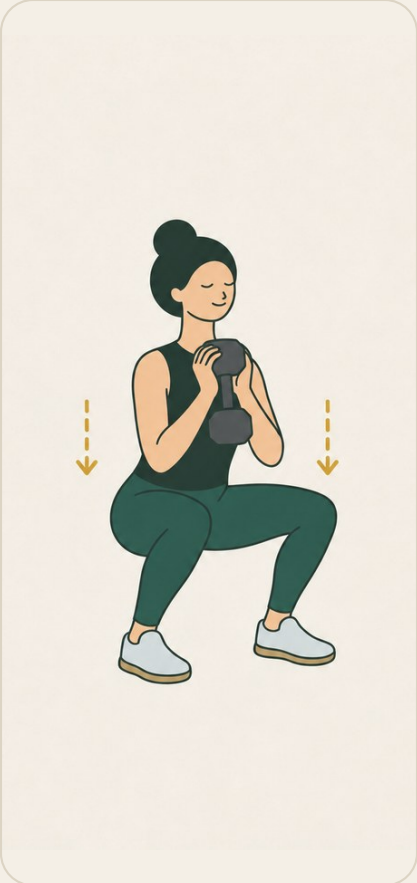
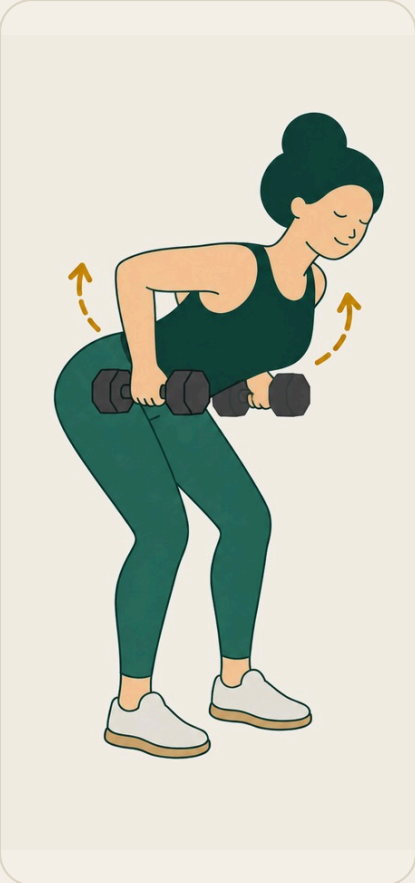
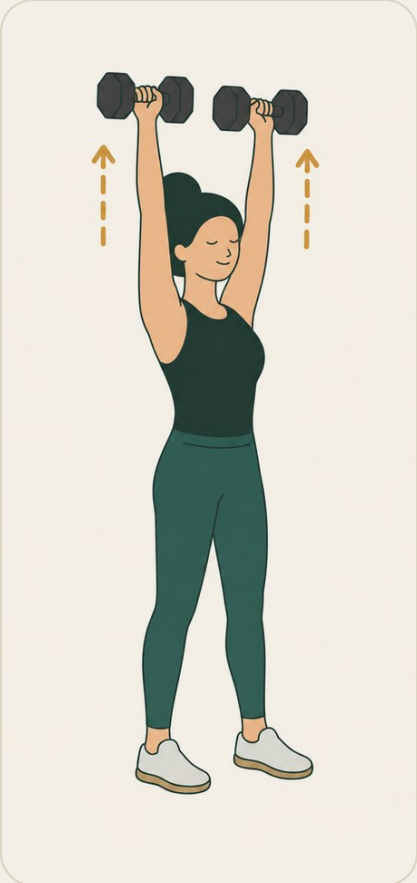
STRENGTH · PROTEIN · PROGRESS

The Skinny-Fat Fix

A 6-Week Strength & Protein Plan for Women 25+







STRENGTH | PROTEIN | MEASURE | PROGRESS

3 workouts a week · 12 illustrated moves · protein system · measurement + strength check-ins

By Coach Luke | NASM-CPT, NESTA Nutrition Coach

START HERE

How to use this plan



You look fine in clothes, but you feel soft, weak or out of shape, even though you have dieted and done the cardio. That is one of the most common things I hear from women, and it is fixable. This plan gives you six weeks of simple strength training, enough protein, and a way to measure what is changing.

1. **Read pages 3 to 5 first.** What skinny-fat really is, and why eating less was never the answer.
2. **Take your baselines.** Measurements, photos and three strength tests. They matter more than the scale.
3. **Set your protein target** and build up to it over two weeks. No meal plan, no weighing food.
4. **Train 3 days a week**, alternating Workout A and Workout B. Log every session.
5. **Check in at Week 3 and Week 6** and compare against your baselines.

What's inside

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You will need: a pair of light and a pair of medium dumbbells (or adjustable ones), a resistance band with a door anchor, a sturdy step or bottom stair, a counter or bench, and a pencil. Gym? Every move has a gym option. Print at 100% on Letter or A4.

READ THIS FIRST

Before you start

WHAT THIS PLAN CAN DO

- Help you get stronger, week by week, on three short sessions a week.
- Help you build muscle while you eat enough to fuel it.
- Show you how to hit your protein target without a strict diet.
- Help you see real progress in tape, photos and lifts.

WHAT IT CAN'T DO

- It can't target fat in one spot. No move burns belly or arm fat on its own.
- It makes no weight-loss promises. Six weeks is a strong start, not a finish line.
- It is not a meal plan or a diagnosis, and it doesn't replace medical care.
- Results vary from woman to woman.

Talk to your doctor before you start if you have a health condition (heart, blood pressure, diabetes, joint or bone problems), take medication, have a recent injury or surgery, are pregnant or postpartum, or have a history of disordered eating. If anything hurts, stop.

Stop and get checked if you notice

- Chest pain, pressure or a racing heart
- Dizziness, fainting or unusual shortness of breath
- Sharp or shooting pain in a joint or your back
- Numbness or tingling down an arm or leg
- Pain that gets worse during a set
- Swelling or pain that lasts more than a few days
- Pelvic heaviness or leaking with lifting (ask a pelvic floor physio)
- Anything that feels wrong

QUESTIONS FOR MY DOCTOR BEFORE I START

I'm a NASM-certified personal trainer and NESTA nutrition coach, not a doctor. Everything here is general education.

