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BODY TRANSFORMATION MEAL PLAN DESIGN



HOW TO CREATE DIETS FOR THE FASTEST POSSIBLE BODY COMPOSITION IMPROVEMENTS IN MEN AND WOMEN



SETTING UP FOR SUCCESS

SETTING UP FOR SUCCESS

ESTABLISH YOUR STARTING POINT

The first step in setting up for success is to establish your starting point.

To do this, you will complete the same body composition assessment that we use with clients in their first session at Ultimate Performance.

The assessment involves:

- ▶ Recording your bodyweight.
- ▶ Taking circumference measurements.
- ▶ Taking progress pictures (the infamous 'before' and 'after' pictures).
- ▶ Estimating your body fat percentage.

The body composition assessment is a vital part of your transformation.

Seeing your starting pictures and measurements can inspire you to take action, and once you are up and running, watching your body take shape and the numbers drop can be equally rewarding.

It also serves a very practical purpose, as you will use the results to create your meal plan and inform any changes you need to make based on your progress.

We have provided comprehensive guides on how to complete each stage of the assessment in the 'Progress Assessment' section.

Each guide covers:

- ▶ Equipment requirements.
- ▶ Recommended frequency and timing of measurement.
- ▶ How to perform the assessment.
- ▶ Key issues and trainer tips.

You can read ahead but make sure to schedule time to complete the baseline assessment, as you will need the results to create your meal plan.



TRANSFORMATION TIME FRAMES

WHY WE RECOMMEND 12 WEEKS

We recommend putting aside 12 weeks to complete your transformation.

From experience, this is the longest time people can commit to before needing a break. An unavoidable truth about transformation programs is that they require a level of discipline and attention to detail that many of your friends, family and colleagues may struggle to understand.

You can sustain a highly focused approach for a relatively short period, but not indefinitely. Nobody is a robot.

YOU MAY NEED LESS THAN 12 WEEKS

If you are starting from a relatively lean position, you may be able to achieve your body composition goals in less than 12 weeks.

However, unless you are an experienced dieter, you have no way of knowing for sure how long you will need. It takes several cycles of dieting to get a solid understanding of how long you need to reach a given body fat percentage. Life can get in the way and affect your ability to follow the plan, for example, travel, social commitments or even the flu!

It is better to overestimate how long you need and then end your diet in advance of the 12 weeks if you achieve your target look ahead of time.

YOU MAY NEED MORE THAN 12 WEEKS

There is a limit to how much body fat you can lose in 12 weeks and some people may need more time to achieve their long-term body composition goals.

If this is the case, we recommend taking a break from dieting after week 12 to focus on consolidating your results. Following this, you can then undertake another block of transformation dieting.

How long you should break for between each dieting phase depends on the length of the initial diet, how much longer you want to diet for and practical issues like aligning the next diet with your schedule.

When attempting large scale body composition changes, breaking it up into more manageable chunks makes it less daunting and from experience leads to more sustainable results.

YOU MAY HAVE LESS THAN 12 WEEKS

If your goal date is less than 12 weeks away, it is still possible to get in great shape, but you will have to tailor your expectations about what is realistically achievable.

There is always the option to make your impending goal date a short-term target and continue to diet afterwards in pursuit of a more long-term goal.

SCHEDULING YOUR TRANSFORMATION

TRANSFORMATION START AND END DATES

When scheduling your transformation, we strongly recommend aligning your start and end dates with a specific occasion where you want to look your best.

Without a clear start and end date, most dieters struggle to stay motivated and ultimately never achieve their goals.

A prime example of this are the countless people who embark upon post-Christmas diets with the vague goal to 'lose some weight'. In most cases, the diet is no longer in place come February. Now, compare this to a future bride preparing for her wedding day or somebody wanting to make a big impression at their college reunion - nothing will get in their way!

Some obvious dates to target include holidays and special events like birthdays and weddings.

If you do not have a specific goal but just the clear idea of wanting a transformation, you should seriously consider creating one. For example, several of our clients have found it extremely motivating to book a photoshoot or holiday to mark the end of their transformation.

Having a motivational goal date gives you something tangible to aim for and keeps you accountable when times get tough.

WITHOUT A CLEAR START AND END DATE, MOST DIETERS STRUGGLE TO STAY MOTIVATED AND ULTIMATELY NEVER ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS.

SELECTING YOUR START AND END DATES



ACTION:

Before continuing, choose your start and motivational end dates and mark them on your calendar.

We have highlighted some example periods that are conducive to dieting and some that are less so on the diagram opposite.

