

Beginner's Guide to Getting Started with an Exercise Program



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By **Matt Weik**

Pull off your security blanket and throw on some workout clothing! The hardest part of getting into shape is by far getting started. People drive by gyms and health food stores every day, many of them thinking they should really start a training program along with a good diet. While their thought process is in the right direction, they continue driving to their next destination bypassing everything they just thought about. This is where the first step needs to be made. I know people get in a routine and don't want to come out of their comfort zone, but joining a gym isn't a bad thing. There are tons of benefits to strength training and following a healthy diet plan.

By coming out of your shell, whether it be due to you being nervous to join a gym because you think people will look at you weird, or you thinking you don't have time to workout, or whatever the case may be—you will find yourself entering a place that you would have never imagined had you not taken that first step. This is the world of healthy living along with a healthy body.

As you can imagine there is so much information that I could put into this article, but I don't want to overload you and scare you off. This is an endless journey of learning. To this day I am still learning myself. The key is to never stop. Grab as much information as you can and build your knowledge of the topic and try differ-





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ent technique and tweak programs and have fun learning about your body.

You got to dig deep

I'm talking about discipline. If you aren't strong in this area it is going to take some work. Work isn't a bad thing—that along with a little determination builds character. You need to get yourself into a routine of working out and following a good healthy diet program. Now when I say this, I'm not telling you to jump into this all at once—baby steps. If you jump in too quickly you will surely be overloaded and will more than likely give up. Start first by joining a gym or getting weights for at your house. Follow that up with a workout routine. After you get in a routine of working out on a regular basis, start changing up parts of your diet—maybe start by eliminating junk food and soft drinks. Again, baby steps. If discipline wasn't your strong point, you will find yourself more disciplined as you progress and stick with your routines. Soon enough all of your day-planners and Blackberry's will have messages on them reminding you of your workout for the day.

Feel the rush

Do you NEED that cup of coffee each morning just to make sure you are productive at work? Or maybe half-way through the day you find yourself wanting to crawl under your desk and take a quick nap? Working out gives you energy throughout the day. If you can't wake up in the morning, try and fit a workout in before you go to work. You will be awake and energized first thing when you walk into work. Not only that, but you will feel better having your workout finished for the day so you can enjoy the rest of your day and night. If napping in the middle of the day is more your style, then try and fit your workout in over lunch. Pack your gear before you leave the house for the day and over lunch hit the gym. This will give you an extra boost of energy for the second half of your work day and into the night. The great thing about working out compared to carbohydrates and sugars in terms of energy is NO CRASH- 100 per

cent pure energy with no dreadful crash at the end where you just want to crawl back in bed.

Be the next World's Strongest Man (or woman)!

Ok, this was just a playful phrase—but let's think this through. Strength training is a must in order to build lean muscle tissue and achieve either a nice lean/toned look or a muscular look (depending on what your goals are). Ladies, have you ever asked your man to help open something or carry something because it was just a little too heavy or tough for you? Guys, you ever want to make home projects go a little easier or impress the ladies with how much you can lift? The key is strength training. Strength training will make all every-

day activities easier and with less effort put into them. You will find yourself moving the weights up further and further as you progress through your program. Ladies, don't worry about the thought of looking like a man by increasing your weights, low testosterone will prevent that from happening. So make sure you are pushing yourself during your workouts and using a weight that is challenging but not too heavy that it could cause an injury.

Health benefits that come along with exercise

There are many benefits that come along with exercise. Health benefits that come along with exercise are our way of preventing risks and taking control of our lives.

- Reduces the risk of dying prematurely

-Reduces the risk of dying prematurely from heart disease

- Reduces the risk of developing diabetes
- Reduces the risk of developing high blood pressure
- Helps reduce blood pressure in people who already have high blood pressure
- Reduces the risk of developing colon cancer
- Reduces feelings of depression and anxiety
- Helps control weight
- Helps build and maintain healthy bones, muscles, and joints
- Helps older adults become stronger and better able to move about without falling
- Promotes psychological well-being
- Promotes better sleep
- Promotes better sex life
- Improves memory

This list goes on and is growing with time as new studies are showing more benefits of exercise.

Take a good look in the mirror!

What do you see? Are you happy? Most people begin working out because they don't like what they see in the mirror. If you are one of those people then this is the first step in making a change. There are many different workout programs to help you reach whatever goal you are striving for. You could build muscle mass, you could tone the physique you already have, you could lose body fat—whatever the goal, there is a program for you. Changing your body won't be easy, but by staying consistent and being determined, you will see changes in your body that you wouldn't think was possible. You control your life and how you live it and in what body. If you grasp the opportunity to better yourself physically, mentally, and emotionally through exercise, then you will find yourself much happier.



Confidence booster

Take all the aspects broken down above. What do they all help you achieve (besides a better body and health)? Confidence! You will find you present yourself differently when meeting new people. You will be more comfortable with your physique and the way you carry yourself. When reaching your goals in the gym you will find yourself taking on more responsibility in your life and wanting to be the person in control with every aspect of your life whether it is at home, at work, or with friends. Not only that, but when people see how you have changed your physique and how you are living a healthier lifestyle, they are going to want to be just like you. You will become a role model for all those around you who haven't taken the first step. Who knows, you might just be the one to help them take the plunge and dive into a healthier lifestyle through exercise.

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Don’t let it stop with you!

Don't let the chain towards a healthier world end with you. If it dies off within you, it dies off in the hopes and dreams of those around you. Learn as much as you can and teach those around you who ask how you achieved greatness. Never settle for anything less than your best. Be confident in everything you do and grab life by the horns. You must first crawl before you can walk. You must walk before you can run. I have led you to the stairs—all you have to do is take that first step. **P**

