



THE MEN'S GYM & STRENGTH GUIDE

# THE IRON PLAYBOOK

Training menus, the **gym floor decoded**, and what to train at every age — a man's complete guide to building **strength that lasts**.

TRAINING MENUS

EQUIPMENT DECODED

TRAIN BY AGE

RECOVERY & FUEL

# BUILT TO LAST.

Strength training isn't about the mirror. **It's the single best investment a man can make in how he ages.** Muscle you build in your 20s and 30s protects your heart, your joints, your metabolism and your independence for decades to come — and it's never too late to start.

This playbook is your map to the gym floor: three ready-to-run training menus, every machine decoded (what it does and why), how to train smart at every age, and how to work around the real-life stuff — a stiff back, a dodgy knee, a long time away. One rule holds it all together: **show up, add a little, repeat. Move today.**

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# WHY EVERY MAN SHOULD **LIFT**

From your 30s onward, untrained men lose muscle every year. Strength training reverses that — and the benefits reach far beyond the gym.



## MUSCLE & METABOLISM

More muscle burns more energy at rest and keeps you lean and capable as you age.



## HEART HEALTH

Resistance training lowers blood pressure and improves cholesterol & blood-sugar control.



## BONES & JOINTS

Loading bone keeps it dense, and strong muscles protect knees, hips & shoulders.



## VITALITY

Training supports healthy hormones, energy and drive — and better sleep at night.



## LONGEVITY

Grip and leg strength are among the strongest predictors of a long, independent life.



## MENTAL GRIT

Progress under the bar builds confidence, discipline and resilience against stress.

## 2–4×

STRENGTH SESSIONS  
PER WEEK IS PLENTY

## 30+

AGE MUSCLE LOSS  
BEGINS IF UNTRAINED

## 8–12

REPS — THE SWEET  
SPOT FOR MOST MEN

## ∞

NEVER TOO LATE  
TO START LIFTING

# FIND YOUR GOAL

Every good program points at one main target. Pick the lane that fits you now — you can change later.



## STRENGTH

Lift heavier over time. Low reps (**3–6**), big compound lifts, long rest. Builds raw force & dense muscle.



## MUSCLE (HYPERTROPHY)

Build size & shape. Moderate reps (**8–15**), more volume, shorter rest, train close to failure.



## CONDITIONING

Get lean & fit. Circuits, intervals & carries, short rest. Burns energy and builds a bigger engine.



## HYBRID

Run *and* lift. Blend strength with cardio — the HYROX way. The best all-round fitness for most men.

NOT SURE? START HERE

## BUILD THE BASE FIRST

If you're new or returning, spend 8–12 weeks on full-body strength (Menu A). It builds the foundation every other goal is stacked on — and teaches the lifts you'll use for life.

*"One clear goal beats five half-efforts. Pick the lane, then just keep showing up."*

# THE 6 MOVEMENT PATTERNS

Every great workout is built from six basic human movements. Cover all six across your week and you've trained your whole body.



## SQUAT

Knees bend, hips drop. **Back squat, goblet, leg press.**



## HINGE

Hips drive back. **Deadlift, RDL, kettlebell swing.**



## PUSH

Press away. **Bench, overhead press, push-up.**



## PULL

Draw toward you. **Row, pull-up, lat pulldown.**



## CARRY

Hold & walk. **Farmer carry, suitcase carry.**



## LUNGE

One leg at a time. **Walking lunge, split squat.**



**How to build any session:** pick 1 squat or hinge, 1 push, 1 pull, and finish with a carry or core. That's a complete, balanced workout in four moves — no guesswork.

## MENU A — FULL-BODY BEGINNER

The best starting point for any man. Run this **3× per week** (e.g. Mon/Wed/Fri) with a rest day between. One session, whole body.

| EXERCISE             | PATTERN      | SETS × REPS |
|----------------------|--------------|-------------|
| GOBLET / BACK SQUAT  | Squat        | 3 × 8–10    |
| DB BENCH / PUSH-UP   | Push         | 3 × 8–12    |
| LAT PULLDOWN / ROW   | Pull         | 3 × 8–12    |
| ROMANIAN DEADLIFT    | Hinge        | 3 × 8–10    |
| WALKING LUNGE        | Lunge        | 2 × 20      |
| PLANK + FARMER CARRY | Core / Carry | 3 rounds    |



### REST

60–90 seconds between sets. Don't rush the big lifts.



### PROGRESS

Hit the top rep on all sets? Add a little weight next time.



### FORM FIRST

Lighter & clean beats heavy & messy. Master the movement.



Always start with a **5–10 minute warm-up** (easy cardio + a lighter set of each lift). Run this menu for 8–12 weeks before moving to a split.

## MENU B — PUSH PULL LEGS

The classic muscle-building split once you've built a base. Run each day once (3×/wk) or twice (6×/wk) for faster gains.