THE BIG PICTURE

What skinny-fat really means



"Skinny-fat" is not a medical term. It is a nickname for a very common mix: **a normal weight on the scale, with low muscle and a higher share of body fat.** You may look slim in clothes but feel soft, weak or out of breath on the stairs. Doctors sometimes call a version of this normal-weight obesity.

HOW IT USUALLY HAPPENS

- Years of dieting and cutting calories, so muscle was lost along with fat
- Lots of cardio, very little strength training
- Low protein, especially at breakfast and lunch
- Sitting most of the day; muscle fades with age from your 30s on
- Poor sleep and stress that make recovery harder

THE FIX IN ONE LINE

Build muscle and eat enough protein. Not eating less. Not more cardio.

- Lifting gives your body a reason to keep and build muscle
- Protein gives it the material to do it
- Steps and sleep support everything else

Why eating less made it worse

When you eat very little and train with cardio only, your body loses some fat but also some muscle. The scale drops, yet your shape barely changes, your energy dips, and the weight tends to creep back. Each round can leave you with a little less muscle than before. That is the skinny-fat loop.

Diet hard → **Lose fat + muscle** → **Feel soft and tired** → **Diet harder**

> **The good news:** muscle responds at any age. Women who start lifting in their 30s, 40s, 50s and beyond still get stronger. Your job for the next six weeks is to give it a clear signal and enough fuel.

WHAT I WANT TO FEEL OR DO DIFFERENTLY IN 6 WEEKS

THE BIG PICTURE

Toning = muscle + a little less fat

"Toned" is the look most women are after: firm arms, a lifted backside, shape in the legs. There is no special toning workout and no toning muscle fiber. What you see as tone is two things happening together.

1. More muscle

Strength training with weights that feel challenging by the last few reps. Muscle gives you shape and firmness.

2. A little less fat over it

Comes slowly from enough protein, daily steps, sleep and sensible eating. Not from crunches or spot work.

Myths to drop now

MYTH	WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENS
Light weights, high reps tone; heavy weights bulk	You need enough challenge. Women rarely get bulky by accident.
Crunches flatten your stomach	Core work builds strength, but it does not burn fat in that spot.
More cardio fixes skinny-fat	Cardio is good for your heart, but it does not build much muscle.
Eat as little as possible	Too little food and protein makes building muscle much harder.
The scale tells you if it works	You can gain muscle and lose fat with little change on the scale.

Realistic timeline: most women feel stronger within 2 to 3 weeks. Visible changes in shape usually take longer, often 8 to 12 weeks or more. That is why this plan measures strength and inches, not just weight.

OLD HABITS I AM READY TO LET GO OF

SELF-CHECK

Does this sound like you?



Tick what fits. This is a self-check to help you focus, **not a diagnosis**. Only a health professional can measure body composition properly.

- [ ] My weight is in a "normal" range, but I feel soft
- [ ] I have dieted on and off for years
- [ ] Most of my exercise is cardio or classes
- [ ] I rarely lift anything heavy
- [ ] Carrying groceries or kids up stairs feels hard
- [ ] I can do very few push-ups, even on my knees
- [ ] I eat little protein before dinner
- [ ] My clothes fit tighter around the waist than they used to
- [ ] I feel tired or weak more than I would like
- [ ] Losing a few pounds never changed my shape much
- [ ] Getting up from the floor takes effort
- [ ] I sit for most of the day

> **Ticked 4 or more?** This plan is a good fit. Ticked fewer? It will still make you stronger. Either way, your baselines on the next pages matter far more than this list.

Where I am starting from

	RATE 1 TO 10
Energy most days	
How strong I feel	
How I feel in my clothes	
Sleep quality	
Confidence with weights	

WHY I AM DOING THIS (READ THIS ON HARD DAYS)

BASELINES 1 OF 2

Measurements + photos



Measurements and strength go first. The scale comes last. When you build muscle and lose a little fat, the scale can stay the same while your waist and lifts change. Measure in the morning, before eating, with a soft tape that is snug but not tight.

WHERE TO MEASURE

- **Waist:** at your belly button, relaxed, breathe out
- **Hips:** widest part of your backside, feet together
- **Upper arm:** halfway between shoulder and elbow, arm relaxed
- **Thigh:** widest part of the right thigh, standing

PROGRESS PHOTOS

- Same spot, same light, same time of day
- Front, side and back, arms relaxed
- Fitted clothes you can wear again in Week 6
- Phone at chest height, or use a timer
- Keep them private. They are just data.

MEASUREMENT	START	WEEK 3	WEEK 6	CHANGE
Date				
Waist				
Hips				
Upper arm (R)				
Thigh (R)				
How clothes fit				
Photos taken	☐	☐	☐	
Scale weight (last)				

> **Weigh yourself rarely, if at all.** Once at the start and once at Week 6 is plenty. Your weight can swing 2 to 4 pounds a day from water and food alone.

NOTES (MY FAVORITE JEANS, A SHIRT THAT PULLS, HOW I FEEL)

BASELINES 2 OF 2

Strength tests



These tests show progress the scale never will. Warm up first (page 18). Use good form and stop 1 or 2 reps before you have to fight for one. Rest 2 to 3 minutes between tests.

1 Push-up test

How many push-ups in a row with good form? Use a counter, a bench or the floor. Write the surface you used so you can repeat it.

START	WK 3	WK 6

2 Sit-to-stand test

How many times can you stand up from a chair and sit back down in 30 seconds, arms crossed?

START	WK 3	WK 6

3 Plank test

Forearm plank: how long can you hold a straight line? Stop when your hips sag or lift.

START	WK 3	WK 6

4 Goblet squat 10RM

The heaviest dumbbell you can goblet squat for 10 good reps, with 1 or 2 left in the tank.

START	WK 3	WK 6

5 Carry test

Farmer carry with your heaviest pair: how many seconds before your grip or posture fades?

START	WK 3	WK 6

Also note your **average daily steps** this week from your phone or watch: _____ This is your step baseline for the plan.

HOW THE TESTS FELT

PROTEIN MADE SIMPLE 1 OF 4

Your protein target

Protein is the building material for muscle, and most women I work with eat far less than they think. Aim for **about 0.7 to 1 gram of protein per pound of your goal body weight** each day. Start near the low end. The high end is useful if you are very active or eating a little less to lose fat.