For now, only focus on scheduling your first 12 weeks (or less, if targeting a more short-term date), even if you think you may need longer.

During your diet break, you can review your progress and decide if this is a temporary break or a more permanent return to maintenance.

JANUARY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

FEBRUARY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28			

MARCH						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

APRIL						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

WINTER

SPRING

JANUARY / NEW YEAR

Most people will be dieting so there will be fewer temptations and more social support.

SPRING

Start here and be lean for summer!

MAY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

JUNE						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

JULY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

RELIGIOUS EVENTS

e.g. Ramadan.

SUMMER

SUMMER

Be aware of holidays and social events like parties and weddings.

SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

OCTOBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

NOVEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

DECEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

AUTUMN

AUTUMN

Normally quiet, but the Christmas party season starts earlier each year.

WINTER

WINTER

Lots of social events to navigate like work Christmas parties.

MOTIVATIONAL GOAL DATES

Example motivational dates to target:

Milestone birthdays, e.g. 30th or 40th / Weddings / Holidays / Photoshoots.

THE 12 WEEK REVIEW

Once you have identified your start and end dates, the next step is to review your transformation time frame and identify any events that will affect your ability to follow your training and meal plan.

Common examples include:

- ▶ **Travel**, e.g. business and pleasure.
- ▶ **Stressful periods**, e.g. work, family and exams.
- ▶ **Special occasions**, e.g. birthdays and anniversaries.
- ▶ **Social events**, e.g. nights out with friends.

No 12 week period will ever be without some challenges and now is the best time to work out how to overcome these potentially derailing events. Performing this review will address any major events and you can deal with less significant ones that crop up as part of your weekly meal planning.

We have outlined several methods you can use to adjust your approach to stay on track in the *'Transformation Meal Planning'* section.

SCHEDULE PROGRESS CHECK-INS

You will repeat each part of the body composition assessment protocol several times throughout your transformation.

Specifically, you need to schedule time and set reminders to:

- ▶ Measure your bodyweight each morning.
- ▶ Take your circumference measurements each week.
- ▶ Review your progress at the end of each week to see if you are on target or need to make changes.
- ▶ Take progress pictures every 2-4 weeks.
For more details, see the *'Progress Assessment'* section.

EXTRA CONSIDERATIONS – THE PRACTICE WEEK

Jumping straight into a transformation program can be overwhelming, especially if you are new to the approaches outlined in this book.

One strategy you can use to make the transition less abrupt is to schedule a practice week before starting your full-blown transformation program.

Even experienced dieters can benefit from an adjustment period if they have spent the last few months being more flexible with their approach to nutrition.

ONE STRATEGY YOU CAN USE TO MAKE THE TRANSITION LESS ABRUPT IS TO SCHEDULE A PRACTICE WEEK BEFORE STARTING YOUR FULL-BLOWN TRANSFORMATION PROGRAM.

Here is a list of example activities you can perform in the practice week

- Complete the baseline body composition assessment (p.88).
- Find a diet partner (p.21).
- Design or select a resistance training program to follow (p.22).
- Download and practice using a nutrition tracking application (p.62).
- Start recording your daily step total and morning bodyweight (p.89).

12-WEEK REVIEW



PRACTICE WEEK

WK 1					
WK 2					
WK 3					
WK 4					
WK 5					
WK 6					
WK 7					
WK 8					
WK 9					
WK 10					
WK 11					
WK 12					



Start



Progress Pic



Workout



Check-in



Weekend



Birthday



Social Event
(e.g. night out)



Travel
(Holiday)



Finish

EXTRA CONSIDERATIONS – DIET PARTNER

A key part of a client's transformation journey at Ultimate Performance is the daily contact (in person and online) with their trainer and the accountability this provides.

You can recreate this for yourself by asking a friend or family member to be your diet partner. This can be somebody who wants to diet at the same time or who is just willing to keep you accountable.

You can even raise the stakes by making a 'diet bet' with your diet partner, for example, agreeing a forfeit for every missed check-in.



ACTION:

At the end of each day, message your diet partner with the following information:



Compose message

To: john.doe@support.com

Subject: Andrew's daily check-in 1st January

- Morning bodyweight, e.g. 80kg.
- Daily step total, e.g. 10,000 steps.
- Training summary, e.g. upper body workout.
- Food diary, e.g. screenshot from a food tracking application or written record.

Attachments: MyFitnessPal Food Diary Screenshot

Send

TRANSFORMATION TRAINING

ALTHOUGH THE FOCUS OF THIS BOOK IS ON NUTRITION, WE CANNOT IGNORE THE IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION THAT TRAINING AND REGULAR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY MAKE IN TRANSFORMING YOUR BODY COMPOSITION.

