



GYMETC WORKOUT GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION

Any fitness expert will agree on the importance of good physical health. With so many exciting facilities readily available with your membership at gymetc, there has never been a better time to invest in your health and well-being. We aim to make this process as simple as possible for you, so we've had one of our expert Personal Trainers put together a small guide on how best to achieve all of your gym goals to become the strongest and fittest version of yourself possible.

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RESISTANCE TRAINING

ELIMINATING THE FEAR FACTOR

Resistance (or weight) training is one of the best things we can do to support the long-term health of our bodies and one of the most popular reasons for people joining gyms. Training with resistance, i.e. dumbbells, barbells and resistance machines, will increase strength in muscles, bones, tendons and ligaments but is also particularly useful for many other adaptations, including fat loss.



Despite its multiple benefits, resistance training is often avoided by new gymgoers who feel intimidated. In the past, I have encouraged new clients to get into the resistance training area on day one. Imagine joining a gym is like passing your driving test, and the free weight section is the motorway. The longer you put it off, the more you build it up in your head as something to fear. But it's really not that bad, and you may even be surprised to know that most people there would be more than happy to help if you have a question about a piece of equipment you don't understand - everyone loves to look like an expert! Oh, and see that big guy in the vest grunting in front of the mirror? He's not looking at you, don't worry, he only has eyes for himself!



RESISTANCE TRAINING: MAKING A PLAN

Now the fear factor has gone, it's time to formulate a plan. Common mistakes I have seen over the years are people floating around from machine to machine using whatever piece of equipment is free and avoiding ones they are unsure about rather than asking for help.

Every gym workout you do should have structure and a goal. The best way to do this is to split your week into body parts on specific days. There are many ways of doing this depending on how often you train, but a great starting point would be a 3-workout week split: one lower body, one upper body and one full body workout.



HERE IS AN EXAMPLE OF A 3-DAY SPLIT:

UPPER BODY DAY

Set 1

Lat pulldown
Seated overhead press

Set 2

DB chest press
DB single arm bent over row

Set 3

DB lat pullover
DB seated lat raise

Set 4

Cable tricep pushdown
Preacher curl

LOWER BODY DAY

Set 1

Barbell squats

Set 2

Deadlifts

Set 3

Glute bridges

Set 4

Seated leg extension
Lying hamstring curl

FULL BODY DAY

Set 1

Weighted step-ups
Alternating DB snatch

Set 2

Walking lunges
Squat thrusts

Set 3

Assisted pull-ups
Hanging leg raises

Set 4

Slam ball
Air bike

A man in a grey tank top and dark shorts is performing a functional training exercise in a gym. He is leaning forward, pushing a heavy sled or weighted object. The gym is dimly lit with warm orange and yellow tones. Other people are visible in the background, also working out. The title 'FUNCTIONAL TRAINING & HIIT' is overlaid in large white letters.

FUNCTIONAL TRAINING & HIIT

Functional training is a term used to describe an exercise that does not use a fixed-plane machine and tends to incorporate many different muscles at once. HIIT, or High-Intensity Interval Training, describes a way of exercise that uses max-intensity bouts of work dispersed by periods of rest. These two forms of exercise can be used together to create short, efficient and challenging workouts.

Exercises such as boxing, squat jumps, kettlebell swings, sprints or those using air bikes or slam balls, for example, fall into this category. This method of training is currently very popular, largely due to its “bang for bucks” - you can burn through a lot of calories in a very short time due to the nature of these quick full body exercises. For those who are busy either before, after or even during work, you can throw together a challenging circuit that can be achieved in less than 30 minutes.

A woman with blonde hair tied back, wearing an orange sports bra and grey leggings, is rowing on a machine. Next to her, a man with a beard and tattoos, wearing a black tank top, is also rowing. They are in a gym with other people and equipment visible in the background.

EXAMPLE OF A HIIT WORKOUT

HIIT WORKOUT:

Slam ball **x20 reps**

Burpee **x10 reps**

KB swings **x20 reps**

Barbell clean and press **x10 reps**

400m row

AMRAP (As many reps as possible) **in 20 minutes**



CARDIO

CARDIOVASCULAR TRAINING

Despite the emergence of many popular forms of training and specifically designed apps to get you running, cycling or swimming outdoors, cardio is still king amongst gymgoers every year. As a stereotypical personal trainer, it may not surprise you to hear that this is not my go-to method of training. However, if your goal is fat loss, it still ranks high in the category of exercises with high-calorie output.



HERE'S AN EXAMPLE OF A CARDIO SESSION USING DIFFERENT VARIABLES:

TREADMILL (X4)

200m run flat

200m walk incline 8

ROWING MACHINE (X10)

20 second sprint

40 second recovery

BIKE (X4)

400m above (x mph)

400m below (x mph)

Treadmills, stationary bikes, rowing machines, cross trainers and step machines are usually commonplace in most commercial gyms and really simple to use. However, as advised with strength training, I still strongly urge anyone who uses just the cardio equipment to stick to a plan. There are still many variables when using just cardio equipment, such as speed, resistance, rest and incline. Try to make sure your workouts are as challenging as possible by mixing things up.



NUTRITION

This is a huge topic that is difficult to summarise in such a short format, so I will keep it incredibly simple and assume the reader is interested in fat loss only.