GOAL WEIGHT	DAILY PROTEIN	PER MEAL (3 MEALS)	GOAL WEIGHT	DAILY PROTEIN	PER MEAL (3 MEALS)
110 lb	77–110 g	26–37 g	160 lb	112–160 g	37–53 g
120 lb	84–120 g	28–40 g	170 lb	119–170 g	40–57 g
130 lb	91–130 g	30–43 g	180 lb	126–180 g	42–60 g
140 lb	98–140 g	33–47 g	190 lb	133–190 g	44–63 g
150 lb	105–150 g	35–50 g	200 lb	140–200 g	47–67 g

Using kilograms? Aim for about 1.6 to 2.2 g per kg of goal body weight.

BUILD UP OVER 2 WEEKS

- **Week 1:** add one protein anchor a day (an extra 20 to 30 g), usually at breakfast
- **Week 2:** reach the low end of your range most days
- **Weeks 3 to 6:** stay in your range; nudge up if you feel hungry
- Bloated? Go slower and drink more water

MY NUMBERS

Goal weight: _____

Daily target (0.7 x goal): _____

Upper end (1.0 x goal): _____

Per meal: _____

Week 1 add-on: _____

Do I need to count anything? No. Use the palm guide on the next page and the tracker to tick off protein anchors. If you like numbers, a food app can check your total for a few days, then stop.

WHERE MY PROTEIN COMES FROM NOW (AND WHERE IT IS MISSING)

PROTEIN MADE SIMPLE 2 OF 4

The palm-size portion guide

Your hand is always with you. **One palm-size portion** (the size and thickness of your palm, no fingers) of most protein foods gives you roughly 20 to 30 g of protein. Aim for 1 to 2 palms at each meal.

ONE PALM-SIZE PORTION	ABOUT	EASY SWAP
Chicken or turkey breast	25–30 g	Rotisserie chicken, deli turkey
Fish or shrimp	20–25 g	Canned tuna or salmon
Lean beef or pork	22–26 g	Lean ground turkey
Firm tofu or tempeh (a bit larger)	15–20 g	Edamame, seitan
Greek yogurt or skyr (1 cup)	20–25 g	Cottage cheese (3/4 cup)
Eggs (3 whole)	18–19 g	Egg whites (1 cup) about 26 g
Lentils or beans (1 cup cooked)	15–18 g	Pair with grains or dairy
Protein powder (1 scoop)	20–25 g	Ready-to-drink shake

Approximate values; brands and portions vary. Check labels if you want exact numbers.

Build a protein-anchored plate

1–2 palms
protein first

1–2 fists
vegetables or fruit

1 cupped hand
carbs: rice, potato, oats

1 thumb
fats: oil, nuts, avocado

Three habits that do most of the work: eat protein first at each meal; get 25 g or more at breakfast; keep two grab-and-go protein snacks at home and one in your bag.

MY GO-TO PROTEIN FOODS (THINGS I ALREADY LIKE)

PROTEIN MADE SIMPLE 3 OF 4

20 protein-anchored ideas



Meals 1–12 · grams are approximate

1 **Greek yogurt power bowl** ~28 g

1 cup plain Greek yogurt, berries, 2 tbsp hemp seeds

2 **Eggs + cottage cheese** ~32 g

3-egg veggie scramble with 1/2 cup cottage cheese on the side

3 **Protein overnight oats** ~30 g

Oats soaked in milk with a scoop of protein powder

4 **Tuna crunch wrap** ~32 g

1 can tuna, Greek yogurt "mayo", crunchy veg, whole-grain wrap

5 **Chicken burrito bowl** ~40 g

4 oz chicken, black beans, rice, salsa, lettuce

6 **Turkey chili** ~30 g

1 1/2 cups lean turkey and bean chili

7 **Sheet-pan salmon** ~32 g

5 oz salmon, potatoes and green beans on one pan

8 **Tofu + edamame stir-fry** ~30 g

7 oz firm tofu, 1/2 cup edamame, veg, rice

9 **Burger night, upgraded** ~30 g

Lean beef or turkey patty, big salad, half a bun

10 **Shrimp tacos** ~30 g

5 oz shrimp, slaw, corn tortillas, lime

11 **Chicken pasta** ~38 g

4 oz chicken stirred into pasta, tomato sauce and spinach

12 **Lentil + chicken soup** ~30 g

A big bowl of lentil soup with shredded chicken

PROTEIN MADE SIMPLE 4 OF 4

20 protein-anchored ideas



Snacks 13–20 · grams are approximate

13 Cottage cheese + pineapple — ~20 g

3/4 cup cottage cheese with fruit

14 Eggs + cheese — ~19 g

2 hard-boiled eggs and a cheese stick

15 Shake + fruit — ~30 g

Protein powder shaken with milk, plus a banana

16 Skyr + almonds — ~20 g

One skyr cup and a small handful of almonds

17 Turkey roll-ups — ~20 g

3 oz deli turkey rolled around cheese and cucumber

18 Edamame — ~18 g

1 cup shelled edamame with sea salt

19 Jerky + apple — ~12 g

1 oz beef or turkey jerky and an apple

20 Hummus + yogurt dip — ~14 g

Greek yogurt stirred into hummus, veg sticks

No full meal plan on purpose. Pick 3 or 4 ideas you like and repeat them. Most women hit their target with the same few breakfasts and snacks on rotation.

MY TOP 5 IDEAS TO TRY THIS WEEK

PROTEIN TRACKER

Weeks 1-3



Tick one box per protein anchor (about one palm, 20-30 g)

WEEK 1

My daily target: _____ anchors / _____ g

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	NOTES
Breakfast	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	
Lunch	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	
Dinner	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	
Snack	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	
Water (glasses)	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	

WEEK 2

My daily target: _____ anchors / _____ g

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	NOTES
Breakfast	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	
Lunch	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	
Dinner	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	
Snack	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	
Water (glasses)	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	

WEEK 3

My daily target: _____ anchors / _____ g

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	NOTES
Breakfast	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	
Lunch	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	
Dinner	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	
Snack	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	
Water (glasses)	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	

PROTEIN TRACKER

Weeks 4-6

Tick one box per protein anchor (about one palm, 20-30 g)



WEEK 4

My daily target: _____ anchors / _____ g

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	NOTES
Breakfast	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	
Lunch	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	
Dinner	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	
Snack	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	
Water (glasses)	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	

WEEK 5

My daily target: _____ anchors / _____ g

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	NOTES
Breakfast	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	
Lunch	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	
Dinner	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	
Snack	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	
Water (glasses)	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	

WEEK 6

My daily target: _____ anchors / _____ g

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	NOTES
Breakfast	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	
Lunch	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	
Dinner	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	
Snack	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	☐☐	
Water (glasses)	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	

THE 6-WEEK PLAN

Your 6 weeks at a glance

Three strength days a week, alternating Workout A and Workout B, plus daily steps and 1 or 2 optional easy cardio sessions. Pick three days with a rest day between, like Mon, Wed, Fri.

