges
- Medicine ball work (med ball slams, med ball twists, med ball reach, etc.)