CONSUME LESS CALORIES THAN YOU ARE USING

The first thing to take from this should be finding out just how many calories your body requires on a daily basis. This is called your BMR (Basal Metabolic Rate) and can be easily found using an online BMR calculator.

The next thing is to count your calorie intake. Again, there is an excellent application called 'My Fitness Pal' for this.



Once we know our BMR and can consistently count our calorie intake, we can now work on creating the required calorie deficit to elicit fat loss.

A generic but widely accepted rule of thumb for fat loss is that it requires an expenditure of 3500 calories to burn 1lb of fat. Over the course of the week, this means being in a deficit of 500 calories per day, which can be made possible by diet, training or a combination of the two.



TIPS

1. CONSISTENCY

Turn up and put in the work. Consistency is key - there are no shortcuts. As long as you have a written plan, stick to it and get it finished. Some days will feel hard, some days will feel great. It's the hard days that get you the results!



2. CHEAT MEALS

I don't use the term cheat meal or cheat day; there should be no such thing. To me, this means you are not enjoying the rest of the week if you feel the need to splurge on a Sunday. However, if you are counting your calories and are in control, you can make space any day of the week for a meal or dessert that you fancy.

If you are planning on a few beers after work on Wednesday - that is fine! Have a light lunch and maybe squeeze in a morning workout. Nothing should be off limits; find a way of creating that calorie allowance which means you can live the life you want without missing out on things you enjoy.



3. SET GOALS

Without goals, you are setting off on a journey with no destination. How will you know when you get there? Your goals should be achievable and completely unique to you. Do 10 press-ups. Run 5km. Lose a stone. Squat my body weight. Fit in that pair of jeans! Whatever it may be, write it down and hold yourself accountable.



4. WEEKEND SABOTAGE

The most common mistake I have seen amongst clients over the years is working hard all week and ruining it at weekends. If you have had a big Saturday night out on the booze, that's not the problem, the problem is usually the following day. The Sunday hangover, full English, big roast dinner with dessert and zero activity. This can undo all the hard work of the week in one afternoon.

My advice? Life goes quick, don't miss out on the fun nights out and family parties, but get up early and get out the next day. Go for a long walk and earn that bacon booty!



5. INTENSITY

Lack of intensity is the most common problem holding back the average gymgoer. Don't be afraid to get sweaty and make some noise. Far too often, I see people training within their comfort zone; they could literally spend years (and often have) training this way and make no progress or anatomical adaptation.

Could that weight be a little bit heavier? Could you squeeze out a few more reps? Could you crank up that speed a bit on the treadmill?

The answer is usually yes.



6. BEST EXERCISE

One thing I have consistently been asked over the years, 'what is the best exercise for fat loss?'. In the past, I may have been guilty of answering that with whatever type of training I was currently into, such as boxing, Olympic lifting, interval training etc.

The real answer to this question is whatever you enjoy the most and will consistently stick at. If you love running on a treadmill, then great, do it. If you love dancing, brilliant, go and find a class or lesson. Love being outdoors? Fantastic, go and get the 'All Trails' app and walk 15,000 steps in the peak district. Much the same as 'what's the best diet?', it's whatever you will consistently do and enjoy.



7. CLASSES

Book on to some classes. This really is one of the best pieces of advice I can give. No matter what your goals are in the gym, there is something that will benefit everyone. If you are only interested in lifting weights, I strongly advise you to try yoga or pilates. It will help you to continue lifting weights long into your later years by increasing your range of motion and core strength, which in turn will help you avoid all those niggly injuries.

If you are new to lifting weights, find a dumbbell or a kettlebell class. Your instructor will have years of experience and can keep a watchful eye over you while you learn some new moves that will be transferable to the gym floor when you're confident enough to take them there.

A spin class is a fantastic way to burn calories, improve lower body strength and avoid impact. They are also great fun and suitable for absolutely any level of ability.

Remember you have already paid for these classes in your membership. So get your money's worth!



8. CHECK THE CALORIES

Many years ago, after struggling with a client for a few months, it was clear she was putting all the work in at the gym but not getting the results she felt she deserved. At the start of the process, when having her in for a consultation, it was clear she did not drink enough water, so I encouraged her to increase that significantly.

After a few months of seeing no obvious results, she revealed to me that she doesn't really like water, so had replaced it with fresh orange juice and was drinking at least 2 litres of it daily. This is roughly 1000 calories per day that she was not equating for.

We have a habit of labelling food as good or bad. Fruit, juices, smoothies, nuts, and avocado are all rich in nutrients, and in moderation, they are great. However, they are also dense in calories. For example, an avocado and feta cheese on toast has more calories than a sausage and egg McMuffin. A shop-bought fruit smoothie has twice as many calories as a can of Coca-Cola.

Now, I am not suggesting you live off fizzy drinks and McDonalds. Nutritional value is still important, but remember, all that glitters is not gold! Check the calories.



9. GET A TRAINING PARTNER

I guarantee one of your friends, colleagues, or family members feels exactly the same as you. Get them involved! Set gym dates - it's far easier to swerve going to the gym when no one knows you were meant to be there! There will be times when you don't want to go, and there will be times your partner doesn't want to go. Encourage one another. Remember - consistency is key.



FINAL POINT

Ask for help. If you don't know what you are doing, just ask. There are plenty of people in our gym who are more than happy to help, don't be shy now.