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
Week 1	A ☐	Steps ☐	B ☐	Easy cardio ☐	A ☐	Steps ☐	Rest ☐
Week 2	B ☐	Steps ☐	A ☐	Easy cardio ☐	B ☐	Steps ☐	Rest ☐
Week 3 CHECK-IN	A ☐	Steps ☐	B ☐	Easy cardio ☐	A ☐	Steps ☐	Rest ☐
Week 4	B ☐	Steps ☐	A ☐	Easy cardio ☐	B ☐	Steps ☐	Rest ☐
Week 5	A ☐	Steps ☐	B ☐	Easy cardio ☐	A ☐	Steps ☐	Rest ☐
Week 6	A light ☐	Steps ☐	B light ☐	Easy cardio ☐	Re-test ☐	Measure ☐	Rest ☐

Missed a day? Just do the next workout on your list. Keep the A/B order and do not cram two sessions into one day. Steps every day: aim to beat your baseline by 1,000 to 2,000.

MY TRAINING DAYS AND TIMES

THE 6-WEEK PLAN

How each week works

STRENGTH A · ABOUT 35 TO 45 MINUTES

Workout A

Warm-up	6 min, page 18
 **Goblet Squat**	see table
 **Incline Push-Up**	see table
 **Two-Arm Bent-Over Row**	see table
 **Dumbbell Glute Bridge**	see table
 **Dead Bug**	6-10 per side
 **Farmer Carry**	30-40 sec walk
Cool-down	4 min

STRENGTH B · ABOUT 35 TO 45 MINUTES

Workout B

Warm-up	6 min, page 18
 **Dumbbell Romanian Deadlift**	see table
 **Split Squat**	see table
 **Band or Cable Pulldown**	see table
 **Dumbbell Overhead Press**	see table
 **Dumbbell Step-Up**	see table
 **Forearm Plank**	20-45 sec hold
Cool-down	4 min

WEEK	MAIN LIFTS	CORE + CARRY	EFFORT	FOCUS
Week 1	2 x 10-12	2 rounds	RPE 6	Learn the moves. Pick weights that feel easy.
Week 2	3 x 10-12	2 rounds	RPE 6-7	Add a third set. Same weights.
Week 3	3 x 8-12	3 rounds	RPE 7-8	Go heavier where you hit 12. Check-in.
Week 4	3 x 8-12	3 rounds	RPE 7-8	Beat last week by one rep or a little weight.
Week 5	3-4 x 8-12	3 rounds	RPE 8	Your hardest week. Add a 4th set to 2 moves.
Week 6	2 x 8-10	2 rounds	RPE 6	Deload, then re-test and measure.

Main lifts = the first 4 moves of each workout (step-up counts as a main lift in B). Rest 60 to 90 seconds between sets.

STEPS + CARDIO

- Daily steps: beat your baseline by 1,000 to 2,000
- Optional: 1 or 2 easy cardio sessions, 20 to 30 min
- Easy = you could chat in full sentences

SHORT ON TIME?

Do the first 4 moves only, 2 sets each. About 20 minutes. A short session beats a skipped one every time.

THE 6-WEEK PLAN

Progressive overload, made simple

Muscle grows when you ask it to do a little more than last time. That is progressive overload. In this plan you do it with one simple rule: **add reps first, then add weight.**

1

Start in the range

Pick a weight you can lift for the bottom of the rep range (say 10) with good form.

2

Add reps

Each session, try for one more rep on one or more sets, up to the top of the range (12).

3

Hit the top on every set?

Next session, go up to the next dumbbell (about 2 to 5 lb) and drop back to 8 to 10 reps.

4

Repeat

Climb the reps again. That is the whole system. Write it all down so you know what to beat.

> **Example:** Goblet squat with 15 lb: Week 2 = 10, 10, 9 reps. Week 3 = 12, 11, 10. Week 4 = 12, 12, 12. Week 5: move to 20 lb for 9, 8, 8, and climb again.

The effort scale (RPE)

RPE means rate of perceived exertion. Rate the last rep of each set from 1 to 10.

RPE	HOW THE SET FELT	REPS LEFT IN THE TANK
10	Could not do one more rep	0
9	Maybe one more, with a fight	1
8	Hard, form still clean	2
7	Challenging, steady speed	3
6	Moderate, a good learning weight	4
5 or less	Warm-up territory	5+

> **Most sets in this plan land at RPE 7 to 8.** If your form breaks down, the set is over, whatever the number. Never chase RPE 10 on squats, deadlifts or presses.

NOTES ON MY WEIGHTS (WHAT TO GO UP ON NEXT)

EVERY SESSION

Warm-up + cool-down

Warm muscles move better and feel safer. This takes about 6 minutes before every strength session, and the cool-down takes about 4.

WARM-UP · 6 MINUTES

March in place or walk	1 min
Arm circles, forward and back	10 each
Hip hinges, hands on hips	10
Bodyweight squats to a chair	10
Glute bridges	10
Wall or counter push-ups	8
Light first set of your first move	1 set

COOL-DOWN · 4 MINUTES

Slow walk around the room	1 min
Hamstring stretch, one leg on a step	30 s each
Hip flexor stretch, half kneeling	30 s each
Chest stretch in a doorway	30 s
Child's pose, slow breathing	45 s

Set-up checklist

- Water, your log page and a pencil within reach
- Clear floor space, a mat, shoes with a flat sole
- Two pairs of dumbbells: one for upper body, one heavier for legs
- Band anchored firmly in a closed door (hinge side) for pulldowns
- Check the step or bench is stable before step-ups and incline push-ups

SPOTS THAT FEEL TIGHT OR NEED EXTRA WARM-UP

THE 12 MOVES · 1 OF 6

Workout A moves

Key position shown · amber arrow = direction of movement

WORKOUT A



Goblet Squat 1

1. Hold one dumbbell upright at your chest, elbows tucked in.

2. Sit your hips down between your heels, chest proud.

3. Push the floor away through your whole foot to stand.

Home: One dumbbell or kettlebell
Gym: Heavier dumbbell, or leg press

Easier: Squat to a chair, no weight
Harder: Pause 2 seconds at the bottom

Works: Thighs, glutes, core

WORKOUT A



Incline Push-Up 2

1. Hands on a sturdy counter, bench or table edge, a bit wider than shoulders.

2. Make one straight line from head to heels, belly tight.

3. Lower your chest to the edge, then press away.

Home: Kitchen counter or sturdy table
Gym: Bench or Smith machine bar

Easier: Use a higher surface, like a wall or counter
Harder: Use a lower surface, then the floor