This section will explain the role of each type of activity in your transformation program and outline our recommendations.

RESISTANCE TRAINING

Resistance training is a type of exercise that forces your muscles to work against resistance provided by your own bodyweight, free weights (dumbbells and barbells) and machines.

When restricting calories to lose body fat, there is a risk that you will lose muscle. This is known as low-quality weight loss and reinforces why losing scale weight should not be your primary goal on a transformation program.

Research has consistently shown that resistance training in combination with a high-protein diet can maintain or even increase muscle mass during periods of caloric restriction.



Resistance Training Recommendations

For the best results, we recommend resistance training three to four times a week.

Training Frequency: 3 x Per Week

If you choose to train three times per week, we recommend alternating between two full-body workouts.

Using a full body program will allow you to train each muscle group at least twice per week, which research suggests is the optimal training frequency for muscle growth.

After you have completed each workout 6–8 times, you will need to update both workouts by making changes to program design variables, such as exercise selection and the number of sets and reps.

	3 Workouts Week 1	3 Workouts Week 2
Mon	Full Body Workout A	Full Body Workout B
Tue	–	–
Wed	Full Body Workout B	Full Body Workout A
Thu	–	–
Fri	Full Body Workout A	Full Body Workout B
Sat	–	–
Sun	–	–

Training Frequency: 4 x Per Week

If you choose to train four times per week, you can either use a full body approach or split your program into upper body and lower body workouts.

Repeat each workout twice per week until you have completed each one 6-8 times and then update both workouts.

Only choose the upper/lower body training split option if you are confident that you can consistently train four times per week.

TRY TO AVOID TRAINING ON THREE CONSECUTIVE DAYS TO GIVE YOUR BODY TIME TO RECOVER, ALTHOUGH THIS IS BETTER THAN NOT TRAINING AT ALL AND WILL NOT AFFECT YOUR RESULTS IF YOU ARE GENERALLY ON TOP OF RECOVERY.

	OPTION 1	OPTION 2
	4 Workouts (Upper/Lower)	4 Workouts (Full Body)
Mon	Upper Body Workout	Full Body Workout A
Tue	Lower Body Workout	Full Body Workout B
Wed	–	–
Thu	Upper Body Workout	Full Body Workout A
Fri	Lower Body Workout	Full Body Workout B
Sat	–	–
Sun	–	–

Try to avoid training on three consecutive days to give your body time to recover, although this is better than not training at all and will not affect your results if you are generally on top of recovery (nutrition, sleep and stress management).

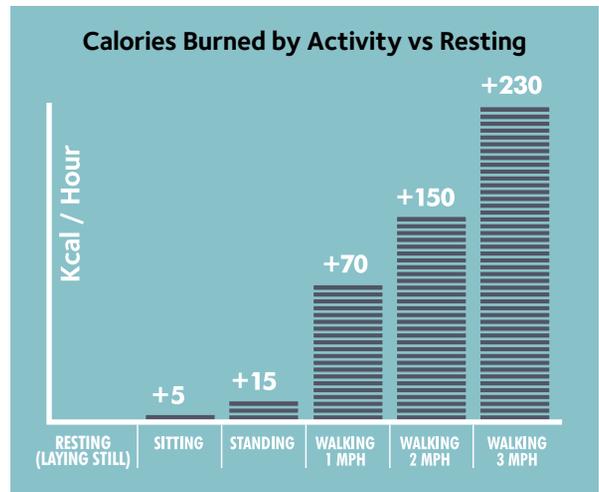
We have provided sample workouts and review program design in more detail in the companion book, 'Principles of Muscle Building Program Design'.

NON-EXERCISE ACTIVITY THERMOGENESIS (NEAT)

From a calorie-burning perspective, how physically active you are outside of the gym can have a real impact on your fat loss efforts.

The technical term for how many calories you burn outside of the gym is non-exercise activity thermogenesis (NEAT for short).

Part of NEAT is voluntary and largely determined by your occupation and how you choose to spend your leisure time. There is also an involuntary component beyond your conscious control that you generate from maintaining your posture and small bodily movements known as fidgeting.



Adapted from Levine (2007).

The Importance of An Active Lifestyle

The diagram above shows the calories burned performing several activities.

Sit down for an hour, and you will burn roughly 5kcal more than you would laying down still. Stand up and this triples to 15kcal more per hour. Start walking and you can burn up to 230kcal more per hour.

