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HONOR YOUR BODY,
FUEL YOUR SOUL,
AND GET STRONG
WITH THE **FIT52 LIFE**

**CARRIE
UNDERWOOD**

with EVE ADAMSON

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CAMERON PREMO

My Secret for Comfort Food Indulgences: Healthy Swaps

MOM'S BISCUITS WITH CHOCOLATE GRAVY

Active time: 10 minutes

Total time: 10 minutes

Serves 2

MOM'S VERSION

1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1/2 cup sugar
1/4 cup flour
2 cups milk
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
6 Pillsbury biscuits, baked and torn into small pieces

CARRIE'S VERSION

1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1/4 cup real maple syrup
1/4 cup flour
2 cups unsweetened vanilla almond milk
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 (whole) Thomas' Light Multi-Grain English Muffin, split

One of my favorite things my mom used to make when I was a kid was this amazing breakfast of biscuits with chocolate “gravy” on them. (I know it sounds more like dessert, but occasionally this would kick off my Saturday morning.) So good! Today, I still make this dish every once in a while, but my recipe is a little bit different. I’m going to share it with you here because this is an example of one of the most important things I do to keep my diet on track: healthy (or rather, healthier) swaps.

I still make food I love, but whenever I do, I swap out some of the ingredients that are the least nutritious or the highest in fat or sugar. With a few healthy adjustments, an indulgent recipe can taste almost exactly the same, but it will be a lot less of a nutritional disaster. This recipe always reminds me of home, and it’s a way for me to have a piece of my childhood in my life . . . once in a while. Know that chocolate gravy, even with swaps, is still a treat. It’s certainly not health food, and I don’t eat chocolate gravy every day. It’s something for special occasions only—but this version is still better for me than the one I ate back in Oklahoma.

Here’s the recipe, with my mom’s ingredient list and then mine—I put my healthy swaps in bold. Notice that I only swapped three things (simple!), but that alone saves 160 calories, 1 gram of fat, 20 grams of carbs, and over 35 grams of sugar in the gravy alone. Add the difference between the biscuits and the English

MOM'S VERSION:

390 calories, 6.5 grams fat, 65.5 grams carbs, 11.5 grams protein, 59.9 grams sugar, 3.5 grams fiber, 122 grams sodium (doesn't include the biscuit)

CARRIE'S VERSION:

230 calories, 5.5 grams fat, 45.5 grams carbs, 4.5 grams protein, 5 grams fiber, 24 grams sugar, 163.5 mg sodium (doesn't include the English muffin)

*muffin and the total savings is **360 calories, 2 grams of fat, 40 grams of carbs, and 36 grams of sugar.***

See what simple swaps can do? (On the left side of this page, you can check out the more specific nutrition information for the chocolate gravy only.)

Note: If you use a high-quality cocoa powder, it really improves the taste.

In a small saucepan, whisk the dry ingredients together. Whisk in the milk. Heat over medium heat, stirring continuously, until the mixture simmers and gets thick like gravy. Remove from the heat and add the vanilla. Serve the chocolate gravy over biscuits pieces or (in my version) an English muffin.

The Family That Exercises Together Stays Together

Exercise is a big priority for both my husband and me, and we try to find physical activities we can do together whenever possible. When the weather is nice, we might take a walk with our sons after dinner instead of defaulting to sitting on the couch to watch TV. You might try an evening walk like we do, or riding bikes to get frozen yogurt after dinner instead of sitting at home eating ice cream from the freezer.

Mike and I also work out together sometimes, especially when we travel together. My current trainer, Eve Overland, sometimes gives us things to do at the same time. Mike might hold plank position while I do 25 push-ups, or I might do wall sits while he runs ¼ mile on the treadmill. This is motivating because when one of us knows that the other is doing something difficult, we work harder and faster. We don't want the other person to be in pain for too long! So I'll do those push-ups as fast as I can. He'll get that ¼ mile behind him as fast as he can. It's a fitness-oriented way to show you care (or to completely torture your spouse—your call, ha!). Here's a more structured way that we do this when Eve is directing the action. You can try it with your partner, with a friend, or even with your

kids. In this version, Eve has us doing lunges, but you can do this with any exercise. It's called . . .

I Go, You Go

This is a simple drill that you can do with two people or two teams. There are two exercises: One is to go halfway down into a lunge and hold it—this is called an isometric hold. The other is to go into a static (stationary) lunge and, without moving your feet, lower your knee down and then back up again. While one person holds the isometric lunge, the other does the static lunge, going up and down. Then they switch, like this:

The first person holds an isometric lunge while the second person does 10 static lunges.

Switch: The second person holds an isometric lunge while the first person does 10 static lunges.

Next, the first person holds an isometric lunge (on the same side, using the same leg) while the second person does 9 lunges (on the same side, using the same leg). Then they switch.

This pattern repeats, working down: 8 lunges (while the other holds),

then switch. Keep counting down, swapping who holds a lunge and who does moving lunges: 7 reps, 6, 5, etc.

When you get all the way down to one lunge, you both switch to your other side/other leg, and do it all again.

Eve says, “Things start to get real around the eighth set. This is where I see form starting to break down. The isometric holds begin to look more like standing with one foot in front of the other, and the lunges start to look more like quick pulses, probably in hopes of going faster to get this game over with already! For clients that are new to exercise, or in the interest of time, I will often start at eight reps. It is a little less evil.”

Yep, she’s telling the truth! This exercise is intense, but it’s awesome for your leg muscles. I do lunges *a lot*, and this is a way to make them fun. But don’t exceed your fitness level. If you get too tired, stop so you don’t injure yourself.

Another way to do this is to use different exercises, like alternating push-ups and holding the plank position (like the top of a push-up), or doing squats (or squat jumps for people who want an even greater challenge) and holding a squat position. The possibilities are endless.



Just to recap, here’s what we do:

Round 1: Right Foot Forward

- Carrie holds a lunge (or plank or squat) while Mike performs lunges (or push-ups or squat jumps) for 10 reps.
- Mike holds a lunge while Carrie performs lunges for 10 reps.
- Carrie holds a lunge while Mike performs lunges for 9 reps.
- Mike holds a lunge while Carrie performs lunges for 9 reps.
- ... and so on, down to 1.

Round 2: Left Foot Forward

Same as above, but with the opposite foot forward.

My On-the-Road Survival Food List

It's hard to eat well on the road. Whether you're on tour like I am or you travel for work or pleasure, junk food always seems like the easiest option. But there are lots of things you can do to make sure you always have healthy options available. One of the best "tricks" I've learned to implement while traveling is to stop by a grocery store on the way to the hotel . . . especially if I'm going to be in the same hotel for a few days. This has saved me on so many levels! Usually, a hotel's idea of food suitable for a vegetarian consists of some type of pizza or flatbread or spaghetti or risotto. Don't get me wrong, all those options are certainly delicious, but eating those foods night after night in a hotel gets boring, and those carbs add up quickly! Plus, hotel restaurant food or room service is so expensive—and so salty! Who wouldn't want to save some money while simultaneously doing their body a favor? Many hotel rooms have some sort of minifridge and some also have microwaves—or you can request one ahead of time for your room (or they may have a microwave in the lobby in the area where they sell snacks).

Some of my favorite things to look for at the store when I'm on the road are:

- › **OATMEAL CUPS:** Simply add hot water, or add water and microwave. Just make sure the ones you grab aren't loaded with sugar. I like Bob's Red Mill oatmeal cups. Some have flaxseeds or other healthy additions; some are gluten-free.
- › **FRUIT:** Apples or mixed berries are never a bad choice for a breakfast boost or a snack.
- › **PREMADE SALADS:** I'm not talking about the ones loaded down with iceberg lettuce, cheese, and ranch dressing like Mom used to make! Instead, pick salads that have leafy greens like romaine, spinach, kale, arugula, or spring greens, and have lots and lots of veggies. I like the ones with dressing on the side so I can decide how much to use (I don't like a lot). If you're a meat eater, you can usually find some with chicken breast or salmon on them. Boiled eggs are a good protein add-on as well, and most stores sell them precooked and peeled.
- › **SANDWICHES AND WRAPS:** Most grocery stores have a whole section with premade sandwiches. If you're at a more health-oriented store, you can probably find some good tofu options or things that are organic and healthy. As always, read



the labels, and make sure they're not loaded down with mayo and cheese, and that they're full of lots of veggies!

- › **HUMMUS AND VEGGIES:** I may have ignored the hummus and carrots from craft services back in my *Idol* days, but now I depend on hummus as a snack. A lot of grocery stores even sell premade snack-size containers of this veggie

goodness. Hummus has a savory flavor that satisfies. I find that hummus and veggies is a super filling combination, and can easily satisfy hunger, especially if you're a late-night snacker.

- › **KAREN'S NATURALS JUST VEGGIES:** If you love to snack on chips or popcorn, this might just be the perfect healthy swap for you. These are simply freeze-dried

vegetables. They're crunchy and super yummy! This brand also has fruit, which is easy to add to those oatmeal cups in the morning.

- › **ENLIGHTENED ROASTED BROAD BEAN CRISPS:** So much better for you than potato chips, but with that same satisfying crunch!
- › **RHYTHM SUPERFOODS KALE CHIPS:** I know, I know—there are a few words in the title of this snack that may turn you off, but seriously, these are delicious. Way better than they sound. I like the ranch and nacho flavors. Even Mike loves to eat these.
- › **PRIMAL STRIPS:** These are vegan “jerky” strips made of seitan. Surprisingly tasty!
- › **RAW ALMONDS:** These are always great to keep in your bag for a quick snack grab. They contain those good-for-you omega fatty acids your body needs, as well as fiber to help sustain you for a while. Just make sure to only grab a handful. Don't eat the whole bag! Even the healthiest of foods can take a turn for the worse if you overindulge.
- › **BARs:** These can be a tricky item. Many bars are high in sugar and low in protein (even if they have “protein” in the name). Despite what the package might say, most of them don't do much to keep you going. They'll spike your blood sugar and give you a quick pick-me-up but will

likely make you crash soon after you eat them. My husband generally doesn't like bars—he says he'd rather eat real food, and I totally get that. But . . . sometimes convenience is key, and there are a few bars out there that can be beneficial and add to a well-balanced diet. Bars are easy to keep in your purse or briefcase and could potentially save you from derailing your entire day with greasy fast food. They may not be the perfect food, but they can be the perfect swap for a much worse food. Just make sure the bars you're grabbing have a good amount of fat and fiber and don't have a ton of ingredients that you can't pronounce. Here are some of my favorites to have on hand when hunger strikes—try a few, or seek out different ones and see what you like.