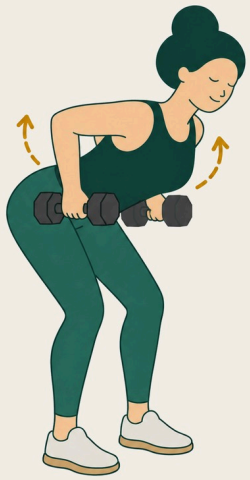
Works: Chest, shoulders, back of arms

THE 12 MOVES · 2 OF 6

Workout A moves

Key position shown · amber arrow = direction of movement

WORKOUT A



Two-Arm Bent-Over Row 3

1. Hinge forward with a flat back and soft knees, weights hanging.

2. Pull both elbows back toward your hips.

3. Squeeze your shoulder blades, then lower slowly.

Home: A pair of dumbbells

Gym: Seated cable row or heavier dumbbells

Easier: One arm at a time, other hand on a bench

Harder: Take 3 seconds to lower

Works: Upper back, arms, posture

WORKOUT A



Dumbbell Glute Bridge 4

1. Lie on your back, knees bent, feet flat. Rest a dumbbell on your hips.

2. Drive through your heels and lift until knees, hips and shoulders line up.

3. Squeeze for a breath at the top, then lower with control.

Home: One dumbbell on your hips

Gym: Barbell or machine hip thrust

Easier: No weight, smaller lift

Harder: Hold 2 seconds at the top, or one leg at a time

Works: Glutes, hamstrings

Workout A moves

Key position shown · amber arrow = direction of movement

WORKOUT A



Dead Bug 5

1. Lie on your back, arms up to the ceiling, knees bent at 90 degrees over your hips.

2. Press your low back gently into the floor.

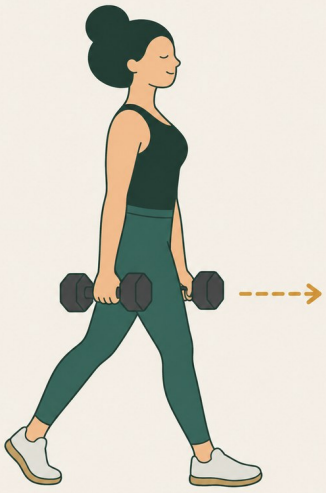
3. Lower one arm and the opposite leg slowly, breathe out, then switch.

Home: Floor or mat
Gym: Same, or hold a light dumbbell

Easier: Move only the legs, keep arms still
Harder: Move slower with the leg lower to the floor

Works: Deep core, low-back control

WORKOUT A



Farmer Carry 6

1. Pick up a heavy dumbbell in each hand with a flat back.

2. Stand tall, shoulders down and back, ribs stacked over hips.

3. Walk with short, steady steps. Set the weights down with control.

Home: Heavy dumbbells, or full grocery bags
Gym: Heavier dumbbells or trap bar

Easier: Lighter weights, shorter walk
Harder: Heavier weights or a longer walk

Works: Grip, core, posture, upper back

THE 12 MOVES · 4 OF 6

Workout B moves

Key position shown · amber arrow = direction of movement

WORKOUT B



Dumbbell Romanian Deadlift 7

1. Stand tall, dumbbells in front of your thighs, knees soft.

2. Push your hips back and slide the weights down your legs, back flat.

3. Stop when you feel your hamstrings, then squeeze your glutes to stand.

Home: A pair of dumbbells

Gym: Barbell, or heavier dumbbells

Easier: Hands on hips, no weight, smaller range

Harder: Take 3 seconds to lower

Works: Hamstrings, glutes, back

WORKOUT B



Split Squat 8

1. Take a long step: front foot flat, back heel up.

2. Lower straight down until your back knee hovers above the floor.

3. Push through your front foot to rise. Finish all reps, then switch.

Home: Dumbbells at your sides

Gym: Heavier dumbbells, or Smith machine

Easier: No weight, hold a counter for balance

Harder: Pause 2 seconds at the bottom

Works: Thighs, glutes, balance

Workout B moves

Key position shown · amber arrow = direction of movement

WORKOUT B



Band or Cable Pulldown 9

1. Anchor a band high (door anchor) and hold one end in each hand.

2. Kneel or stand tall, arms reaching up, ribs down.

3. Pull your elbows down and back toward your ribs, then return slowly.

Home: Resistance band + door anchor
Gym: Lat pulldown machine or cable

Easier: Lighter band, or step closer to the anchor
Harder: Heavier band, pause 1 second at your chest

Works: Back (lats), arms, posture

WORKOUT B



Dumbbell Overhead Press 10

1. Hold the dumbbells at your shoulders, ribs down, glutes tight.

2. Press straight up until your arms are long, without leaning back.

3. Lower slowly to your shoulders.

Home: A pair of dumbbells
Gym: Machine shoulder press or heavier dumbbells

Easier: Sit on a chair, or press one arm at a time
Harder: Take 3 seconds to lower

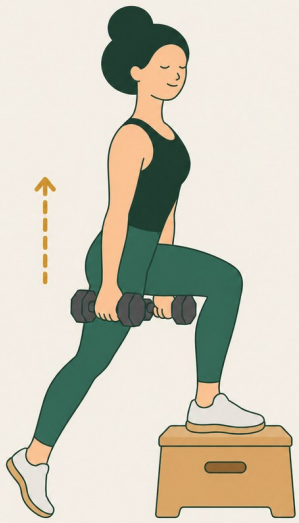
Works: Shoulders, arms, upper back

THE 12 MOVES · 6 OF 6

Workout B moves

Key position shown · amber arrow = direction of movement

WORKOUT B



Dumbbell Step-Up 11

1. Stand facing a sturdy, low step or box.

2. Put your whole foot on it and drive up through that foot to stand tall.

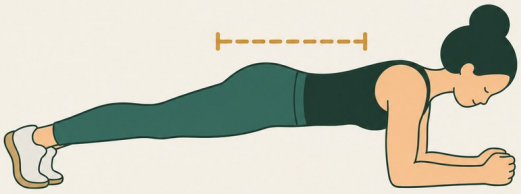
3. Step down slowly with control. Finish all reps, then switch.

