

# Upgrade Program Fitness Plan

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## Introduction

This document is part of a series of upgrade plans for every [area](#) of your life. It's broadly designed for a single, middle-class, 30-something living in a major city in a developed country.

Fitness is a measure of physical aptitude—your agility, speed, strength, mobility, and cardiovascular conditioning and endurance. The benefits of improving your fitness levels are enormous, ranging from improved mood, cognition, energy, and longevity. Do not neglect your body.

Please go to “File” > “Make a copy” and make a copy of it for yourself. Then fill it out section by section according to your particular needs and circumstances. Perhaps add sections or items, delete them, change the order, and so on.

Your aim should be to make the plan as applicable and useful to you as possible. You should not follow the plan blindly—think it through for yourself.

Note that this process might be challenging. You might need to teach yourself things you aren't very knowledgeable about yet. You might feel like you need to do preliminary work in a different life area first. That's okay. Figure out broadly what makes sense for you, operationalize that understanding as specific actions in the [Actions](#) section, and then do them.

If it feels overwhelming, just start with the parts you find most valuable and do what you can. Tackle the rest over time. It may also help to set aside a dedicated [day](#) to work exclusively on this by yourself or with friends. Or you may choose to enlist an [UP Coach](#) to co-design and execute this plan alongside you.

## Epistemic Status

This is an overview of how confident the principal [author](#) is in this plan.

- Generally high confidence in plan
- Based on 30+ years of moderate focus on fitness for self and 250+ hours supporting 25+ clients with their fitness and serving as a teaching assistant for an introductory weight training class multiple times

## Objectives

Decide what objectives you have with this plan and rank them in order of importance. Below are some sample objectives.

1. Maximize healthspan and lifespan
  - a. Maximize day-to-day health, wellbeing, and energy
  - b. Minimize risk of disease, illness, and disability
  - c. Minimize healthcare costs over your lifetime
2. Improve appearance
  - a. Increase confidence and self-esteem
  - b. Achieve desired optimal body mass index and body fat levels
  - c. Achieve desired physique
3. Increase strength, stamina, stability, and flexibility
4. Improve emotional well-being
5. Improve cognitive performance

## Metrics

Decide what metrics you will use to evaluate the effectiveness of this plan. Also include the frequency in which you'll evaluate those metrics. For example, ad hoc, once, hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, annually or per decade. Below are some sample metrics.

- Fitness Rating: How would you rate your fitness level, on a 1-10 scale?
- Resting Heart Rate
- Weight
- Body Mass Index (BMI)
- [VO2 Max](#)

## Values

List all of your relevant values and rank them in order of importance. Below are some sample values.

1. Healthspan
2. Lifespan
3. Well-being
4. Self-esteem
5. Appearance
6. Strength
7. Happiness
8. Leisure

## 9. Relationships

### **Value Analysis**

List and then analyze all of the costs and benefits of this plan. Potentially also estimate expected value, cost-benefit, return on investment, and/or net present value.

- Time costs: 1 - 15,000 hours
- Financial costs: \$0 - \$100,000 dollars (e.g., fitness coach, fitness equipment, gym memberships, competitions, etc.)
- Benefits: \$X in extremely large objective and subjective benefits (e.g., emotional well-being, disease prevention, improved strength and stamina, etc.)

### **Strategies**

Decide on your high-level strategies for achieving your objectives. Below are some sample strategies.

#### *Key People*

- Do the work on your own
- Outsource some of the work to experts (e.g., coach, exercise physiologist, personal trainer, etc.)
- Outsource some of the work to assistants

#### *Key Timings*

- Make incremental changes every day until you reach your objectives
- Make as many changes as you can over a set period (e.g., one month, six months or one year)
- Make changes as intensively as you can until you've reached your objectives

#### *Training*

- Train alone
- Train with a partner
- Train with a team
- Train with a coach

## Actions

List the specific actions you will take to achieve your objectives. You should add these tasks to your project management system unless you are choosing to do them now. Below is an example sequence of actions you might take.