- › **NO COW BARs:** These are my favorite. I really like these because they have a ton of fiber, which fills me up for a long time. They also have around 20 grams of protein and are vegan. My favorite flavors are the peanut butter chocolate chip, mint cacao chip, chocolate fudge brownie, and vanilla caramel. Out of all the bars out there, No Cow is the bar my husband is most likely to eat.

- › **GARDEN OF LIFE PROTEIN BARS:** There are many different types/flavors of these. I like this brand for other foods, too, including protein powder.
- › **RXBARS:** These are simple. They don't have a lot of ingredients, which I appreciate, and they usually include lower-sugar fruits and nuts.
- › **KIND BARS:** These are also made with simple, recognizable ingredients. They contain lots of almonds and they taste really good, too.
- › **QUEST BARS:** If you're okay with whey (a protein from milk), you might like these. They have lots of protein and fiber and many flavors to choose from.
- › **STEVE'S PALEOGOODS PALEOKRUNCH:** This is a grain-free granola bar made up mostly of nuts and seeds. It's super yummy and doesn't have a ton of sugar. If you like granola bars, this could be your new best friend.
- › **MICROWAVE BURRITOS/ BOWLS:** These fall into the same category as bars when it comes to health—they vary widely in terms of how good the ingredients and nutrition are. Some are all right, and some are naughty posing as nice, but again, I like to have a few around for an easy grab—better than going

through a drive-thru for junk food. Remember, it's all about convenience and making healthy swaps. Even if they're a bit processed, microwavable burritos and bowls are probably a lot better for your health than what's on the room service menu. Some of my favorite brands are:

- › **SWEET EARTH BURRITOS:**
I love the Big Sur Burrito and the Protein Lover's Burrito, but all the flavors are really good, and they also have lots of protein. I could eat these for any meal of the day.
- › **AMY'S KITCHEN BOWLS:**
I especially like the Brown Rice & Vegetables bowl (tofu, brown rice, veggies . . . what more could a girl want?) and the Brown Rice, Black-Eyed Peas, and Veggies bowl.

These are just a few examples of things I like to look for, but each grocery store is different, and sometimes you just have to do the best with whatever you can find. However, I promise that once you get into this healthy habit and work on your label-reading skills, you'll be able to master any store and any travel situation. You'll learn the things you like and dislike, and you'll be able to stay on track while you're away from home. So worth it!

MY WORKOUT PLAYLISTS

As I've mentioned, music fuels my workouts and keeps me energized and inspired. Everyone has their own taste in music. Fortunately, technology is at your service. There are some really great apps out there that actually let you pick the BPM (beats per minute) of the songs you want to hear while you're on the move. As they say, there's an app for that!

When you run to the beat of the music, somehow it takes the pressure off you to set your own pace. It's like the music is driving your body and you just do what it tells you to do. Plus, you can speed up the BPMs as you advance, to improve your time and/or distance. That said, we're all on our own journeys and all run at different paces, so I encourage you to find the tempo you're comfortable with and give it a go!

To get you started, I put together a random list of songs that I feel are good to run to. Most have BPMs somewhere around 170 (I tried to mix in lots of genres).

Note: Some of the songs in some of my playlists have adult or explicit lyrics, so just be aware, in case little ears are listening.

RUNNING PLAYLIST

"The Pretender"—Foo Fighters

"She's Country"—Jason Aldean

"Livin' on the Edge"—Aerosmith

"California Love"—Tupac Shakur (feat. Dr. Dre and Roger Troutman)

"Santeria"—Sublime

"Paper Planes"—M.I.A.

"Take on Me"—a-ha

"All My Life"—Foo Fighters

"Love Is a Battlefield"—Pat Benatar

"Interstate Love Song"—Stone Temple Pilots

“Work It”—Missy Elliott
“Johnny B. Goode”—Chuck Berry
“Danger Zone”—Kenny Loggins
“Loser”—Beck
“Kickstart My Heart”—Mötley Crüe (a personal favorite song that
always kicks me into high gear)
“Centuries”—Fall Out Boy
“Part-Time Lover”—Stevie Wonder
“Knee Deep”—Zac Brown Band (feat. Jimmy Buffett)
“Swallowed”—Bush
“Big Poppa”—The Notorious B.I.G.
“Gold Digger”—Kanye West (feat. Jamie Foxx)
“Boys Don’t Cry”—The Cure
“Stressed Out”—Twenty One Pilots
“Bang Bang”—Jessie J (feat. Ariana Grande and Nicki Minaj)
“Basket Case”—Green Day
“Karma Chameleon”—Culture Club
“Give It Away”—Red Hot Chili Peppers
“Hey Ya!”—OutKast
“Paint It Black”—The Rolling Stones
“The Middle”—Jimmy Eat World

In this chapter, Eve and I will show you exactly how you can do Fit52 at home. At first it may sound complex, but really, it couldn't be easier, once you get the hang of it. All you need are a deck of cards and the equipment listed on pages 15-16. And it's fun! Let's go through it step by step.

Fit52 Workout Basics

First, an overview:

1. The Fit52 Workout is a plan that assigns certain exercises to each suit in a deck of cards:



UPPER BODY



LOWER BODY



CORE



CARDIO

Every time you work out, you'll be doing exercises for each of these areas.

2. There are 52 playing cards in a standard deck. First you'll divide the deck in half. During the first half of your workout (Set #1), you'll go through the first half of the deck. During the second half of your workout (Set #2), you'll go through the second half of the deck.
3. For each suit, you'll get two exercises: one for Set #1, and one for Set #2. So you'll have two upper body exercises, two lower body exercises, two core exercises, and two cardio exercises—eight total exercises for each workout.
4. You will work through each half of the deck by drawing the cards one at a time. The suit of each card that you draw determines which type of exercise you will do (upper body, lower body, core, or cardio). The number on each card that you draw determines how

IF YOU'RE JUST GETTING STARTED

If you haven't worked out for a while (or ever!), doing one set of exercises with half the deck, for a 30-minute workout, may be enough for you until you build the strength and endurance for a 60-minute workout. If this sounds like you, I advise doing only Set #1 for all six days, then

moving to Set #2 the following week. If you were to do Set #1 one day, then Set #2 the next day, you would be working the same set of muscles two days in a row. It's good to rest those muscle groups in order to recover properly, especially if you feel really sore.

many reps you will do. For example, in your first set, if you draw a 6 of spades, you will do 6 reps of the first cardio exercise. If you draw a 7 of diamonds next, you will do 7 reps of your first upper body exercise. Note that the lowest number of reps you can draw is 2. If you draw a jack, that's 11 reps. Queen is 12 reps. King is 13 reps. Ace is 14 reps, the most you will do with any single draw.

5. During Set #1 (first half of the deck), you'll do the first of each pair of exercises, and the exercise you do will correspond with which suit you draw. Example: If you draw a heart, you will do the first lower body exercise. During Set #2 (second half of the deck), you will do the second of each pair of exercises, and the exercise you do will again correspond with which suit you draw. Example: If you draw a club, you will do the second core exercise.
6. Each workout takes approximately an hour—30 minutes for the Set #1 exercises, and 30 minutes for the Set #2 exercises. If you have only 30 minutes total to work out, do the Set #1 exercises for six days, then do the Set #2 exercises for the six days after that, so you take twelve days to get through all the exercises. That's totally fine—go at your own pace or according to your own schedule. You can take even longer if you alternate the Fit52 Workout with other workouts you like to do.

JOKERS WILD!

If you have a pair of jokers in your deck of cards, you can make these “wild cards” and assign any exercise to them—but it should be one that’s challenging for you. What I like to do is assign one minute of forearm plank (think top of a push-up, but on your forearms instead of on

your hands). This is a great full-body exercise, but especially beneficial for strengthening your core. Keep your body in a straight line from the crown of your head to your heels. If you can’t quite make it the full minute, try starting with 30 seconds and work your way up.

Because there are many cards of each suit, you will do each exercise multiple times, but you will never know how many reps you’ll do or what order you will do the exercises in until you draw your next card. That’s the fun part!

The other fun part: You can do this workout exactly as written, or you can substitute any exercises for the suits, making this workout ultimately adaptable. At the gym? Assign a weight machine to each suit. In a hotel room? Pick a basic exercise for each suit: push-ups, sit-ups, squats, and burpees, for example. At the playground? Pick a different playground exercise for each suit.

Now let’s look at how it works in practice. Here’s what you will do during each workout:

1. Let’s say it’s Monday. You will start with Day #1, which consists of a pair of complementary upper body, lower body, core, and cardio exercises. Take note of what those exercises are. (They start on page 23.) Be sure you know how to do them by consulting the instructions. (It won’t take long for you to learn them all and not have to look anymore.)
2. Get out any equipment you will need for your Day #1 exercises. Now you’re ready to go!

3. Do the warm-up described starting on page 17.
4. Shuffle the deck and divide it in half. Put one half in front of you and set the other half aside for when you get to your second set.
5. Draw a card. The suit determines which exercise you will do. If you draw a diamond, you will do the first upper body exercise for Day #1. If you draw a 10 of diamonds, you will do 10 reps.
6. Draw another card. If you draw a spade, you will do the first cardio exercise for Day #1. If you draw a 4 of spades, you will do 4 reps.
7. Draw another card. Uh-oh, it's another diamond, this time an 8 of diamonds. That means you're going to do the same upper body exercise again, this time for 8 reps.
8. Draw another card. This time it's a 3 of clubs. Do your first core exercise for Day #1, and do 3 reps.
9. Draw another card. Oh no, another diamond! This time a queen. Back to that same upper body exercise, but this time you do 12 reps. Are your arms getting tired? Great! That means you're building muscle!
10. Draw another card. It's a 7 of spades. Do the first cardio exercise for Day #1, and do 7 reps.
11. Keep going until you've gotten through all the cards in the first half of the deck.
12. Now it's time for the second half of the deck, and Set #2. Proceed just as you did with the first half of the deck, but switch to the Set #2 exercise for Day #1.
13. Once you've gotten through the whole deck, do the cool-down starting on page 54.
14. Congratulate yourself on a workout well done! Now you can go on with your day knowing you've done your workout and are feeling great.
15. Do Day #2 tomorrow!

WORKOUT EQUIPMENT BASICS

For every workout, before each set, I will cue you about which pieces of workout equipment to have available, but here is your workout equipment basics list. This includes every piece of equipment mentioned in this chapter.