Home: Bottom stair or sturdy step, dumbbells
Gym: Plyo box or bench, heavier dumbbells

Easier: Lower step, no weight, hold a rail
Harder: Higher step, or slower lowering

Works: Thighs, glutes, balance

WORKOUT B



Forearm Plank 12

1. Forearms on the floor, elbows under your shoulders.

2. Lift onto your toes in one straight line from head to heels.

3. Squeeze your glutes, breathe slowly and hold.

Home: Floor or mat
Gym: Same

Easier: Knees down, or hands on a bench
Harder: Hold longer, or lift one foot for a few seconds

Works: Deep core, shoulders

HOME OR GYM

Home + gym options at a glance

Train at home, at the gym, or mix both. The sets, reps and log stay the same. Write which version you used in your log so you compare like with like at your check-ins.

#	MOVE	HOME	GYM
1	Goblet Squat	One dumbbell or kettlebell	Heavier dumbbell, or leg press
2	Incline Push-Up	Kitchen counter or sturdy table	Bench or Smith machine bar
3	Two-Arm Bent-Over Row	A pair of dumbbells	Seated cable row or heavier dumbbells
4	Dumbbell Glute Bridge	One dumbbell on your hips	Barbell or machine hip thrust
5	Dead Bug	Floor or mat	Same, or hold a light dumbbell
6	Farmer Carry	Heavy dumbbells, or full grocery bags	Heavier dumbbells or trap bar
7	Dumbbell Romanian Deadlift	A pair of dumbbells	Barbell, or heavier dumbbells
8	Split Squat	Dumbbells at your sides	Heavier dumbbells, or Smith machine
9	Band or Cable Pulldown	Resistance band + door anchor	Lat pulldown machine or cable
10	Dumbbell Overhead Press	A pair of dumbbells	Shoulder press machine or dumbbells
11	Dumbbell Step-Up	Bottom stair or sturdy step, dumbbells	Plyo box or bench, heavier dumbbells
12	Forearm Plank	Floor or mat	Same

Choosing weights: start light enough to finish every rep with clean form at about RPE 6. Most women start with 8 to 15 lb for upper body and 15 to 25 lb for lower body, but use what your body tells you, not a number on a chart.

MY EQUIPMENT + STARTING WEIGHTS

SESSION LOG · WEEK 1

Week 1: A-B-A



2 x 10–12 main lifts · 2 rounds core + carry · RPE 6 · write weight x reps per set (e.g. 15 x 12)

SESSION 1 · WORKOUT A

Date _____ Session RPE ____ Energy 1–10 ____

MOVE	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3	SET 4
Goblet Squat				
Incline Push-Up				
Two-Arm Bent-Over Row				
Dumbbell Glute Bridge				
Dead Bug				
Farmer Carry				

SESSION 2 · WORKOUT B

Date _____ Session RPE ____ Energy 1–10 ____

MOVE	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3	SET 4
Dumbbell Romanian Deadlift				
Split Squat				
Band or Cable Pulldown				
Dumbbell Overhead Press				
Dumbbell Step-Up				
Forearm Plank				

SESSION 3 · WORKOUT A

Date _____ Session RPE ____ Energy 1–10 ____

MOVE	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3	SET 4
Goblet Squat				
Incline Push-Up				
Two-Arm Bent-Over Row				
Dumbbell Glute Bridge				
Dead Bug				
Farmer Carry				

SESSION LOG · WEEK 2

Week 2: B-A-B



3 x 10–12 main lifts · 2 rounds core + carry · RPE 6–7 · write weight x reps per set (e.g. 15 x 12)

SESSION 1 · WORKOUT B

Date _____ Session RPE ____ Energy 1–10 ____

MOVE	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3	SET 4
Dumbbell Romanian Deadlift				
Split Squat				
Band or Cable Pulldown				
Dumbbell Overhead Press				
Dumbbell Step-Up				
Forearm Plank				

SESSION 2 · WORKOUT A

Date _____ Session RPE ____ Energy 1–10 ____

MOVE	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3	SET 4
Goblet Squat				
Incline Push-Up				
Two-Arm Bent-Over Row				
Dumbbell Glute Bridge				
Dead Bug				
Farmer Carry				

SESSION 3 · WORKOUT B

Date _____ Session RPE ____ Energy 1–10 ____

MOVE	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3	SET 4
Dumbbell Romanian Deadlift				
Split Squat				
Band or Cable Pulldown				
Dumbbell Overhead Press				
Dumbbell Step-Up				
Forearm Plank				

SESSION LOG · WEEK 3

Week 3: A-B-A



3 x 8–12 main lifts · 3 rounds core + carry · RPE 7–8 · write weight x reps per set (e.g. 15 x 12)

SESSION 1 · WORKOUT A

Date _____ Session RPE ____ Energy 1–10 ____

MOVE	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3	SET 4
Goblet Squat				
Incline Push-Up				
Two-Arm Bent-Over Row				
Dumbbell Glute Bridge				
Dead Bug				
Farmer Carry				

SESSION 2 · WORKOUT B

Date _____ Session RPE ____ Energy 1–10 ____

MOVE	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3	SET 4
Dumbbell Romanian Deadlift				
Split Squat				
Band or Cable Pulldown				
Dumbbell Overhead Press				
Dumbbell Step-Up				
Forearm Plank				

SESSION 3 · WORKOUT A

Date _____ Session RPE ____ Energy 1–10 ____

MOVE	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3	SET 4
Goblet Squat				
Incline Push-Up				
Two-Arm Bent-Over Row				
Dumbbell Glute Bridge				
Dead Bug				
Farmer Carry				

SESSION LOG · WEEK 4

Week 4: B-A-B



3 x 8–12 main lifts · 3 rounds core + carry · RPE 7–8 · write weight x reps per set (e.g. 15 x 12)

SESSION 1 · WORKOUT B

Date _____ Session RPE ____ Energy 1–10 ____

MOVE	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3	SET 4
Dumbbell Romanian Deadlift				
Split Squat				
Band or Cable Pulldown				
Dumbbell Overhead Press				
Dumbbell Step-Up				
Forearm Plank				

SESSION 2 · WORKOUT A

Date _____ Session RPE ____ Energy 1–10 ____

MOVE	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3	SET 4
Goblet Squat				
Incline Push-Up				
Two-Arm Bent-Over Row				
Dumbbell Glute Bridge				
Dead Bug				
Farmer Carry				