1. Describe your [mental model](#) of personal fitness
  - a. Create a visual representation of it from memory without referencing this plan or outside sources of information
  - b. Create a new visual representation after thoroughly studying this plan and any relevant sources of information
  - c. Pay special attention to the improvements in the second version as incorporating those new insights may be crucial to the success of your plan
2. Finish every section of this plan, including the [assessments](#), [tools](#), and [resources](#) below
3. [Assess](#) your current fitness levels (e.g., cardiorespiratory/musculoskeletal fitness assessments<sup>1</sup>, VO2 max, resting metabolic rate, etc.)
4. Conduct a body composition analysis
5. Ensure you do at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise per week or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic exercise per week
6. Ensure you do muscle-strengthening activities twice or more per week
7. Develop your optimal fitness routine
  - a. Set a regular schedule each week
    - i. If general fitness is a priority, consider training for a [decathlon](#) (or modified to your preferences)
    - ii. If muscle gain is a priority, consider adopting higher-frequency training (e.g., 6 times/week)
  - b. Regularly measure your progress
  - c. Actively adjust your routine as needed
8. Stay motivated
  - a. Consider working with a personal trainer one-on-one or with an accountability partner or partners
  - b. Consider using a reward system
  - c. Consider switching up your program to keep it interesting
  - d. Consider focusing on enjoyable activities, especially if you find yourself losing motivation
9. Constantly improve to keep workouts effective
  - a. Practice progressive overload by increasing your training volume over time
10. Improve your [behavioral mastery](#)
11. Improve [nutrition](#)

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<sup>1</sup>[Reliability of field-based fitness tests in adults: a systematic review](#)

- a. Consider doing 1 [protein-sparing modified fast](#) (PSMF) per week if you'd like to improve your physique
12. Improve your [health](#)
13. Improve your [sleep](#)
14. Improve your [emotional well-being](#)

## Schedule

Decide on which days you will take which actions. You should add these dates to your calendar now.

- [Date]: Finalize plan
- [Dates]: Execute plan
- [Dates]: Review plan's outcomes

## Predictions

Predict how well you will do in achieving your objectives.

- [Name]: I predict with [X]% confidence that I will [Y] by [Z].
- [Team Member's Name]: I predict with [X]% confidence that [Name] will [Y] by [Z].
- [Team Member's Name]: I predict with [X]% confidence that [Name] will [Y] by [Z].
  
- Combined: We predict with an average [X]% confidence that [Name] will [Y] by [Z].

## Outcomes

Objectively record how well you achieved your objectives.

- [Year 1]: [Outcomes]
- [Year 2]: [Outcomes]
- [Year 3]: [Outcomes]
- [Year 4]: [Outcomes]
- [Year 5]: [Outcomes]
- [Year 6]: [Outcomes]
- [Year 7]: [Outcomes]
- [Year 8]: [Outcomes]
- [Year 9]: [Outcomes]
- [Year 10]: [Outcomes]

## Assessments

List all of the assessments you might take to understand how you're doing compared to your objectives. Below are some sample assessments.