While the exact values will vary depending on your bodyweight and how vigorously you move, these figures highlight how simply moving around more has the potential to add up to a surprisingly large calorie count over the course of a day.

In fact, Dr James Levine of the Mayo Clinic estimates that we have lost up to 2,000kcal of activity from our day in the transition to becoming a mainly sedentary society – a full day’s worth of eating for a lot of people!

How Active Are You?

A simple test to evaluate your NEAT levels is to use your mobile phone or pedometer to track how many steps you take during a typical day.

The table below shows the number of steps we consider to be representative of a sedentary and active lifestyle.

ACTIVITY LEVEL	TOTAL STEPS (AVERAGE)
SEDENTARY	< 5,000 STEPS PER DAY
LIGHTLY ACTIVE	5,000 – 9,999 STEPS PER DAY
ACTIVE	10,000 – 12,500 STEPS PER DAY
HIGHLY ACTIVE	> 12,500 STEPS PER DAY

If you currently take less than 10,000 steps, you will benefit from making changes to your routine to become more active.

On top of several health benefits, you will be less dependent on caloric restriction to lose body fat and will be able to diet on a higher number of calories.

Numerous research studies have also shown NEAT (mainly the involuntary component) to decline in response to weight loss as an attempt by the body to conserve energy during periods of low energy availability.

ON TOP OF SEVERAL HEALTH BENEFITS, YOU WILL BE LESS DEPENDENT ON CALORIC RESTRICTION TO LOSE BODY FAT AND WILL BE ABLE TO DIET ON A HIGHER NUMBER OF CALORIES.



This is a natural part of weight loss and simply your body doing its job, ensuring you have enough energy to keep going. Making an effort to keep voluntary components of NEAT high can help offset this adaptive reduction and prevent fat loss plateaus.

NEAT Recommendations

Walking is the main component of most people’s NEAT, and you can track your step count using your mobile phone or pedometer.

Aim for a minimum average step target of 10,000 steps.

The target is an average so you can make up for low-step days, such as long-distance travel, with more active days later in the week.

Where possible, aim for ‘active steps’, for example, making it a rule to take the stairs or walking at a brisk pace.

If you already take more than 10,000 steps as part of your normal routine, aim to keep this consistent.

If you currently take less than 10,000 steps, try some of the following ideas to build NEAT into your day:



AT HOME

Start your day with 5-10 minutes of light exercise, e.g. bodyweight circuit.

Go for a walk while calling friends and family.

Go for a walk before or after dinner.



TRAVEL

Walk all or part of the way to work.

Get off public transport early and complete the journey on foot.

Park further away from destinations and complete the journey on foot.



AT WORK

Break up long bouts of sitting with standing, pacing or walking.

Take phone calls and meetings standing or walking.

Go for a walk on your lunch break.



FOR FUN

Set yourself NEAT challenges, e.g. 20,000 steps in one day.

Make socialising active, e.g. bowling or table tennis.

Plan leisure time around walking, e.g. exploring a new city or hiking.

By the way, do not pay much attention to the calorie burn estimates provided by commercial grade activity trackers. While they are great awareness tools, the algorithms are not accurate enough to manage your calorie intake.

FORMAL CARDIO

Formal cardio refers to structured workouts performed as part of your training program with a specific goal, for example:

- ▶ Develop cardiovascular fitness.
- ▶ Offset an otherwise sedentary lifestyle.
- ▶ Burn calories.

There are three main types of formal cardio that are identifiable based on training intensity (how hard you work) which you can measure using the following rate of perceived exertion (RPE) scale.



RATE OF PERCEIVED EXERTION (RPE) SCALE

RPE SCALE	EMOJI	WHAT THIS FEELS LIKE...
9-10	😵‍💫	MAX EFFORT – This pace should feel as if it is almost impossible to keep going. You will be out of breath and unable to talk.
7-8	😓	CHALLENGING – This pace should feel difficult to maintain and you will only be able to speak a few words.
5-6	😞	MODERATELY CHALLENGING – This pace should feel uncomfortable and you will only be able to hold a short conversation.
3-4	😊	EASY – This pace should feel as if you can keep going for hours, while holding a full conversation.
1-2	😄	VERY EASY – This pace should feel like very little effort, but more than not moving at all.

LOW-INTENSITY STEADY STATE (LISS)

Low-intensity activity (RPE 1-4) maintained for extended periods of time, e.g. incline treadmill walking for 30-minutes.

MODERATE-INTENSITY STEADY STATE (MISS)

Moderate-intensity activity (RPE 5-6) maintained for extended periods of time, e.g. 5km run.