- › **BOX, BENCH, OR AEROBIC STEP:** You could get one or all of these—Carrie prefers wooden boxes for exercises like box jumps, but she also uses benches and steps. Weight benches are good, but any bench will do. Aerobic steps are lower, and many have adjustable risers. The height of what you use depends on the exercise and your fitness level. One of the things I have purchased for my clients and for my home gym is called the Reebok Deck. You can buy it online. It's so versatile—it has an adjustable back, so you can use it as an incline bench, and it has attachments for resistance bands, but it is low enough that you can also use it as an adjustable-height step. When Carrie saw mine, she bought one, too!
- › **DUMBBELLS (LIGHT, MEDIUM, AND HEAVY):** Dumbbells are probably the piece of fitness equipment people are most likely to have. If you don't have any, find them at a sporting goods store or discount store. Choose dumbbells that are light, medium, and heavy for you—try before you buy. But don't go too easy on yourself. There must be resistance and effort involved in order to gain strength and to shape muscles. If you pick up a set and you can easily do 20 or more reps, that's too light. Even your lightest dumbbells need to provide some level of challenge if you want to see results. You might be able to go heavier than you think, and remember that you will gain strength quickly. Buy dumbbells individually, or in sets.
- › **RESISTANCE BANDS (LIGHT, MEDIUM, AND HEAVY):** These flexible tube-shaped bands are stretchy, have handles, and offer different levels of resistance. If you can find a set with a variety of sizes, handles you can clip on or off, and a door anchor to hold the band (very handy and will give you a lot more exercise options), that would be your best bet. All bands will tell you the weight equivalency for the different bands (e.g., 10 pounds or "medium resistance"), so you will have a better idea of which one to choose for any given exercise.
- › **MINI BANDS (MEDIUM AND HEAVY):** These are like giant circular rubber bands that are most commonly used around the legs or ankles, to provide resistance for lateral movements.

› **STABILITY**

BALL: Technically called a Swiss ball, this is a large inflatable ball that helps build core stability. It's good for a variety of exercises that use just your body weight (like crunches and hamstring curls). You can even use it instead of a bench for exercises like the seated shoulder press or dumbbell bench press. It is very versatile.

These items can also be used in the Fit52 Workout as options, but are not essential:

- › **MEDICINE BALL:** These weighted balls are about the size of a volleyball and are available in different weights—mine is 8 pounds. These are great for ab/core exercises, partner work, or even in place of dumbbells.
- › **KETTLEBELLS (MEDIUM AND HEAVY):** These heavy cast-iron flat-bottomed weights with handles are good for many different exercises, the most common being the kettlebell swing.



- › **BOSU:** (Carrie loves this one!) Like a stability ball cut in half and stuck to a flat platform, a BOSU provides an unstable surface for improving balance while doing various movements.
- › **BARBELL:** If you go to a gym, you don't need this at home, but some people like to have one to add variety and more exercise options. It is a bar that can hold plates on either end to increase the weight.
- › **EXERCISE MAT:** Not a must, but nice to have when you are doing an exercise on the floor.

Your Fit52 Workout

Now let's look at the exercises you'll actually be doing. Eve has carefully selected these exercises to complement each other so you'll get a complete full-body workout each day. Over the course of six 60-minute workouts (or twelve 30-minute workouts), you will cover them all.

Note that in Appendix 2 there are modify-down and modify-up options, for when these exercises are a little too strenuous or a little too easy for you on any given day. Every day is different, and everyone is in a different place on their fitness path, so this gives you a little more flexibility to adapt any exercise to your current needs.

Ready to get Fit52? Here we go!

EVE'S FIT52 DYNAMIC WARM-UP

There are two kinds of stretching: dynamic and static. *Dynamic stretching* is more active. You stretch your muscles during movement, rather than holding the stretch for a period of time, as you would do in *static stretching*. As a general rule, dynamic stretching is best for warming up, and static stretching is best for cooling down. Here's a good basic dynamic stretching warm-up that you can do before any exercise session.

You may have heard that all you really need to do to warm up is to jump on the treadmill or elliptical trainer or take a short jog and break a light sweat. However, how you warm up is related to how you plan to work out. Therefore, warming up with cardio really just prepares your body for . . . more cardio. The purpose of a dynamic warm-up is not just to raise your core temperature (although that's part of it), but to improve your power, strength, and performance when you begin your actual

workout. Don't get me wrong—I love me some cardio. And if you love it, go for it. But in addition to your cardio, you will get more benefit if you add dynamic stretching to your warm-up routine. The benefits of dynamic stretching include:

- › Increased blood flow to your muscles
- › Increased efficiency of your body's cooling mechanisms
- › Better focus during your workout
- › Decreased likelihood of injury
- › Priming of your central nervous system (CNS)
- › Improved mobility, stability, balance, and range of motion (ROM)
- › Greater power output

Here is the basic process I recommend. Spend **30 seconds** doing each of these exercises, and move as quickly as you can from one to the next, for a total warm-up of about 6 minutes.

(Note that many smartwatches and fitness trackers, not to mention most smartphones, have functional timers on them, and there are also a lot of free timer apps that can be useful when timing these warm-ups.)

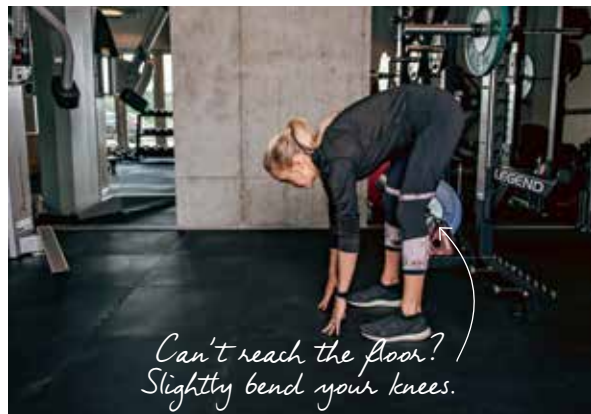
- 1. HIGH KNEES:** Jog or walk in place while lifting your knees as high as you can.
- 2. ALTERNATING KNEE HUGGERS:** Stand on one leg and lift the opposite knee. Hug it in close to your chest. Draw circles in the air with your toes to warm up your ankles. Take a beat or two before switching legs. Do each side twice.

- 3. LOW SQUAT WITH ALTERNATING HIP OPENERS:** Squat as low as you can, then, as you come up, swing your leg up and out, as if you're swinging it over an invisible chair (you can keep your knees bent). Squat again and repeat with the other leg.



- 4. ALTERNATING REVERSE LUNGE WITH OVERHEAD REACH OR TORSO TWIST:** Step backward with one leg, lowering yourself into a lunge, as you reach both arms straight overhead. Come back to standing, then repeat with the other leg. For the Torso Twist variation, as you lunge, hold your arms out in front of you and twist your torso and arms in the opposite direction of your back (lunging) leg. Return to standing, then repeat with the other leg and opposing twist.
- 5. BUTT KICKERS:** Jog (or walk) in place, trying to kick your rear with each foot when it is bent behind you.
- 6. STANDING QUAD STRETCH:** Stand on one leg and hold your foot behind you to stretch your quad muscles, shifting your hips forward for a deeper stretch. Release your foot and step forward. Repeat with the other leg.

- 7. BODY WEIGHT GOOD MORNINGS:** From a standing position, feet shoulder-width apart, put your hands behind your head, elbows extended out wide. With a slight bend in your knees, push your hips back and “take a bow,” hinging at the hips and keeping your spine straight and your core tight. Pause for a beat when your torso is as close to parallel to the floor as possible, then return to standing.



- 8. INCHWORMS (WITH OPTIONAL PUSH-UP):** From a standing position, bend from the hips until your hands reach the floor. If you can't quite reach the floor, bend your knees just enough to get there. Walk your hands out in front of you until you are in a plank position like the top of a push-up—in fact, for extra credit, you could throw in a push-up here. Hold for a breath or two, keeping your ab muscles engaged. Walk your hands back to your feet, keeping your legs as straight as possible and taking your time to feel the stretch in your hamstrings. Return to standing. Repeat.



- 9. ALTERNATING SLOW OUTSIDE MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS:** Get into plank position. Keeping your abdominal muscles tight, bring one knee out to the side, as close to your triceps muscle (the back of your upper arm) as possible. Move your leg back to return to plank position, then repeat on the other side.



- 10. ALTERNATING LIZARD LUNGE WITH ROTATION:** Start in a plank position. Take a big step forward with one leg, placing your foot outside your hand on the same side, with your knee bent at 90 degrees. You are now in a low runner's lunge. Reach the hand closest to your bent leg up to the sky while keeping the other hand on the floor. Twist your torso toward your bent knee. Stay for a beat or two. Return your extended hand back to the floor. Step back into plank position and repeat on the other side.

- 11. UP/DOWN DOGS:** You yoga folks will know this one. Start in plank position and lower your hips while raising your head and chest. Look slightly upward, but don't collapse your neck backward. Try to keep as much length as you can between your shoulders and your ears. Keep your arms straight and your hips low. This is Up Dog. Next, move your hips up and back as high as you can, keeping your head between your upper arms. Your heels should

be as close to the ground as possible. This is Down Dog. Move between these two positions—hips up, head down; hips down, head up—with control, keeping your core engaged.

- 12. FIVE FAST FEET AND JUMP:** With your feet a little wider than hip-width apart and your knees slightly bent, take five tiny fast running steps in place (moving your right foot then your left foot equals one step). Think of a football drill. Then jump as high as you can. Land soft. Repeat. (To make this more challenging, you can do a tuck jump: While jumping, tuck both knees up to your chest.)

eve says

DUMBBELL GUIDANCE

In general, use heavier dumbbells to work larger muscle groups like those in the legs and back. These muscles can typically handle more weight. You may need to use medium weights when performing a lower body unilateral exercise like a Bulgarian Split Squat because it requires more balance. Many of my female clients use medium weights for their chests and shoulders, but you would be surprised how quickly they progress to a heavier set.

Light weights are great for the smaller muscle groups like your biceps and triceps, and exercises like the Lateral Raise. They can also be useful for those who are new to weight lifting and need to build strength from the ground up. But these people are likely to progress quickly to heavier weights also.

REMEMBER: If you can do 20 reps with ease, that weight is too light for any of the exercises in this book.