### PUSH

- Bench Press — 4 × 6–8
- Overhead Press — 3 × 8
- Incline DB Press — 3 × 10
- Cable Fly — 3 × 12
- Triceps Pushdown — 3 × 12

### PULL

- Deadlift — 3 × 5
- Pull-Up / Pulldown — 4 × 8
- Barbell Row — 4 × 8
- Face Pull — 3 × 15
- Biceps Curl — 3 × 12

### LEGS

- Back Squat — 4 × 6–8
- Romanian Deadlift — 3 × 8
- Leg Press — 3 × 12
- Walking Lunge — 3 × 20
- Calf Raise — 4 × 15

#### HOW TO SCHEDULE IT

### 3-DAY OR 6-DAY

Beginner-intermediate: Push / Pull / Legs across the week with rest days. Advanced: run it twice — Push / Pull / Legs / Push / Pull / Legs / Rest. Progress the weight weekly.

## MENU C — HYBRID ENGINE

For the man who wants to look strong *and* last. Blend lifting with conditioning — the foundation of HYROX-style fitness.

### THE BENCHMARK SESSION — FOR TIME

## "THE FLOOR COMBINE"

3 rounds: 500 m row · 15 wall balls · 400 m run · 12 DB thrusters · 50 m sled push. Rest as needed; record your time and chase it every few weeks.

### THE WEEKLY BLUEPRINT

- 2 × strength (upper / lower or full-body)
- 2 × runs (1 easy, 1 intervals)
- 1 × hybrid session (like the Combine)
- 1-2 × rest / mobility

### QUICK CONDITIONING FINISHERS

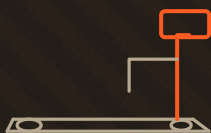
- **EMOM 10:** 10 kettlebell swings + 5 burpees
- **Carry ladder:** 40 m farmer carry × 5
- **Bike intervals:** 8 × 20s hard / 40s easy
- **Sled:** 6 × 25 m push, walk back to rest

- ⓘ Lift first, condition second when you train both in one day. Keep hard conditioning to **2-3 sessions a week** so your strength keeps climbing.

## CARDIO & CONDITIONING

The machines that build your engine. Here's what each one does, and where you'll find it on the gym floor.

01



### TREADMILL **PRECOR · CENTR**

Zone-2 easy runs, incline walks & interval sprints. The most versatile cardio machine.

TRAINS: ENGINE · FAT LOSS · RUNNING BASE

02



### SKIERG **CONCEPT2 · OFFICIAL HYROX**

Full-body pull that hammers lats, core & lungs with zero impact. Station one in HYROX.

TRAINS: FULL-BODY · LUNGS · LOW IMPACT

03



### ROWERG **CONCEPT2 · OFFICIAL HYROX**

Legs, back & arms in one smooth, powerful stroke. A superb full-body conditioner.

TRAINS: LEGS + BACK · ENGINE

04



### AIR / ASSAULT BIKE **COMMERCIAL FLOORS**

Push and pull against a fan — the harder you go, the harder it fights back. Brutal, low-impact intervals.

TRAINS: ALL-OUT CONDITIONING



Illustrations are original diagrams. Brand names show where you'll typically find each machine — **Concept2** ergs and **Centr** gear are HYROX's official kit; **Precor** is a staple on commercial gym floors.

## STRENGTH & FUNCTIONAL

The iron that builds muscle and force. Learn what each station is for so you walk onto any gym floor with a plan.

05



### POWER RACK + BARBELL PRECOR · COMMERCIAL

The heart of any serious gym. Squat, press & pull heavy — safely — with the big compound lifts.

TRAINS: MAX STRENGTH · THE BIG LIFTS

06



### DUMBBELLS EVERY GYM

The most versatile tool on the floor. Train each side evenly, build muscle, fix imbalances.

TRAINS: HYPERTROPHY · UNILATERAL STRENGTH

07



### CABLE MACHINE PRECOR FUNCTIONAL

Constant tension through the full range, and endless angles. Joint-friendly size & detail work.

TRAINS: ISOLATION · CONSTANT TENSION

08



### POWER SLED CENTR × HYROX

Push and pull for raw leg drive and conditioning — the official HYROX sled-push & sled-pull station.

TRAINS: LEG POWER · CONDITIONING



**Also worth knowing:** the **Centr × HYROX** range adds Octo kettlebells, sandbags & wall balls — the functional tools behind swings, carries, lunges and throws.

# TRAIN SMART IN YOUR 20S & 30S

Your foundation years. The muscle, bone density and habits you build now pay dividends for the rest of your life.

## 20S

### BUILD THE BASE

Peak recovery and hormones — the best window to add muscle & learn the big lifts. Train hard (3–5×/wk), push strength & size, but groove clean technique now to protect the decades ahead.