- [1RM Calculator](#): a calculator to calculate the maximum weight a person can lift for a single repetition for a given exercise
- Body Composition
  - Lean Body Mass: a component of body composition, calculated by subtracting body fat weight from total body weight: total body weight is lean plus fat (requires lab visit)
  - Dry Lean Mass: the weight of the protein and mineral content in the body (requires lab visit)
  - Skeletal Muscle Mass: the total weight of skeletal muscle (requires lab visit)
  - Body Fat: the total weight of body fat (requires lab visit)
  - Buttock Circumference: butt circumference (requires measuring tape)
  - Chest Circumference: chest circumference (requires measuring tape)
  - Biceps Circumference: biceps circumference (requires measuring tape)
  - Triceps Circumference: triceps circumference (requires measuring tape)
  - Thighs Circumference: thighs circumference (requires measuring tape)
  - Calves Circumference: calves circumference (requires measuring tape)
  - Forearms Circumference: forearms circumference (requires measuring tape)
  - Hips Circumference: hips circumference (requires measuring tape)
  - Waist Circumference: waist circumference (requires measuring tape)
  - Neck Circumference: neck circumference (requires measuring tape)
- [Body Composition Analysis \(BOD POD\)](#): an air displacement plethysmograph that uses whole-body densitometry to determine body composition (fat and fat-free mass) in adults and children and can accommodate a wide range of populations (requires lab visit)
- [Body Mass Index \(BMI\) Calculator](#): a measure of body fat based on height and weight that applies to adult men and women
- [Dual-Energy Absorptiometry \(DEXA\) Body Composition Scan](#): an accurate method for body composition analysis (requires lab visit)
- [Functional Movement Screen \(FMS\)](#): a screening tool designed to identify compensatory movement patterns that are indicative of increased injury risk and inefficient movement that causes reduced performance (requires gym or lab visit)
- [Health Fitness Test](#): a comprehensive physical fitness assessment including at least one test to measure each of the five components of fitness: body composition, flexibility, muscular strength and endurance, and cardiorespiratory endurance (recommended at a lab or gym)
- [Heart Rate Calculator](#): a tool to calculate your resting heart rate
- [Ideal Bodyweight Calculator](#): a tool to calculate ideal body weight
- Mobility Score: an overall score of mobility
- [Natural Muscular Potential Calculator](#): a realistic estimate of the maximum amount of muscle a person can gain without steroids
- [One Rep Max Calculator](#): a tool to calculate one-repetition maximum (1RM) for any lift and compare it to others

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- Physique Selfie: a picture taken of oneself at baseline and regular intervals to track visual changes in body composition (UP Top Pick)
- [Selective Functional Movement Assessment \(SFMA\)](#): a series of 7 full-body movement tests designed to assess fundamental patterns of movement such as bending and squatting in those with known musculoskeletal pain (requires gym or lab visit)
- [ShapeScale 3D Body Scan](#): a full-body scan that visualizes fat loss and muscle gains
- [Strength Analysis](#): a measure of how much the strength levels among lifts vary
- [Strength Standards](#): a series of strength benchmarks for different exercises based on body weight and sex
- [Symmetric Strength](#): a measure of how well a person would fare in a strength competition against lifters of the same sex and bodyweight
- [Total Daily Energy Expenditure \(TDEE\) Calculator](#): a measure of how many calories an individual burns per day, as well as BMI, BMR, Macros, and many other useful statistics
- Training Volume: the total weight lifted in a given timeframe (e.g., sets x repetitions x weight over 1 week)
- [Wilks Calculator](#): a measure to compare the strength of powerlifters against each other despite the different weights of the lifters

## Tools

List all of the tools you might use to achieve your objectives. Below are some sample tools.

- [7 Minute Workout](#)
- [ActiveOS](#)
- [Adidas](#)
- [Adidas Runtastic](#)
- [Amiigo Wristband](#)
- [Apeiron Genetics](#)
- [Apeiron Zoh](#)
- [Apple Watch](#)
- [Argus](#)
- [Asics](#)
- [Asics Runkeeper](#)
- [Athos Coaching System](#)
- [Beast Sensor](#)
- [Blue Goji](#)
- [Bowflex 4.1S Stowable Bench](#)
- [Bowflex 5.1S Stowable Bench](#)
- [ClassPass](#)
- [Crossfit](#)
- [Daily Burn](#)
- [DietBet](#)
- [Eight Sleep](#)
- [Endomondo](#)