SESSION 3 · WORKOUT B

Date _____ Session RPE ____ Energy 1–10 ____

MOVE	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3	SET 4
Dumbbell Romanian Deadlift				
Split Squat				
Band or Cable Pulldown				
Dumbbell Overhead Press				
Dumbbell Step-Up				
Forearm Plank				

SESSION LOG · WEEK 5

Week 5: A-B-A



3–4 x 8–12 main lifts · 3 rounds core + carry · RPE 8 · write weight x reps per set (e.g. 15 x 12)

SESSION 1 · WORKOUT A

Date _____ Session RPE ____ Energy 1–10 ____

MOVE	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3	SET 4
Goblet Squat				
Incline Push-Up				
Two-Arm Bent-Over Row				
Dumbbell Glute Bridge				
Dead Bug				
Farmer Carry				

SESSION 2 · WORKOUT B

Date _____ Session RPE ____ Energy 1–10 ____

MOVE	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3	SET 4
Dumbbell Romanian Deadlift				
Split Squat				
Band or Cable Pulldown				
Dumbbell Overhead Press				
Dumbbell Step-Up				
Forearm Plank				

SESSION 3 · WORKOUT A

Date _____ Session RPE ____ Energy 1–10 ____

MOVE	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3	SET 4
Goblet Squat				
Incline Push-Up				
Two-Arm Bent-Over Row				
Dumbbell Glute Bridge				
Dead Bug				
Farmer Carry				

SESSION LOG · WEEK 6

Week 6: A-B + re-test

2 x 8-10 main lifts · 2 rounds core + carry · RPE 6 · write weight x reps per set (e.g. 15 x 12)

SESSION 1 · WORKOUT A, LIGHT

Date _____ Session RPE ____ Energy 1-10 ____

MOVE	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3	SET 4
Goblet Squat				
Incline Push-Up				
Two-Arm Bent-Over Row				
Dumbbell Glute Bridge				
Dead Bug				
Farmer Carry				

SESSION 2 · WORKOUT B, LIGHT

Date _____ Session RPE ____ Energy 1-10 ____

MOVE	SET 1	SET 2	SET 3	SET 4
Dumbbell Romanian Deadlift				
Split Squat				
Band or Cable Pulldown				
Dumbbell Overhead Press				
Dumbbell Step-Up				
Forearm Plank				

SESSION 3 · RE-TEST DAY (DAY 5)

Date _____ Session RPE ____ Energy 1-10 ____

TEST	RESULT	START	CHANGE	NOTES
Push-ups (surface: ____)				
Sit-to-stand, 30 s				
Forearm plank, sec				
Goblet squat 10RM				
Farmer carry, sec				
Tape + photos: next morning				

DAILY MOVEMENT

Steps + easy cardio tracker

Write your step count each day and tick the box if you did an easy cardio session (walk, bike, swim, or a class at a chatty pace). My step baseline: _____ My daily step goal: _____

WEEK	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	AVG	CARDIO
1									☐ ☐
2									☐ ☐
3									☐ ☐
4									☐ ☐
5									☐ ☐
6									☐ ☐

Easy ways to add steps

- A 10-minute walk after two meals a day
- Take calls standing or walking
- Park at the far end, use the stairs
- Walk while you wait (kids, coffee, the kettle)
- A longer walk at the weekend with a friend
- Set a reminder to move every hour

WHAT HELPED ME MOVE MORE THIS WEEK

RECOVERY BASICS

Sleep, rest days + soreness



You do not build muscle during the workout. You build it while you recover. Three things matter most.

Sleep

- Aim for 7 to 9 hours
- Same wake time most days
- Dim screens 30 to 60 min before bed
- Cool, dark room

Rest days

- At least one full rest day a week
- A day between strength sessions
- Walks and stretching are fine
- Feeling run down? Take an extra day

Fuel

- Hit your protein target
- Do not under-eat on rest days
- Water through the day
- A protein meal within a few hours after training

Soreness vs pain

NORMAL MUSCLE SORENESS	PAIN TO TAKE SERIOUSLY
Dull, achy, in the muscle you worked	Sharp, stabbing or in a joint
Starts 12 to 48 hours after training	Starts during a set
Eases as you warm up and move	Gets worse as you move
Gone in 2 to 4 days	Swelling, bruising or lasting longer
Fine to train other muscles or walk	Stop that move; see a doctor or physio

> **Very sore after Week 1?** That is common and fades fast. Keep moving gently and do not add weight until the soreness settles.

MY SLEEP AND RECOVERY NOTES

CHECK-IN · WEEK 3

Week 3 check-in

Halfway. Repeat your measurements and the strength tests at the end of Week 3, then compare with your baselines. Strength usually moves first. Inches may barely move yet, and that is normal.

STRENGTH TEST	START	WEEK 3	CHANGE
Push-ups (surface: ____)			
Sit-to-stand, 30 s			
Forearm plank, sec			
Goblet squat 10RM			
Farmer carry			

MEASUREMENT	START	WEEK 3	CHANGE
Waist			
Hips			
Upper arm (R)			
Thigh (R)			
Average daily steps			

RATE 1 TO 10, THEN AND NOW

Energy	____ to ____
How strong I feel	____ to ____
Clothes fit	____ to ____
Sleep	____ to ____

PROTEIN + TRAINING

Sessions done (of 9)	______
Days I hit protein, last 7	______
Moves I went heavier on	______
Photos taken	______

If nothing has moved: check three things first. Are you adding reps or weight each week? Are you near your protein target most days? Are you sleeping 7 hours or more? Fix the weakest one for Weeks 4 and 5.

MY BIGGEST WIN SO FAR

WEEK 6

Deload, then re-test



After five weeks of pushing, Week 6 is lighter on purpose. A deload lets your joints, muscles and energy catch up, so you feel fresh for your re-test and ready for what comes next. It is not a step back.

HOW TO DELOAD

- Two light sessions: A early in the week, B midweek
- Keep your Week 5 weights
- Drop to 2 sets of 8 to 10 reps
- Stop at RPE 6, with 4 reps in the tank
- Keep your steps, protein and sleep the same

RE-TEST DAY (END OF WEEK)

- Same warm-up as your baseline day
- Same order: push-ups, sit-to-stand, plank, goblet squat, carry
- Same surfaces and the same dumbbells
- Next morning: measurements and photos
- Fill in the Week 6 check-in

WEEK 6 PLAN	SESSION	DONE
Day 1	Workout A, light (2 x 8-10)	☐
Day 2	Steps + easy walk	☐
Day 3	Workout B, light (2 x 8-10)	☐
Day 4	Easy cardio or rest	☐
Day 5	Re-test the 5 strength tests	☐
Day 6	Measurements + photos	☐
Day 7	Rest	☐

Feeling great and itching to lift? Good. That is the deload working. Save the energy for re-test day.