DAY #1 EXERCISES

EQUIPMENT LIST FOR SET #1

- › **DUMBBELLS** (since these exercises focus on the lower body, use weights on the heavier side)
- › **MAT** (optional)

EQUIPMENT LIST FOR SET #2

- › **BENCH, STEP, OR CHAIR**
- › **LOW STEP** (or a stair step)
- › **DUMBBELLS** (the same ones you used for Set #1)

eve says

Your Day #1 exercises will use your whole body, but your legs will be the primary focus—in particular the Heart (lower body) exercises. I would like you to challenge yourself with these exercises, and I encourage you to go as heavy as possible with your weights, as long as you can maintain good form and control. Leg muscles are larger and generally stronger than the upper body and core muscles, so they are good to train first. For your Diamond (upper body) exercises, we'll work two complementary pushing muscle groups: chest and triceps (the backs of your arms). For your Heart (lower body) exercises, we'll work the quads (the muscles in the front of your thighs) and your glutes (your backside). Your Club (core) and Spade (cardio) exercises will also activate your leg muscles. Get ready for a great workout and an awesome kickoff to your week of fitness!

	SET #1 (FIRST 30 MINUTES)	SET #2 (SECOND 30 MINUTES)
◆ (UPPER BODY)	<p>PUSH-UPS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Get into plank position, with your shoulders over your wrists. 2. Bend your elbows, pointing them back toward your hips, lowering your body with a straight spine and a tight core. Go as far down as you can without touching the floor. Keep the tension. Don't relax at the bottom. 3. Straighten your arms and raise your body back up, keeping your spine straight and your neck in line with your spine. Your body should make a straight line from the crown of your head to your tailbone during this entire exercise. 4. Do the number of reps on your card. 	<p>TRICEPS BENCH DIPS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sit in a chair or on a bench. Put your palms on the chair or bench on either side of your hips. 2. Slide forward off the bench or chair. Keep your knees bent and your feet on the floor in front of you. Your hips (or backside) should always be under your shoulders, so stay close to the bench or chair. 3. Bend your elbows and lower yourself down until your upper arms are parallel to the floor, elbows pointing behind you (don't splay them out to the sides). 4. Straighten your arms and squeeze your triceps to raise yourself back up to the starting position. 5. Do the number of reps on your card.

SET #1 (FIRST 30 MINUTES)

DOUBLE SUITCASE SQUATS

1. Holding a heavy dumbbell in each hand, stand with your feet about shoulder-width apart and your arms hanging at your sides, like you are holding two suitcases.
2. Squat down slowly with control, so your legs form a 90-degree angle, or slightly lower, if you can.
3. Keeping your weight in your heels, stand up straight again.
4. Do the number of reps on your card.

SET #2 (SECOND 30 MINUTES)

STEP UPS

1. Holding a heavy dumbbell in each hand, stand facing a step or bench, both feet close to the step. Put one foot on the step or bench and lean forward very slightly—only enough to put your weight on the upper foot.
2. Maintaining good posture, drive off the leg that is on the step or bench, to stand up fully on top of the step or bench. (If this is too difficult, you don't have to use the dumbbells.)
3. Lower yourself back down, keeping the same foot on the step or bench.
4. Repeat using the same leg for the number of reps on your card. Then do the same number of reps on the other side.



SET #1 (FIRST 30 MINUTES)

REVERSE CRUNCHES WITH LEG DROP

1. Lie on your back, with your hands close to your sides, palms facedown. Keeping your legs straight, lift your legs a few inches above the ground. Tuck your pelvis to keep your lower back on the floor.
2. Using your abs (rather than momentum), draw your knees in so they are bent at 90 degrees and directly above your hips, then straighten your legs and raise your hips up, as if you are trying to make a footprint on the ceiling. Lower your hips back down, and slowly lower your legs back to the floor without arching your back.
3. Do the number of reps on your card.

SET #2 (SECOND 30 MINUTES)

PLANK AROUND-THE-WORLDS

1. From a plank position (the top of a push-up), keeping your body straight, extend your right arm in front of you to shoulder height, then return your hand to the ground. Repeat with your left arm.
2. Lift up your left foot so your leg is at hip height or slightly higher (but without any curve or arch in your lower back), keeping your body straight. Don't twist or reach all the way to the ceiling—keep your hips and shoulders as square to the floor as possible.
3. Return your foot to the ground, then repeat with your right foot. All the way "around" is one rep.
4. Do the number of reps on your card.



	SET #1 (FIRST 30 MINUTES)	SET #2 (SECOND 30 MINUTES)
♥ (CARDIO)	<p>STAR JUMPS OR STAR JACKS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stand with your feet close together. Squat as low as you can, still keeping your chest up and your heels on the ground. Wrap your arms loosely around your shins. 2. Jump up, reaching your arms and legs out to make a star shape. Land softly with feet together and come back into the squat. 3. Do the number of reps on your card. 	<p>JUMP LUNGES</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stand with your feet hip-width apart and bring one leg in front of you, the other behind you. Bend both legs at a 90-degree angle and lower yourself into a lunge. 2. From this position, jump up and switch your legs in the air to land with the opposite foot forward. 3. Make sure to keep your back straight and land with soft knees to absorb impact. 4. Jump back to the original lunge position. This is one rep. Do the number of reps on your card.

DAY #2 EXERCISES

EQUIPMENT LIST FOR SET #1


- › **RESISTANCE BAND** (heavy) with handles (a door anchor or a pull-up bar is helpful to hold your band for Lat Pull-Downs)

EQUIPMENT LIST FOR SET #2

- › **DUMBBELLS** (heavy for Biceps Curls, light for Sit-Ups with Cross Punches)
- › **MINI BAND**
- › **MAT** (optional), **BENCH OR CHAIR**

eve says

For Day #2, we will focus on your upper body. After yesterday, you'll probably be glad to give your lower body a bit of a break. Your Diamond exercises will complement each other using your pulling muscles: back and biceps. Today is the day I encourage you to lift as heavy as possible for the Diamond exercises. The Heart exercises will work the smaller muscles in your legs and glutes. The focus is on three things: 1) the gluteus medius (one of the three gluteal muscles, commonly known in the industry as the "side butt"); 2) your abductors (the muscles that help you push your thighs apart); and 3) your adductors (the muscles that help you squeeze your thighs together). The Club exercises include arm work to round out the upper body focus day, and the Spade exercises will work laterally (side to side), using many of the same working muscles you use in your Heart exercises.

A woman with blonde hair tied back is performing a seated cable row exercise. She is wearing a purple striped halter-neck top and grey leggings. She is holding the handles of a cable machine with both hands, pulling them towards her chest. The background shows a gym setting with other equipment and a window.

*Try to reset and
shove shoulders
down before each
pull-down.*

SET #1 (FIRST 30 MINUTES)

LAT PULL-DOWNS

1. Loop your resistance band with handles through a door anchor, over a pull-up bar, or in any other secure overhead position.
2. Take hold of the handles and kneel down on one or both knees. (You can also sit completely on the floor, if that is more comfortable or the band is too long.) Raise your arms overhead. The band should be straight with slight tension in this position.
3. Keeping good posture, lean back slightly and bring your shoulders down “into your back pockets.” This is your starting position. Pull the band down by bringing your elbows down to the side of your body. When the resistance band handles are about shoulder height, this is the bottom of the rep. Squeeze your shoulder blades together and raise your arms back up.
4. Do the number of reps on your card.

SET #2 (SECOND 30 MINUTES)

BICEPS CURLS

1. Hold a dumbbell in each hand. With your hands at your sides, turn your palms forward.
2. Keeping your upper arms against your sides and moving your lower arms only, bend at the elbows without rotating your wrists to lift the weights up to your chest.
3. Lower the weights back to the starting position.
4. Do the number of reps on your card.

SET #1 (FIRST 30 MINUTES)

ALTERNATING CURTSY LUNGES

1. Stand up straight, with your core tight and your feet hip-width apart. You can hold your hands in front of your chest or place them on your hips or wherever is comfortable.
2. Step back with your right foot, bringing it behind you at an angle and past your left foot. Keep equal weight on both feet, back straight and hips square as you bend both knees into a lunge. Return to starting position.
3. Repeat with the left foot to complete one rep. As an alternative, you could do all reps on one side, then do all the reps on the other side.
4. Do the number of reps on your card.

SET #2 (SECOND 30 MINUTES)

BANDED SQUAT TAP-OUTS

1. Stand and put a circular (mini) band around your ankles. Squat down to about 45 degrees.
2. From the squat position, tap your right foot out to the right side and back in.
3. Staying in the squat, tap your left foot out to the left side and back in, to complete 1 rep.
4. Do the number of reps on your card.



	SET #1 (FIRST 30 MINUTES)	SET #2 (SECOND 30 MINUTES)
♣ (CORE)	<p>SUPER PLANKS OR PLANK UP-DOWNS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Get into a forearm plank (like the top of a push-up but on your forearms instead of your hands) with your body straight. 2. Put your right hand on the floor directly under your shoulder exactly where your elbow was and push yourself up on one side, then put your left hand on the floor and push yourself fully up. You are now at the top of a push-up. 3. Lower your right forearm back to the ground, then your left. 4. If you feel yourself shifting from side to side or need more stability, bring your feet into a wider stance. 5. Repeat the whole sequence on the other side, starting with your left arm, to complete 1 rep. 6. Do the number of reps on your card. 	<p>SIT-UPS WITH CROSS PUNCHES</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor. Hold a dumbbell in each hand at your chest. 2. Do a sit-up, twisting slightly to the right on the way up and punch with your left hand across your body at a diagonal (holding the dumbbell), then twist in the other direction and punch with the right hand. 3. Lower back down and repeat on the other side, twisting to the left and punching with your right hand (holding the dumbbell), then twist in the other direction and punch with your left. Lower back down. 4. Do the number of reps on your card.

SET #1 (FIRST 30 MINUTES)

SKATERS

1. Stand with your feet about shoulder-width apart, your knees slightly bent, and your back straight, with a slight forward lean.
2. Transfer all your weight to the right leg and bring your left leg behind you at an angle, crossing your midline (like a curtsy lunge without putting the foot back down). Swing your left arm in front of you, as if you were skating.
3. Drive off the right leg and take a lateral hop to the left, to land on your left leg with your right leg back behind you at an angle as you swing your right arm in front of you. Immediately leap to the right again with the same motion on the opposite side.
4. Right and left is 1 rep.
5. Do the number of reps on your card.

SET #2 (SECOND 30 MINUTES)

LOG HOPS

1. Place both hands on the end of the bench on either side, with both legs together extended behind you. Keep your head up and your back straight. Squeeze the bench to engage the muscles in your upper body. Your arms should be straight, but your elbows should not be locked.
2. Bend your knees, engage your core, and jump both feet to the side, as if you are jumping over an imaginary log.
3. Immediately jump your feet to the other side. Do your best not to double bounce. Right and left is 1 rep.
4. Do the number of reps on your card.