## 30S

### PROTECT THE GAINS & STAY CONSISTENT

Career and family eat your time — so efficiency wins. 3 focused sessions beat 6 rushed ones. Keep lifting heavy-ish, add mobility work, and prioritise sleep. This is where lifelong consistency is made or lost.



#### LIFT HEAVY

Your body handles load & volume best now. Make the most of it.



#### LEARN FORM

Perfect the squat, hinge, press & pull — skills for life.



#### SLEEP

Late nights blunt recovery. Guard 7–9 hours where you can.

*"The best time to start was ten years ago. The second best time is today."*

## TRAIN SMART IN YOUR 40S & BEYOND

Training becomes about staying capable, mobile and independent. You can still get strong — you just train smarter, not just harder.

### 40S

#### PRIORITISE STRENGTH & MOBILITY

Muscle loss accelerates if you coast — so keep lifting. Warm up longer, add mobility for hips & shoulders, and favour a few quality hard sets over endless volume.

### 50S

#### PROTECT JOINTS, KEEP LOADING

Strength training keeps bones dense and joints supported. Machines & cables are your friends; manage aches, but don't stop — loading is medicine for aging bodies.

### 60+

#### POWER, BALANCE & GRIP

Focus on leg power, balance & grip — the strongest predictors of independence. 2–3 full-body sessions a week, plus daily walking, pays off enormously.



Protein matters more with age (aim for a palm of protein at each meal), and so does recovery. **If you're over 40 and new to training, get a check-up first** — then start light and build.

# TRAINING AROUND HEALTH ISSUES

Common conditions don't mean you can't train — they mean you train smart. General principles only; see the note below.

## HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

Favour steady, moderate loads and **breathe out on effort** — never hold your breath or strain. Build cardio; skip maximal lifts until cleared.

## KNEE / JOINT PAIN

Train pain-free ranges. Machines, cables & controlled tempo spare the joints. Strengthen around the joint; don't push through sharp pain.

## LOWER-BACK ISSUES

Master the hip hinge & brace your core. Start with supported moves (goblet squat, cable row); progress loading slowly and keep a neutral spine.

## RETURNING / HIGHER BODY WEIGHT

Start low-impact: walking, bike, machines & bodyweight. Consistency over intensity. Every session counts — build the habit first.

### READ THIS FIRST

## NOT MEDICAL ADVICE

This page is general education, not a treatment plan. If you have a medical condition, are on medication, or feel chest pain, dizziness or unusual breathlessness — **stop and see a doctor**. Get cleared before starting, and consider a few sessions with a qualified coach.

# RECOVERY, SLEEP & FUEL

You don't grow in the gym — you grow when you recover from it. These four levers decide your results.



## SLEEP (7–9 HRS)

The number-one recovery tool. Most muscle repair & hormone release happens while you sleep. Protect it like training.



## PROTEIN & FOOD

Aim for a palm of protein at each meal (roughly 1.6–2.2 g per kg bodyweight daily if building muscle). Eat enough to fuel training.



## PROGRESSIVE OVERLOAD

Add a little weight, a rep, or a set over time. Small, steady progress is what actually drives results.



## REST & MOBILITY

Take 1–2 full rest days. Add light mobility for hips, shoulders & ankles to move well and stay injury-free.

### THE ONLY SUPPLEMENT TRUTH

## BASICS BEAT HACKS

No powder beats sleep, protein and consistent training. If you want two low-risk, well-studied options: creatine and whey protein. Everything else is optional — nail the basics first.

# GETTING STARTED

Walking in for the first time (or the first time in years) is the hardest rep. Here's how to make it simple.



## PROGRESS SLOWLY

Start lighter than you think. Add weight only when reps feel clean.



## TRACK IT

Log your lifts in a note or app. What gets measured gets better.



## WARM UP

5–10 min easy cardio + light sets. Prep the body, lift better.

## GYM-FLOOR ETIQUETTE

- ☐ **Re-rack your weights** — every time, no exceptions.
- ☐ **Wipe down** benches & machines after use.
- ☐ **Share equipment** — let others work in between your sets.
- ☐ **Ask for help.** Staff & regulars would rather you ask than get hurt.

*"Nobody's watching you. Everyone started at rep one. Just begin."*

SHOW UP. ADD A LITTLE. REPEAT.

# STRENGTH IS A SKILL YOU KEEP.

You don't need the perfect program, the perfect gym, or the perfect body to begin. You need to pick up something heavy, put it down, and come back and do it again. Do that for years and you build something no one can take from you. The bar is waiting. **Move today.**

— the Move Today crew



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DISCLAIMER: This e-book is general education & inspiration, not medical advice or a personalised program. Consult a doctor before starting a new training routine, especially if you have a health condition or are over 40. Equipment illustrations are original diagrams by Move Today. Precor, Centr, Concept2 & HYROX are trademarks of their respective owners; this guide is independent and unofficial, and is not affiliated with or endorsed by them.

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