HIGH-INTENSITY INTERVAL TRAINING (HIIT)

Alternates short periods of high-intensity exercise (RPE 7-10) with less-intense recovery periods (RPE 1-4), e.g. alternating between sprinting and walking.

We also consider most group fitness classes, e.g. spinning and circuit training, to be versions of HIIT training.



Always Prioritise Resistance Training

If you can only get to the gym three times a week and have no other opportunities to train, then resistance training should always take priority over formal cardio.

You can develop your fitness, lose body fat and avoid a sedentary lifestyle by sticking to your diet and keeping active outside of the gym. In contrast, lifting weights is the only way to build muscle.

IF YOU CAN ONLY GET TO THE GYM THREE TIMES A WEEK AND HAVE NO OTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO TRAIN, THEN RESISTANCE TRAINING SHOULD ALWAYS TAKE PRIORITY OVER FORMAL CARDIO.

However, there are several physical and practical benefits associated with formal cardio:

- 1.** MISS and HIIT both develop your work capacity which can have a beneficial impact on your resistance training.
- 2.** Formal cardio develops mental toughness.
- 3.** If short on time and low on steps, performing a MISS or HIIT workout can boost your daily physical activity levels in a time-efficient manner.
- 4.** Many of our clients enjoy performing formal cardio, particularly the group element of fitness classes.
- 5.** The low skill component lets beginner trainees push themselves harder than they can while lifting weights.

LISS vs MISS vs HIIT

The intensity level of the different formal cardio options can have a significant impact on their compatibility with resistance training.

LISS is not intense enough to interfere with your recovery from or performance in resistance training workouts. The primary role of LISS in a training program is to burn additional calories. You can use LISS to help meet your daily step target, for example, walking on the treadmill for 10 minutes before your resistance training workout – this is also a great mental warm-up!

The main issue to be aware of with MISS is that your body adapts specifically to the types of training that you perform. The problem this poses is that resistance training and MISS place opposite and competing demands on your body.

Resistance training conditions your muscles to lift heavy weights explosively and for short durations, whereas MISS conditions your muscles to work at lower intensities for longer durations.

This should not be a problem if you limit the amount of MISS performed. However, you can avoid the issue altogether by using HIIT instead.

The high-intensity nature of HIIT and time spent working versus resting is very similar to resistance training, which results in complementary rather than competing adaptations.

For example, sprinting flat out for 30 seconds and then resting for 90 seconds is comparable to lifting a heavy weight for 10 reps and then resting for an equivalent amount of time.

RESISTANCE TRAINING CONDITIONS YOUR MUSCLES TO LIFT HEAVY WEIGHTS EXPLOSIVELY AND FOR SHORT DURATIONS, WHEREAS MISS CONDITIONS YOUR MUSCLES TO WORK AT LOWER INTENSITIES FOR LONGER DURATIONS.

You Have a Limited Recovery Capacity

There is a limit to how much training you can recover from, and both MISS and HIIT add to the total amount of exercise-related stress placed on your body. Remember, any cardio you do takes place in the same week that you will also be resistance training three to four times.

Formal Cardio Recommendations

If you are training three to four times a week and meeting your NEAT target, you do not need to include a formal cardio component in your training program.

Perform a maximum of two cardio workouts (MISS or HIIT) per week if resistance training three times.

Perform a maximum of one cardio workout (MISS or HIIT) per week if resistance training four times.

There is no limit for LISS cardio as this does not challenge your body enough to interfere with recovery or workout performance.

Always perform cardio after resistance training if doing both on the same day. However, the ideal time to complete cardio workouts is on a non-resistance training day.

You can find sample formal cardio workouts in the companion book, *Principles of Muscle Building Program Design*.

	3 Workouts Per Week	4 Workouts Per Week
Mon	Workout 1	Workout 1
Tue	Cardio Workout	Workout 2
Wed	Workout 2	Rest Day
Thu	Rest Day	Workout 3
Fri	Workout 3	Workout 4
Sat	Cardio Workout	Cardio Workout
Sun	Rest Day	Rest Day

BODY TRANSFORMATION MEAL PLAN DESIGN

Distilled from our experience as the world's leading results-producing trainers, **Volume 2 of the U.P. Encyclopaedia of Personal Training**, gives you everything that you need to know to understand and create your own body transformation meal plans and diets. Aimed at the beginner right through to the experienced professional personal trainer, we have included every lesson that we have learned whilst helping thousands of men and women achieve body composition improvements that critics claim are too good to be true!

**Learn why the proof of the pudding is in the eating,
and experience results like never before.**

UP ULTIMATE
PERFORMANCE

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