HOW YOUR MUSCLES MOVE

Muscles move in two primary ways: concentrically and eccentrically. It's important to work both in order to move and perform your best. When you lift something, like a weight, your muscles shorten and make a concentric contraction. Think of a biceps curl: You hold the weight at the bottom, then bend your elbow, and your biceps muscles make a concentric contraction to lift the weight up toward your body.

An eccentric contraction is the opposite motion—the lengthening of the muscles—and it allows you to lower the weight back down again with control. Whether you are exercising or just going

about your everyday life, I bet you can notice when your muscles contract concentrically (like when you're lifting a baby out of a crib or standing up from a chair), and when they contract eccentrically (such as when you're putting a bag of groceries down on the kitchen counter or relaxing into a warm bath). Becoming aware of these muscle actions is just another way to refine your body awareness, which includes movement awareness. Being aware of how you move is especially important for remaining mobile, healthy, and injury-free throughout your life.

DAY #3 EXERCISES

EQUIPMENT LIST FOR SET #1

- › **STABILITY BALL**
- › **MAT** (optional—you might want to use a mat since several of these exercises require lying on the floor)
- › **STEP OR LOW BENCH** (if you have a BOSU, you could use it for the Up and Overs)

EQUIPMENT LIST FOR SET #2

- › **RESISTANCE BANDS WITH HANDLES** (a door anchor is useful here)
- › **HEAVY DUMBBELLS** (if you have a kettlebell, you could use it instead of dumbbells for the Romanian Deadlifts)

eve says

Day #3 is another lower body focus day, but we'll also be lighting up your core and going hard with cardio. Your Diamond exercises will include shoulders and chest, your Heart exercises will be all about the hamstrings (with an engaged core), and both your Club and Spade exercises will elevate your heart rate. Do your best to go all out with these! You'll give your heart and lungs a great workout today.

Special Note About Deadlifts

The Romanian Deadlifts in Set #2 seem simple enough. You just bend over and lift up a weight, right? The truth is, this exercise is actually quite technical, and when it is performed incorrectly, it can result in back strain. I purposefully start you out with Hamstring Roll-Outs in the first set to prime or wake up your hamstring muscles and your glutes for the deadlifts in the second set. Isolating your hamstring muscles in the first set elevates your mind-muscle connection to this area. This will help you to keep good form and focus on your hamstrings instead of recruiting your lower back for the heavy lifting. Keep that in mind when you get there: Let your hamstrings do the work.

SET #1 (FIRST 30 MINUTES)

DIVEBOMBERS

1. Put your hands on the floor and walk forward, keeping your hips up, so your body forms an upside-down V.
2. Bending your elbows but keeping your legs straight, lower your upper body almost to the floor. Imagine a line drawn right between your thumbs. Leading with your forehead, aim to touch the center of that line with your forehead, your chin, and then your chest. Right before your chest touches the ground, swoop it up through your arms, raising your head so you are looking up, in an Up Dog position.
3. Without stopping, draw your hips up and back, keeping your arms straight, to return to your starting upside-down V position.
4. Do the number of reps on your card.

SET #2 (SECOND 30 MINUTES)

CHEST FLYS

1. Loop your resistance band around a pole, pull-up bar, or other stable object at or above chest height, or through a door anchor at the top of the door. With your back to the band, take hold of the handles with both hands. Move forward or backward to extend the band fully but not tightly. Take a natural step forward with one leg and hold your arms out to your sides, palms facing each other with your elbows slightly bent, at chest height.
2. Fly the handles in toward each other like you are “hugging a tree” until your hands almost meet in front of you. Keep your back straight, your shoulders down, and a slight bend in your elbows.
3. Return your arms to your sides. Do not go so far that your arms are behind your body.
4. Do the number of reps on your card.

Divebombers



Think forehead, chin, and chest—
like a plane swooping down and
then back up again.

SET #1 (FIRST 30 MINUTES)

HAMSTRING ROLL-OUTS

1. Lie on the floor and put your heels on a stability ball with your knees bent 90 degrees, your arms down by your sides at about a 45-degree angle (to help stabilize), and your palms facedown on the floor.
2. Lift your hips up, keeping your core tight. Your shoulders and head remain on the floor.
3. Keeping your feet on the ball and your hips high, slowly straighten your legs, pushing the ball away from you. When you reach full extension, bend your knees and curl the ball back toward your hips with your feet.
4. Do the number of reps on your card.

SET #2 (SECOND 30 MINUTES)

ROMANIAN DEADLIFTS

1. Hold a heavy dumbbell in each hand, in front of your hips, with your feet about hip-width apart in a comfortable stance and your knees slightly bent in a fixed position. Keep your chest up, shoulders back, and core tight.
2. With your back and arms straight, hinge at the hips and slide them back as you lower the dumbbells toward the floor. Stop when you feel a good stretch in your hamstrings, about mid-shin. Do not relax at the bottom of the movement. Keep the tension and your leg muscles active.
3. Stand up straight again, using your hamstrings to pull you up and squeeze your glutes at the top.
4. Do the number of reps on your card.

	SET #1 (FIRST 30 MINUTES)	SET #2 (SECOND 30 MINUTES)
♣ (CORE)	BICYCLES <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lie on your back on the floor. Put your hands behind your head, elbows out. Tighten your core and lift your straight legs off the floor about 30 degrees, while also lifting your head and lower back slightly off the floor. 2. Bend your right knee toward your chest and twist so your left elbow moves toward your bent knee. Don't pull on your neck. 3. Straighten your right knee as you bend your left knee, bringing it toward your chest and twisting so your right elbow moves toward your bent knee. 4. Do the number of reps on your card. 	MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Get into plank position. 2. Keeping your palms firmly planted on the floor, pull your right knee in toward your chest, while your left leg remains straight and extended. Jump back with your right foot as you pull your left knee in toward your chest. 3. Quickly jump back with your left foot while pulling your right knee in toward your chest, as if you are running up a mountain. 4. Do the number of reps on your card.



Right and left equal one rep.
1, 1... 2, 2...

	SET #1 (FIRST 30 MINUTES)	SET #2 (SECOND 30 MINUTES)
♥ (CARDIO)	UP AND OVERS <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stand sideways on a step or low bench (or a BOSU), then step off to the side with your right leg. One foot will be on the step and one on the floor. 2. Jump up and land with your right foot on the step and your left foot on the ground on the opposite side of the step. 3. Quickly jump again and land with your left foot on the step and your right foot on the ground. 4. Do the number of reps on your card. 	REVERSE LUNGES WITH HOP <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. From standing, step back into a reverse lunge by bringing your right leg behind you and lowering your knee toward the floor. 2. Jump up and bring your back leg forward, driving your knee up in front of you as you jump. Come back down into the lunge on the same side. 3. Do the number of reps on your card on one side, then repeat on the other side.

DAY #4 EXERCISES

EQUIPMENT LIST FOR SET #1

- › **DUMBBELLS** (medium or heavy, or optional medicine ball; use as heavy as possible for Shoulder Presses and medium to heavy for Sumo Squats with Upright Row)
- › **BENCH OR CHAIR** (optional, if you want to sit during Shoulder Press)
- › **JUMP ROPE**
- › **MAT** (optional)

EQUIPMENT LIST FOR SET #2

- › **DUMBBELLS** (light or medium for Lateral Raises and as heavy as possible for Thrusters)
- › **MEDICINE BALL** (optional)
- › **MAT** (optional)

eve says

CHOOSING YOUR JUMP ROPE

There are many types of jump ropes available. Personally, I like a nylon rope. The length is also important for maximum fitness benefit. If it's too short, you are more likely to trip on it. If it's too long, you will have to bring your arms too far away from your body, swinging your arms and using your shoulders too much. All

the twirling motion should come from your wrists. To get the right length, stand on the rope with one foot and bring the handles up to your armpits. The ends of the rope should reach in the range from 1 inch above to 1 inch below your armpits when the rope is tight.

eve says

Today it's all about your shoulders. Every single exercise—Diamond, Heart, Club, and Spade—will have shoulder engagement. When you jump rope, focus on using your shoulders to stabilize the rope. In the second set, when you do the Frog Jumps, use a medicine ball if you want even more shoulder strengthening.

	SET #1 (FIRST 30 MINUTES)	SET #2 (SECOND 30 MINUTES)
◆ (UPPER BODY)	<p>SHOULDER PRESSES</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Either stand or sit on a bench or chair, holding a dumbbell in each hand at your shoulder, palms facing forward. Keep your back straight and your core tight. 2. Raise both dumbbells straight overhead, arms straight and fully extended and biceps close to your ears. (There should be a perfect line from your wrists to your shoulders; think about stacking “bone on bone.”) Lower the dumbbells back to your shoulders. 3. Do the number of reps on your card. 	<p>LATERAL RAISES</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stand holding a dumbbell in each hand at your sides. 2. Raise both arms out to the sides to shoulder height, with your arms straight, palms facing down. If you feel any tension in your neck, or you see yourself “shrugging” (relying on your trapezius muscles), lower the weight. Avoid using momentum to bring the weight up. Keep good form and control. 3. Lower your arms back down to your sides. 4. Do the number of reps on your card.
♥ (LOWER BODY)	<p>SUMO SQUATS WITH UPRIGHT ROW</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Holding a dumbbell in each hand in front of your body, stand with your legs wider than shoulder-width apart, toes pointed out. 2. With your chest up tall, sit back and squat down low, bringing the dumbbells toward the floor between your legs. Make sure to keep your shoulders back and spine straight. 3. As you stand, raise the dumbbells up toward your chin, elbows out and raised in a V. This should be one fluid motion, with no pause between the squat and the upright row. 4. Squat back down, as you bring the dumbbells toward the floor to the starting position. 5. Do the number of reps on your card. 	<p>THRUSTERS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hold a dumbbell in each hand at your shoulders, with your elbows down, palms facing each other. Stand with your feet about shoulder-width apart. 2. With your chest up and back straight, squat down and try to get your elbows close to your knees. Keep your core engaged to stabilize the weight and avoid falling forward. 3. Drive through your heels and explode up to standing. As you come up, raise the dumbbells above your head, keeping your palms facing each other and straightening your arms at the top. The power should all come from the leg drive, and your arms should just go along for the ride. 4. Squat back down, bringing the dumbbells back to your shoulders. 5. Do the number of reps on your card.

SET #1 (FIRST 30 MINUTES)

SIT-UP AND REACH

1. Lie down on the floor with your knees bent, feet and knees apart. Hold one dumbbell or medicine ball in front of your chest with your arms straight. Tighten your core.
2. Perform a full sit-up and reach your arms up toward the ceiling, keeping them straight. At the top of the sit-up, make sure to have a straight spine and “peek through the window” (as your arms frame your face, biceps by your ears).
3. Slowly and with control, lower yourself back down, keeping your arms raised.
4. Do the number of reps on your card.