HOW MY BODY FEELS THIS WEEK

CHECK-IN · WEEK 6

Week 6 check-in

Do this after your light Week 6 sessions, when you are rested. Same tape, same spot, same time of day, same test surfaces as your baselines. Then take new photos.

STRENGTH TEST	START	WEEK 6	CHANGE
Push-ups (surface: ____)			
Sit-to-stand, 30 s			
Forearm plank, sec			
Goblet squat 10RM			
Farmer carry			

MEASUREMENT	START	WEEK 6	CHANGE
Waist			
Hips			
Upper arm (R)			
Thigh (R)			
Average daily steps			

RATE 1 TO 10, THEN AND NOW

Energy	____ to ____
How strong I feel	____ to ____
Clothes fit	____ to ____
Sleep	____ to ____

PROTEIN + TRAINING

Sessions done (of 18)	______
Days I hit protein, last 7	______
Moves I went heavier on	______
Photos taken	______

Read your results kindly. Six weeks builds a base. Any gain in strength, any inch, any better night's sleep counts. Body composition keeps changing over the months you keep this up.

WINS I WANT TO REMEMBER

YOUR RESULTS

My 6-week summary

Bring all your numbers onto one page. Circle every improvement.

	START	WEEK 3	WEEK 6	CHANGE
Push-ups				
Sit-to-stand, 30 s				
Plank, sec				
Goblet squat 10RM				
Farmer carry				
Waist				
Hips				
Upper arm (R)				
Thigh (R)				
Average steps				
Protein days per week				
Scale weight (optional)				

LIFT	WEEK 1 WEIGHT X REPS	WEEK 5 WEIGHT X REPS
Goblet Squat		
Dumbbell Romanian Deadlift		
Two-Arm Bent-Over Row		
Dumbbell Overhead Press		
Split Squat		
Band or Cable Pulldown		

WHAT CHANGED THAT NUMBERS CAN'T SHOW

AFTER WEEK 6

What's next after Week 6



Six weeks builds the base. Real changes in body composition come from keeping this up for months. Here is how to keep going without starting over.

Run it again, heavier

- Repeat Weeks 1 to 6 with your new weights
- Start Week 1 at your Week 5 weights, 2 sets
- Re-test at the end of each 6-week block

Keep protein on autopilot

- Keep your best 4 or 5 protein ideas on rotation
- Reprint the protein tracker for a few more weeks
- Check your target again if your goal weight changes

Want to lose some fat too?

- Keep lifting and keep protein high
- Trim portions a little, not a lot
- Add steps before you add cardio
- Expect slow and steady, not fast

Signs it is time to change

- You stall on a move for 3 weeks
- Swap to a close variation (pages 19 to 25)
- Bored? Try the gym option for each move

MY PLAN FOR THE NEXT 6 WEEKS

COMMON QUESTIONS

Questions women ask me

Will lifting make me bulky?

Very unlikely. Building noticeable size takes years of heavy training and lots of food. In six weeks you will feel firmer and stronger.

Should I eat less to lose the belly?

Not to start. Eating too little makes building muscle harder. Build protein and strength first; if you want to lose fat later, trim portions a little, not a lot.

Do I have to stop cardio?

No. Keep it easy and keep it to 1 or 2 sessions a week, plus daily steps. Strength is the priority for this plan.

The scale went up. Did I do something wrong?

Probably not. New training can hold a little extra water in your muscles. Look at your tape, photos and lifts instead.

I can't eat that much protein.

Build up over two weeks and lean on easy anchors: Greek yogurt, eggs, cottage cheese, shakes. Small appetite? Add protein to foods you already eat.

What if I miss a week?

Pick up where you left off, or repeat the last week you finished. Consistency over months matters more than any single week.

I'm over 50. Is this for me?

Yes, with your doctor's OK. Start at the easier versions, keep RPE around 6 to 7, and progress a little slower.

Can I do this while breastfeeding or postpartum?

Only with clearance from your doctor or a pelvic floor physio, and at a gentler pace.

MY OWN QUESTIONS

NOTES

Notes + reflections



THOUGHTS, WINS, QUESTIONS



THANK YOU

Strong looks good on you

Thank you for choosing this plan and for supporting a small business.
Your free bonuses are on page 42, and your first coaching email is on its way.

PRINTING TIPS

- Print at 100% (actual size) on Letter or A4
- Print the guide pages once; reprint logs and trackers as often as you like
- A clipboard or binder keeps it handy
- Reprint any page for your personal use

PLEASE NOTE

Talk to your doctor before starting if you have a health condition, are pregnant or postpartum, or feel pain. Stop any exercise that hurts.

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This guide is for general education and information only. It is not medical advice and does not diagnose, treat or cure any condition. The exercises and nutrition guidance are general and may not suit everyone; check with your doctor or a qualified health professional before starting any new exercise or eating plan, especially if you have a medical condition, take medication, or are pregnant or postpartum.

You take part at your own risk. Results vary from person to person and depend on many factors, including consistency, sleep, stress and health history. No specific result is promised. Stop any exercise that causes pain, dizziness or shortness of breath and seek medical advice.

Coach Luke | NASM-CPT, CES, PES | NESTA Nutrition Coach

More free workouts and recipes at coachluke.com.

YOUR FREE BONUSES

Thanks for buying direct

Because you bought this plan from my own shop, two bonuses come with it.

BONUS 1 · 13 COACHING EMAILS OVER 6 WEEKS

They start automatically after your purchase: a welcome email today, then two short emails a week for six weeks, matched to where you are in the plan. What to focus on that week, how to add reps or weight, a protein tip, and a nudge for your Week 3 and Week 6 check-ins. Check your inbox (and your promotions or spam folder) for the first one.

BONUS 2 · FREE RESOURCE LIBRARY

Scan the code or visit

coachluke.com/free-library

Printable guides, trackers and checklists to use alongside this plan. New ones are added regularly.

Questions? Reply to any coaching email or write to **coach@coachluke.com**. I read every one.