BUILT FOR A REAL WEEK · THE PLAN

THE NORMAL WEEK

Everything in the book, on two pages. Stick it on the fridge, keep it in your gym bag, or photograph it. **A session moved beats a session missed.**

3	45	2 or 3	2
SESSIONS A WEEK	MINUTES EACH	HARD SETS PER LIFT	REPS SHORT OF FAILURE

EVERY SESSION, SAME SHAPE

01
WARM-UP
About five minutes. Move, then one or two light sets of your first lift.

02
SQUAT OR HINGE
For example squat Monday and Friday, hinge Wednesday.

03
PUSH
One pressing lift.

04
PULL
One rowing or pulling lift.

- **Days:** Monday, Wednesday and Friday, or any three with a day between. Two in a row is fine when the week won't allow a gap.
- **Hard sets:** two or three of each lift. Hard means you stop about two reps before you'd fail.
- **Reps:** 6 to 12 a set. Give each lift a range inside that; 8 to 10 is a good start.
- **Rest:** about two minutes between hard sets.
- **Progress:** add a rep or a little weight most weeks. Top of the range on every set? Add the smallest jump next time.
- **Big lifts first.** Anything extra, like arms or calves, goes at the end and is the first thing cut.

EXERCISE OPTIONS

PICK WHAT YOUR BODY TOLERATES AND YOUR GYM HAS. MACHINES COUNT.

PATTERN	FREE WEIGHTS	MACHINES	HOME OR HOTEL
SQUAT	Barbell back squat, goblet squat	Leg press, hack squat	Goblet squat, split squat, band squat
HINGE	Romanian deadlift (dumbbells or barbell), trap-bar deadlift	Back extension	Dumbbell Romanian deadlift
PUSH	Barbell bench press, dumbbell bench press, overhead press	Machine chest press	Dumbbell press on a bench or the floor, push-ups, band press
PULL	Chin-up, one-arm dumbbell row	Lat pulldown, seated cable row, machine row	One-arm dumbbell row, band row anchored in a door

THE SLEEP RULES

- Seven hours most nights.
- The same bedtime on a Tuesday and a Saturday.
- The phone out of the bedroom.
- No caffeine after two in the afternoon.
- **Bad night?** Do the session, keep the weight, don't chase a best. **Bad run of nights?** Fix the bedtime.

WHEN THE WEEK GOES WRONG

THE BAD WEEK

TWO SESSIONS. THIRTY MINUTES EACH.

The same plan, made small.

- **The big three only:** your squat or hinge, your push, your pull.
- **Two hard sets of each**, about two reps short.
- **Keep the weight. Cut the sets.**
- **Cut from the end, never the start.**
- **Move it, don't miss it.** Don't double up: if Tuesday can't move, just do Thursday.
- **Write it down before you need it.** Two slots in the calendar, with a day and an hour.
- **Ill or hurt?** That isn't a bad week. Rest.
- **Back after a month or more off?** Start where you left off, a little lighter for the first week or two. No punishment week.

THE TRAVEL WEEK

TWO SESSIONS. THIRTY MINUTES EACH.

Two hard sets of each lift.

- **Hotel gym, one dumbbell:** goblet squat, dumbbell press, one-arm row.
- **No gym:** pack a band. Band squat, band press or push-ups, band row anchored in the door.
- **No band and no gym?** Walk. Push-ups and split squats in the room still keep the habit alive.
- **Light weight or band, more than about 15 reps?** Go to the end of the set: stop at the last clean rep, or one before it. Two reps short is too hard to judge on long sets.
- **Make a light weight harder:** three seconds on the way down, a pause at the bottom, or one leg or one arm at a time.
- **Expect to hold, not to set records.** A travel week holds muscle better than top-end strength.

> **Never go to the end of a set alone under a loaded barbell. A dumbbell can be put down.**

WHAT YOU EAT

THE FOOD RULES

1.6 g	0.4 g
PROTEIN PER KILO A DAY	PER KILO, EVERY MEAL

For an 85 kg man: about 135 g a day, about 35 g a meal. That's a palm and a half of meat or fish, not a small pot of yoghurt.

1. **Protein at every meal.** It does most of the work.
2. **Aim for about 1.6 g of protein per kilo of bodyweight a day.**
3. **Make each meal a real dose:** about 0.4 g per kilo.
4. **Then eat the food you like around it.** Pizza on Friday is fine. Have the chicken first and two slices instead of five.
5. **One protein you'll happily eat at every meal, and two fallback meals** you can make without thinking. Mine: chicken and eggs most days; tuna or salmon with rice as the fallbacks.
6. **Decide dinner before you're hungry,** not in front of the fridge.
7. **Weekends:** protein at breakfast, dinner decided, and the number of drinks decided before the first one.
8. **Travel:** protein every meal, even if it's eggs at the buffet and a burger at the airport. One real meal a day where you don't count anything. No catching up when you get home. Hold your weight and you've won.
9. **Eating out:** build the plate around protein, then pick one extra: the bread, the dessert or the drinks. Not all three. Have a regular order. Mine is boiled skinless chicken, plain steamed rice and cucumber from a chicken shop near home.

If you have kidney disease or any other medical condition, talk to your doctor before you raise your protein.

MY TWO FALLBACK MEALS

Write yours here. The ones you can make tired, without a recipe.

My bad-week slots (day and hour):

TAKE IT TO THE GYM

THE LOG SHEET

ONE LINE PER LIFT
Every session. Write the weight before you leave the gym.

REPS LEFT
How many more you could have done on the last set. Aim for about 2.

TOP OF THE RANGE?
Every set at the top of your rep range: add the smallest jump next time.

DATE	SESSION	LIFT	WEIGHT	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3	REPS LEFT ON LAST SET	NOTES
Mon 4 Jan	*Normal*	*Goblet squat*	*24 kg*	*9*	*8*	*8*	*2*	
		Dumbbell press	*22 kg*	*8*	*8*	*8*	*2*	
		One-arm row	*26 kg*	*10*	*10*	*10*	*2*	*Top of range on every set: add weight*

EVERY TWO WEEKS FILL IN ONE LINE

DATE	WAIST (CM)	SESSIONS DONE (OF 6)	BAD WEEKS	PHOTOS TAKEN?	AVERAGE SLEEP	ONE NOTE
Day one				Yes		Starting line
Week 2						
Week 4				Yes		
Week 6						
Week 8				Yes		
Week 10						
Week 12				Yes		Month three: compare with day one