SET #2 (SECOND 30 MINUTES)

PLANK SHOULDER TAPS

1. Get into plank position, with your hands firmly on the floor and your core tight.
2. Lift up your right hand and quickly touch the inside of your left shoulder, then return to the starting position. Try not to move anything but your arm.
3. Lift up your left hand and quickly touch the inside of your right shoulder, then return to the starting position.
4. Right and left is 1 rep.
5. Do the number of reps on your card.



Try to keep your hips square to the floor at all times.

SET #1 (FIRST 30 MINUTES)

JUMP ROPE X10

(10 jumps per rep, so a 2 of spades would be 20 jumps, and an ace of spaces would be 140 jumps)

1. Hold the jump rope so your hands are just above your hips with your elbows slightly bent and tucked in close to your body.
2. Twirl the rope using your wrists only, and jump over it with both feet. Keep your jump as low as possible and land on the balls of your feet.
3. Find your rhythm and jump over the rope as fast as you can without a double bounce.
4. Do the number of reps on your card.

SET #2 (SECOND 30 MINUTES)

FROG JUMPS WITH OVERHEAD REACH

1. Stand with your feet wide apart, toes turned out, heels on the ground, arms in front of you, hanging down (or hold a medicine ball in front of you).
2. Squat down and lightly touch the floor between your feet with your fingertips (or the medicine ball).
3. Jump up from the squatting position and reach your arms (or the medicine ball) straight up overhead.
4. Land softly back down into the squat and immediately jump again.
5. Do the number of reps on your card.



DAY #5 EXERCISES

EQUIPMENT LIST FOR SET #1

- › **RESISTANCE BAND** (medium or heavy). Even though it is lower focus day, you can use a heavy resistance band for Low Rows. You may find that the medium resistance band feels too light for this particular exercise. Your back is a large muscle group, so we tend to be stronger here.
- › **DUMBBELLS** (one heavy or medium dumbbell for Goblet Squats—it is lower focus day, so go as heavy as you can for this exercise)
- › **BOX OR STEP**

EQUIPMENT LIST FOR SET #2

- › **MAT** (optional)
- › **BENCH**
- › **DUMBBELLS** (medium or heavy). Bulgarian Split Squats are a very advanced move. Even if you are a seasoned exerciser, it is perfectly fine to start with medium weights until you master form.

— | *eve says* | —

WEIGHTY ADVICE

Aim for choosing weights that feel heavy (but not impossible) for any exercise, especially for those foundational exercises that use the larger muscle groups and gross motor movements (exercises like Lateral Raises and Chest Flys will require lighter weights than exercises like squats and deadlifts). As the workout continues, if your form starts to break down or you get too tired, you

can always drop to a lighter weight. Or go heavy for the lower-numbered cards (2, 3, 4, etc.), and drop to medium for the higher numbers (9, 10, queen, etc.). The goal is to increase your strength so you will be able to do all the reps with the heaviest weight that you can. When your heavy weights get too light (and they will, if you keep at it), then it's time to go out and buy heavier dumbbells!

eve says

Back to your lower body with a focus on your core today. You'll also be upping your cardio game with more advanced Spade exercises. (If these are too advanced, check Appendix 2 for "Modify Down" options.) The Diamond exercises work the mid-back, lower back, and core. The Heart exercises focus on your quads, glutes and core. Your legs are involved in both Club exercises, and in Set #2, your ab exercise specifically targets the obliques (the muscles along the sides of your torso). For your Spade exercises, you'll do burpees. They pretty much work everything.

	SET #1 (FIRST 30 MINUTES)	SET #2 (SECOND 30 MINUTES)
◆ (UPPER BODY)	<p>LOW ROWS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Secure a resistance band in a door anchor, or around a pole or another sturdy object slightly higher than hip level. Facing the anchor, hold the handles and walk backward to take out the slack in the band. Get into an athletic stance—knees slightly bent, back straight, core tight—and bring your shoulder blades down and back, as if aiming for your “back pockets.”2. With your palms facing each other, draw the handles straight back toward your body, aiming for the bottom of your rib cage, keeping your elbows in. Squeeze your shoulder blades down and back at the end of the motion.3. Release the band with control as you straighten your arms again.4. Do the number of reps on your card.	<p>SUPERMANS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Lie flat on the floor on your stomach, with your legs extended behind you and your arms extended straight out in front of you.2. Using your lower back, lift your legs and arms off the ground. Keep your neck in line and the crown of your head reaching long in front of you. Squeeze your glutes at the top.3. Hold for a beat. Feel the contraction before you lower your legs and arms back down to the floor.4. Do the number of reps on your card.

	SET #1 (FIRST 30 MINUTES)	SET #2 (SECOND 30 MINUTES)
♥ (LOWER BODY)	<p>GOBLET SQUATS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Holding a single dumbbell in front of your chest with both hands, stand with your feet wider than shoulder-width apart. 2. Squat as low as you can, keeping the dumbbell in front of your chest. 3. Stand up straight again. 4. Do the number of reps on your card. 	<p>BULGARIAN SPLIT SQUATS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Holding a dumbbell in each hand, at your sides, stand with your back toward a bench. Take a step forward with your left foot and bring your right leg behind you to rest the top of your foot on the bench. You may have to adjust your front foot forward or back to find proper alignment. 2. Keeping your chest up and spine straight, slowly squat with your standing leg and drop the knee of your back leg straight down toward the floor, hovering a few inches above it. Your front knee should be directly over your ankle. Drive through the heel of your standing leg to return to the starting position. 3. Do the number of reps on your card with one leg, then repeat with the other leg.
♣ (CORE)	<p>CRAB TOE TOUCHES</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sit on the floor with your knees bent, your feet on the floor, your hands behind your hips, aligned with your shoulders. Your palms should be flat on the floor, fingertips facing your backside. 2. Lift up your hips so your body is elevated off the floor. 3. Extend your right leg straight up and lift your left arm up to reach your right foot at the same time. Lower your foot and hand back to the floor. 4. Repeat on the other side. (Right and left is 1 rep.) 5. Do the number of reps on your card. 	<p>RUSSIAN TWISTS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sit with your knees bent and your feet on the floor. Hold a single dumbbell in both hands right below your chest. Keeping your chest up and shoulders down, lean back slightly to engage your core. 2. If desired, raise your knees to lift your feet up off the floor, keeping them together. Tighten your abs as you balance on your sit bones. 3. Keeping the dumbbell close to your body, twist right to left in an arching motion so the end of your dumbbell reaches your hip. Make sure to keep your head straight, chest open, and spine long. 4. Right and left is 1 rep. 5. Do the number of reps on your card.

SET #1 (FIRST 30 MINUTES)

BOX JUMPS

1. Stand in front of a sturdy box or bench.
2. Bend your knees, hinge your hips, and swing your arms back. Drive with your hips, swing your arms forward, and explode off the balls of your feet to jump up onto the box with both feet.
3. Land with soft knees, making sure not to collapse them in. Straighten your knees fully to stand at the top. Pause for a moment before you jump back down to the ground. Land softly and repeat.
4. Do the number of reps on your card.

SET #2 (SECOND 30 MINUTES)

BURPEES

1. Stand with your feet about shoulder-width apart.
2. Bend your knees, hinge at your waist, and bring your hips down and back until your hands reach the floor.
3. Plant your palms on the floor and immediately jump your feet back behind you into plank position. Do one push-up.
4. Jump your legs forward again so your feet land about shoulder-width apart, heels on the ground. Transfer your weight back into a low squat position. Stand up and jump at the top, raising your arms overhead.
5. Do the number of reps on your card.

DAY #6 EXERCISES

EQUIPMENT LIST FOR SET #1

- › **DUMBBELLS** (medium or heavy for Alternating Floor Press, depending on fitness level; medium or heavy for Walking Lunges). People still working on chest strength may have to go lighter with floor presses.
- › **STABILITY BALL**

EQUIPMENT LIST FOR SET #2

- › **DUMBBELLS** (medium or heavy for Renegade Rows; light or medium for Triple Crushes). Because Renegade Rows are an advanced exercise, you may want to start out with a medium weight. Note: Always keep the same weight throughout the entire exercise. Even if you can squat, curl, and press heavier, the triceps extension will be the deciding factor for weights you choose.

eve says

Day #6 will be your toughest workout of the week—or month, or however long it takes you to get through all the exercises in this six-day plan. No hurry if you're building your fitness. Do your thing, work your program, and meet yourself where you are. The Fit52 concept of living healthy and fit every week means that some days, you'll push yourself a little harder than other days. This is definitely a push-yourself workout, so buyer beware! For your Diamond exercises, you'll do more upper body push-pull work as you focus on the muscles in your chest and back. Your Heart exercises will engage everything lower body: quads, glutes, hamstrings, and calves. For your Club exercises, you'll work all your ab muscles, and for Spades, you'll do some serious jumping exercises, focusing on length in Set #1 and height in Set #2. Good luck, and give it your all! (Your next workout goes back to the first pair of cards you draw, so you can look forward to that—it will seem easier each time you go through the entire six days.)

SET #1 (FIRST 30 MINUTES)

ALTERNATING FLOOR PRESSES, NEUTRAL GRIP

1. Lie on your back on the floor with your knees bent and your feet flat. It is important to drive your shoulder blades down as your upper back and head rest on the floor. Hold a dumbbell in each hand and bend your elbows to 90 degrees. Rest your upper arms on the floor beside you, palms facing each other.
2. Keeping your elbows tucked close to your body and bent roughly 45 degrees, raise the right dumbbells up, keeping your arm straight and rotating your palm to face your feet. Lower the arm back down to the starting position.
3. Repeat with your left arm. Pressing up with right then left equals one rep.
4. Do the number of reps on your card.

SET #2 (SECOND 30 MINUTES)

RENEGADE ROWS

1. Get into plank position, holding a dumbbell in each hand. As you hold the dumbbells on the floor, maintain proper alignment from your shoulders to your wrists, keeping your wrists as straight as possible. (Your knuckles should be facing the floor as much as possible.)
2. Engage your core and transfer your weight into your left arm. Bend your right elbow and raise the dumbbell up toward your rib cage, keeping it close in to your body. Keep your hips and shoulders square to the floor. If you find yourself rocking and rolling to each side, widen your stance with your feet to help stabilize and keep your body in a perfect plank position.
3. Lower your right arm back to the floor and place it directly under your shoulder.
4. Repeat on the left side (right and left is 1 rep).
5. Do the number of reps on your card.