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- [Enquos](#)
- [Evo UltraFit](#)
- [EZ Curl Bar](#)
- [Fat-Free Mass Index Calculator](#)
- [Fatbet](#)
- [Fitbit](#)
- [Fitness Buddy](#)
- [Fitness Lift Fixer](#)
- [Fitness Program Picker](#)
- [Fitocracy](#)
- [Follistatin](#)
- [GoodGym](#)
- [Google Fit](#)
- [Gyroscope](#)
- [HealthyWage](#)
- [Ice bath](#)
- [Jacuzzi](#)
- [Joovv Quad 3.0 Kit](#)
- [KGoal](#)
- [LifeCoin](#)
- [LikeAGlove](#)
- [Lumo Bodytech](#)
- [MapMyFitness](#)
- [Minimum Viable Fitness](#)
- [MuscleWiki](#)
- [MyFitnessPal](#)
- [Myontec](#)
- [New Balance](#)
- [Nike](#)
- [Oura Ring](#)
- [Oyo Gym](#)
- [Paceline](#)
- [Peloton](#)
- [Portable Sauna](#)
- [Puma](#)
- [Push](#)
- [RestWise](#)
- [Rove](#)
- [Sauna](#)
- [Skimble](#)
- [Skulpt](#)
- [SmartMat](#)
- [Strava](#)

- [StrongLifts](#)
- [Sworkit](#)
- [System2](#)
- [Therasage Thera360 Portable Sauna](#)
- [Trainerize](#)
- [Under Armour](#)
- [UP Actions](#)
- [UP Assessments](#)
- [UP Behavioral Plan](#)
- [UP Curriculum](#)
- [UP Emotional Plan](#)
- [UP Environmental Plan](#)
- [UP Tools](#)
- [UP Sleep Plan](#)
- [Vida](#)
- [Virtuagym](#)
- [Weight Watchers](#)
- [Whoop](#)
- [Withings Hybrid Smartwatches](#)
- [Withings Smart Scales](#)
- [X3 Bar Elite](#)
- [Zamzee](#)
- [Zombies, Run!](#)

## Resources

List all of the resources you might use to achieve your objectives. Below are some sample resources.

### General

- [Aerial Yoga](#)
- [Bikram Yoga](#)
- [Biohack Stack](#)
- [BioMindmap](#)
- [Body by Science](#)
- [Boxing](#)
- [Darebee](#)
- [Exercise](#)
- [Foot Exercises](#)
- [Greatist Wherever Workout](#)
- [Ice Bath](#)

- [Julian Shapiro's Building Muscle Handbook](#)
- [Menno Hensselmans](#) (UP Top Pick)
- [Muay Thai](#)
- [Parkour](#)
- [Yoga as Exercise](#)

## **Example Program**

### ***Kick Off Plan #1***

- 3 days of daily 30 minute walks
- Resistance training daily for 2x15 reps of 25% 1RM for squat, deadlift, bench press, bent over barbell rows, and overhead press with focus on technique and flexibility

### ***Kick Off Plan #2***

- 21 days of daily 30 minute walks
- Resistance training 3 days/week for 5x5 reps of 80% 1RM for squat, deadlift, bench press, bent over barbell rows, and overhead press with focus on building core strength

### ***Exercise***

- CrossFit 3 times/week for 60 minutes with average rate of perceived exertion (RPE) of 7
- HIIT incline treadmill cardio for 20 minutes 2 times/week with 5 30-second sprints and remaining time walking with average RPE of 8
- Test testosterone levels (saliva sampling) after testing strength, bodybuilding, endurance and power resistance protocols for 2 weeks each and determine optimal program

### ***Exercise Schedule***

- Fasted Crossfit Monday evening
- HIIT incline treadmill Tuesday evening (or Crossfit)
- Fasted Crossfit Wednesday evening
- HIIT incline treadmill Thursday evening (or Crossfit)
- Fasted Crossfit Friday evening
- Recover Saturday
- Recover Sunday

## Notes

Add any random thoughts, questions, and uncertainties you may have.

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