SET #1 (FIRST 30 MINUTES)

WALKING LUNGES

1. Holding a dumbbell in each hand, arms down at your sides, stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, keeping your chest up and back straight.
2. Lunge your right leg forward, lowering your back knee as close to the floor as you can. Both knees should be bent at 90 degrees.
3. Drive off your right leg and step your left foot forward to meet your right. Stand up fully.
4. Repeat on the other side (left and right is 1 rep).
5. Do the number of reps on your card.

SET #2 (SECOND 30 MINUTES)

TRIPLE CRUSHES

1. Holding a dumbbell in each hand at your shoulders, palms facing each other, stand with your feet wider than shoulder-width apart, toes pointed slightly out in a wide squat stance.
2. With your chest up and back straight, perform a squat, and at the same time, lower the dumbbells in between your legs, with your elbows resting lightly inside your knees.
3. At the bottom of the squat, perform a bicep curl by bringing the dumbbells up to your shoulders. Do not lower the dumbbells back down. Keeping your core tight and your weight in your heels, stand straight up.
4. Press both weights straight up over your shoulders, palms facing in, keeping your upper arms close to your ears.
5. Bend both elbows, lowering the dumbbells behind your head. Straighten your elbows to complete the triceps extension.
6. Lower the weights back down to your shoulders to the starting position.
7. Do the number of reps on your card.

SET #1 (FIRST 30 MINUTES)

BALL PASSES WITH STABILITY BALL


1. Lie on your back and place a stability ball between your feet, with your legs straight up in the air, squeezing your inner thighs together. Your head and shoulders should be resting on the floor and your arms reaching long overhead.
2. Crunch up and reach forward to grab the ball with both hands.
3. Lower the ball behind your head toward the floor as you lower your straight legs to a 45-degree angle to the floor. Make sure to keep your lower back connected to the floor.
4. Lift the ball back up and forward as you raise your legs back up toward your hips. Transfer the ball from your hands to between your feet.
5. Lower the ball to a 45-degree angle (it is fine if it touches the floor) as you bring your upper half back down to the floor.
6. Do the number of reps on your card.

SET #2 (SECOND 30 MINUTES)

SIDE PLANK HIP DROPS

1. Lie on your side, propping yourself up on your elbow directly under your shoulder, your forearm on the floor. Your legs should be stacked on top of each other.
2. Lift your hips into the air so your body forms one straight line from your head to your feet—this is side plank position.
3. Lower your hips to the floor, then raise them back up again.
4. Do the number of reps on your card on one side, then repeat on the other side.



	SET #1 (FIRST 30 MINUTES)	SET #2 (SECOND 30 MINUTES)
<div>  (CARDIO) </div>	BROAD JUMP BACKPEDALS <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stand with your legs about shoulder-width apart and bend your knees slightly. 2. Lean forward, swing your arms back, and use that power to jump forward as far as you can, landing softly with both feet at the same time. 3. Staying low, take small steps backward to your starting position, then jump again. 4. Do the number of reps on your card. 	SQUAT TO TUCK JUMPS <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stand with your feet about shoulder-width apart. 2. Squat down, then jump up as high as you can from the squat, tucking your knees into your chest. 3. Land with soft knees, absorbing the impact, and repeat immediately. 4. Do the number of reps on your card.

EVE'S FIT52 STATIC STRETCH COOL-DOWN

Cooling down after an intense workout should not be an afterthought. I understand the temptation: You're done with your workout and you just want to get going. I'm guilty of it, too, having run right out of the gym on occasions, seconds after my last set. But skipping your cool-down can mean missing the opportunity to optimize your health and fitness level, as well as your future performance. Here are some other great reasons to take the time for a cool-down:

- › Cooling down allows your heart rate and breathing rate to return to normal.
- › It increases your flexibility and range of motion (ROM).
- › It can help to prevent future injury.
- › It helps with overall recovery from the workout you just did.
- › It helps with mental focus, relaxation, and calming the central nervous system (the parasympathetic state, or the "rest and digest" state).

In other words, it's a useful and pleasant transition back to your "real life."

Do these static stretching exercises right after your workout when your muscles are still warm. These are not for warming up. (Imagine stretching a cold rubber band—it's more likely to snap. Ouch!) Hold each position for at least 20 to 30 seconds, then flow immediately into the next position, as directed.

First, walk for 2 minutes (if your heart rate is still elevated). You could walk on a treadmill, outside, or just around your house or the gym. Then do these stretches.

1. **RUNNER'S STRETCH (SEATED HAMSTRING STRETCH):** Sit on your mat with your right leg straight and your left leg bent, with your left foot against your right inner thigh. Sit up tall and turn your torso toward your straight leg, then bend at the waist and reach for your right foot. Hold. Keep your spine straight and go down only as far as you can without rounding your back. The goal is to get the center of your chest touching the top of your thigh. Move to the next stretch (don't do the other side yet).

2. **SEATED SPINAL TWIST:** From the position you are already in, cross your left leg over your right leg. Twist so your right elbow is resting on the outside of your left knee. Sit up tall with a long spine. Stretch and hold, then move immediately to the next exercise.



3. **PIGEON STRETCH:** Shift your left leg behind you and bend your right leg in front of you at a 90-degree angle so your shin is horizontal in front of your body. Keep your hips square. Sink into the position, feeling the stretch in

your hips. Walk your hands in front of you and rest your torso on your front leg, stretching as deeply as you can. You could rest your forehead on the floor. Come out carefully by swinging your back leg to the front.

4. REPEAT STRETCHES 1 THROUGH 3 ON THE OTHER SIDE.

5. LIE DOWN ON YOUR BACK, EXTENDING YOUR LEGS. TAKE A FEW BREATHS FOR A NICE FULL-BODY STRETCH.

6. KNEE HUG: From your supine position, keep your left extended leg long and hug your right knee into your chest. Hold. Flow directly into the next stretch.

7. LYING HAMSTRING STRETCH: Still lying on your back, keep your left leg long and extend your right leg straight up into the air. Gently pull on the back of your thigh or calf, drawing your leg closer to your body. Hold, then flow right into the next stretch.

8. SUPINE SCORPION: Still lying on your back, extend your arms into a T, keeping your shoulder blades on the floor. Raise your right leg straight up again, then, without bending your knee, let it fall across your body to the left side. Breathe into the spinal twist, then return to the starting position and extend both legs long. Stretch your arms overhead for another full-body stretch.

9. HUG YOUR LEFT KNEE IN, AND REPEAT EXERCISES 6 THROUGH 8 ON THE OTHER SIDE.

10. ROLL ONTO YOUR STOMACH.

11. CHILD'S POSE: Get up on your hands and knees, bring your big toes together to touch, and sink back, resting your hips close to your heels and your body between your knees. Bend forward to rest your forehead on the mat, arms extended long in front of you, palms grounded on the floor. Walk both hands to the right, hold,

and breathe as you stretch the left side of your body. Walk both hands to the left, hold, and breathe as you stretch the right side of your body. Walk your hands back to center.

- 12. THREAD THE NEEDLE:** From Child's Pose, "thread" your right arm under your chest and under your left arm. Reach your right arm as far to the left as you can to stretch your shoulder. Hold, then pull your right arm back underneath you and return to starting position. Repeat on the other side.

- 13. PRONE SCORPION:** Lie back down on your stomach with your legs behind you, your arms out to your sides, and your head resting on the mat, looking to the right. Bend your right knee so your foot is raised, then lift up your knee and, keeping your leg bent, try to touch your toes to the floor on the outside of your left leg. Bring your leg back and repeat on the other side.



- 14. UP DOG:** You did Up Dog and Down Dog in your warm-up. Get into the Up Dog position by lying on your stomach, putting your hands under your shoulders, and lifting your upper body. Your hips and thighs should lift slightly off the floor. Open your chest. Keep your shoulders away from your ears by pressing firmly into the mat. Stretch and hold.
- 15. DOWN DOG:** From Up Dog, curl your toes under and lift your hips up to make an inverted V with your body. Keep your head down between your arms and sink your chest closer to your thighs and your heels closer to the ground. Hold and breathe. You can also

pedal your feet, right and left, for an extra hamstring/calf stretch while you are holding this position.

16. ROLL UP SLOWLY AND SHOULDER STRETCH: From the Down Dog position, walk your hands back to your feet, then slowly roll up to standing. Once standing, cross one arm straight across your body. With your opposite hand, apply gentle pressure on your upper arm, pressing toward yourself, to stretch out your shoulder. Repeat on the other side. Roll your shoulders back a few times, take one more deep breath in, and notice how your body and mind feel after working so hard and getting it done!

TRY THE FIT52 APP

If you'd like an additional resource to make the Fit52 Workout even more easy and fun, check out the fit52 app! The fit52 app is available on the App Store and on Google Play.

THE JOURNAL OF YOU

your workout progress

As you learn the Fit52 Workout, keep track of your progress in your journal. Are there certain exercises you love? Exercises that challenge you? Are you noticing that the exercises are getting easier as you build strength? Were you sore at first? This kind of self-feedback can

be really useful later when you look back and see how far you've come. It's also a really good way to keep your brain engaged in what you're doing. The more you notice and focus on your workout, the better your form will be and the faster you will progress.

Your Fit Pregnancy

I wrote much of this book while pregnant with baby Jacob. Pregnancy is a game-changer in the world of working out. With Isaiah, I was able to work out throughout my entire pregnancy, but with Jacob, I had various physical reasons that made working out more difficult. But I always did my best to keep at it! I recommend staying active while you're pregnant, if you're feeling up to it. However, exercising when pregnant isn't the same as exercising when you're not. First of all, it is extremely important to talk to your doctor about any physical activity you want to do. Get the medical okay before you do anything strenuous!

Also, respect your current fitness level. If you haven't been exercising, during your pregnancy is not the time to start training for a marathon (or even a 5K). Keep going with your current level of fitness to the extent you can. The only exception is if you haven't been exercising *at all*. In that case, check with your doctor to see if you can start doing more walking. Walking is almost always a good idea.

Some research shows that when moms exercise during pregnancy, they have an easier labor and healthier babies, and their kids end up being fitter later.

That's awesome! So do what you can, but also keep these things in mind:

- › Always, always get your doctor's approval for any exercise!
- › Stay well hydrated. Drink lots of water.
- › If you get tired, stop. This is no time to push yourself.
- › If you were doing it before, you may be able to keep doing it (whatever "it" is), especially in your first trimester. But if anything ever feels uncomfortable, take it off your exercise list until after the baby arrives.
- › Do not do exercises that require you to lie on your back or on your stomach.
- › Do not do exercises that work or strain your abdominal area in any way.
- › As your belly gets larger, protect your lower back. You have a different center of gravity now, and your back may not be prepared for that change in weight on the front side.
- › Your balance is different now, too, so be careful. Be aware that you could fall.
- › Always, always, always listen to your body. Do what it tells you. If you have energy, do what is medically approved. If you're tired, rest.

- › Breathe! It's not good to hold your breath when you work out. Keep your breath steady and notice if you start holding your breath. Keep breathing!

Keeping all these things in mind, I'll say again that exercising during pregnancy is good for you! Just be smart about it

and err on the side of caution. During pregnancy, I tried to exercise on most days, but I also stopped whenever I was tired, and I was extra careful. And did I mention that, first and foremost, you should check with your doctor to make sure you can stay on the exercise train? Please do!



PLAYLIST FOR WEIGHT LIFTING

When I lift weights, I like to listen to super intense music. The louder the guitars, the more I seem to be able to bench/squat/press/curl etc. Add a scream-y lead singer and I'm set! Everyone has their own preferences, though. I once knew someone who would listen to jazz standards when he was in the gym. I tried really hard not to judge, but I figured that's why my biceps were bigger than his! Just joking (sort of). Mike likes to listen to music that is more on the inspirational side when he's in the gym. My point is, everyone knows what motivates them. Here is an example of what I might be listening to when I'm pumping iron!

"The Violence"—Rise Against

"Go to War"—Nothing More

"BURN IT"—fever 333

"Waking Lions"—Pop Evil

"Betray and Degrade"—Seether

"Into the Fire"—Asking Alexandria

"Kickstart My Heart"—Mötley Crüe (This song makes it onto all of my workout playlists, if you haven't noticed)

"Enemies"—Shinedown

"You're Going Down"—Sick Puppies

"Big Bad Wolf"—In This Moment

"Na Na Na (Na Na Na Na Na Na Na Na Na Na)"—My Chemical Romance

"My Own Summer (Shove It)"—Deftones

"Coming Home"—Falling in Reverse

"Bang Your Head (Metal Health)"—Quiet Riot

"Welcome to the Jungle"—Guns N' Roses

"Not Falling"—Mudvayne

"Born for Greatness"—Papa Roach

"Bad Company"—Five Finger Death Punch

“Sabotage”—Beastie Boys
“When Legends Rise”—Godsmack
“Ace of Spades”—Motörhead
“Bully”—Shinedown
“Fuel”—Metallica
“Duality”—Slipknot
“Bulls on Parade”—Rage Against the Machine
“Do You Really Want It?”—Nothing More
“Coming Undone”—Korn
“Master of Puppets”—Metallica
“Sing”—My Chemical Romance
“Paradise City”—Guns N’ Roses

eve says

WHAT IS A “PUMP”?

“Pump” is a fitness term that refers to that feeling of tightness under your skin as your muscles swell. When you lift a lot of reps, especially in a fixed position (think of biceps curls), blood shuttles into your muscles faster than it can be released, causing temporary swelling and increased

size. At the same time, during strenuous exercise, metabolic by-products like lactic acid accumulate in your muscle cells. Your body will try to equalize this concentration by increasing the flow of water into your muscle cells, and this can also cause swelling on a cellular level.

LEG WORKOUT GUIDELINES

Before you jump into the leg workout, I want to prepare you for what's coming and give you some guidance. First of all, in general, it's important to do the heaviest and/or the most technical or difficult exercises at the beginning of a workout when you're still fresh. This will help you to maintain good form, so you get the most out of the exercise, and it may help avoid injury. If your form starts to break down and you can no longer control the weight, that is the cue that the set is over—drop the weight on the next set so you can perform the allotted number of reps. Keep with the “two reps shy of failure” mentality.

Also, always choose the appropriate amount of weight for the prescribed number of reps. This may take a bit of experimentation, but that experimentation will heighten your body awareness. Be honest and listen to your body. Give 100 percent of what your body has to offer each day. That is all you can ask of yourself. Each day may look different. But I stress the “be honest” part. This takes work and self-awareness. I have had clients who think they're listening to their bodies, but they're really just making excuses. Then

there are the hard chargers who get the workout in because they physically can, but it is doing more damage than making progress because they put themselves at risk of overtraining, or they don't address an underlying injury. Don't forget that rest and recovery are just as important as the workouts themselves.

This chapter consists of six supersets, or groups of exercises: A, B, and C. The A exercises are the easiest, getting you ready for the B exercises, which are harder. The C exercises have a cardio component, so adding those too makes these supersets the most challenging. Ahead of the first two supersets, you will also get two additional priming exercises that help to prime your central nervous system for better form and more lifting power (we call these CNS Primers).

For many people just beginning a fitness routine, sticking with the CNS Primers and the A exercises in this workout may be enough. As your fitness level increases, you may choose to add the additional exercises in each group. Doing the entire workout as written is for those with higher fitness levels, like

Carrie. Please remember that Carrie is an advanced lifter. If this level of fitness is your goal and you can't get there today, keep it up! Remember, exercise is just practice, like playing a sport, an instrument, or singing. The more you do it, the better you get!

This particular workout is an example of a muscle building/shaping (or hypertrophy) phase, with moderate weight in the 8-to-12-reps range. (For a refresher on the phases, go back to page 145.) If you do this workout for four to six weeks, remember you should switch it up by changing phases—increasing the weight and decreasing the reps, or decreasing the weight and increasing the reps. Aim for 10 reps on the major lifts, but if that is too much for you, take it down in weight or reps. If you are lifting a challenging weight and only get 8 reps in (with 2 reps shy of failure), that is just fine. If you get 12 reps, awesome! However, I would challenge my clients to increase the weight and see if they can get 8 to 10.

Here is phase-specific guidance for you:

- › **FOR BEGINNERS AND THOSE DOING THE STRENGTH PHASE (HIGHER WEIGHT, LOWER REPS):** Focus on the priming exercises (1. and 2.) and the **A-level** exercises in each superset. Rest for 90 seconds or longer if you need to between sets.
- › **FOR THOSE DOING THE MUSCLE-BUILDING/SHAPE (HYPERTROPHY) PHASE (MODERATE WEIGHT, 8 TO 12 REPS):** Perform the priming exercises, along with the **A- and B-level** exercises, with the option to include or omit the **C-level** exercise, depending on your goals and fitness level. Rest for 60 seconds between supersets.
- › **FOR THOSE DOING THE ENDURANCE PHASE (LOWER WEIGHT, HIGHER REPS):** Perform the workout as prescribed, adding the **C-level** exercises if your fitness level allows. This is particularly beneficial in the endurance phase. Keep your reps high and the rest period as short as you can (aim for no more than 30 seconds), and work on getting a good “pump.”

Carrie's Leg Workout

I'm not gonna lie—this workout is hard. I've been doing the Fit52 Workout for a long time, and I've worked my way up to this. Maybe you're just curious to know what my leg workout looks like, but you don't necessarily want to do it yet. That's great. However, if you do decide to try it, be sure to modify what I do according to your own strength and fitness levels. Work through these exercises in order, following the above instructions, and adjust the weight and reps for your own purposes. If you aren't sure how, I would advise booking even just one session with a trainer, to help you figure out how you can do this workout in a way that will benefit you. If you're an experienced fitness person, you may be able to do this workout with few, if any, modifications. Be sure that you know your limits, but at the same time, don't shy away from your potential.

Note that every exercise includes the weight that I would typically use, but again, don't take this as gospel. Definitely choose the weight and reps that are right for you, your goals, and your fitness level right now.

WARM-UP

Before you begin, do the warm-up for the Fit52 Workout beginning on page 17.

CNS PRIMER #1: 1 set

Primer exercises get your muscles ready to move with proper form and also wake up your central nervous system (CNS) so it can fire more rapidly for more difficult activities. This one is a “dress rehearsal” for the Dumbbell Front Squat:

DUMBBELL BOX SQUATS: *10 reps with a 20-pound dumbbell*

1. Stand in front of a box, bench, or chair tall enough to keep your legs bent at 90 degrees when you sit on it. Hold a single dumbbell in both hands, horizontally against your chest at about shoulder height.
2. Slowly squat until you are sitting on the box or bench. Don't just tap or fully relax and sit back when you make contact. Maintain good posture, keep your core tight, and drive through your heels to return to standing. Repeat.



Rest for 60 seconds. (For this light primer, you may not need to rest for the full minute.)

SUPERSET #1: *Do 3 to 4 sets.*

EXPLOSIVE TUCK JUMPS: *5 reps*

This exercise will recruit more muscle fibers and help them to fire more quickly. This will lead to more power and help you lift heavier weights for squats and their variations.

1. With your arms out in front of you, jump up, lifting both your knees as high as you can. Think of an exploding action when you jump.
2. Land with soft knees and immediately jump again. These 5 reps should be continuous.

DUMBBELL FRONT SQUATS: *10 reps*

1. Stand with your feet about shoulder-width apart.
2. Hold a 25- to 30-pound dumbbell in each hand. Raise them up so the dumbbells just touch the fronts of your shoulders with your elbows tucked in at your sides.
3. Slowly squat down, using the same form you did with the Dumbbells Box Squats. Try to get down as close as you can to a 90-degree angle. If you can maintain proper form and even go a little lower, awesome! Drive through your heels and return to standing. Repeat.

Rest for 60 seconds.

HIGH BOX JUMPS: 30 seconds

1. Stand in front of a box or bench that is between 12 and 24 inches tall.
2. Bend your knees, hinge your hips, and swing your arms back.
3. Drive with your hips and swing your arms forward, then explode off the balls of your feet onto the box, landing with both feet.
4. Land with soft knees, making sure not to collapse them in. Straighten your legs fully to stand at the top. Pause.
5. Jump back down (you will be jumping backward), land soft, and keep your knees aligned. Repeat.



Rest for 60 seconds.

CNS PRIMER #2: 1 set

This exercise wakes up your glutes and hamstrings, preparing you for the next group of exercises.

DUMBBELL HIP THRUST: 10 reps with a 20-pound dumbbell, or 20 reps without a weight

1. Sit on the floor with your back against a bench. Shift to lie down with your upper back on the bench, just below your shoulder blades. Your feet stay on the floor, hip-width apart, right under your knees.
2. Hold a single dumbbell over your hips, just below your hip bones. Keep your core tight and your chin slightly tucked.
3. Drive through your heels to push your rear end up off the floor until your thighs and shins are roughly at a 90-degree angle. Squeeze your glutes at the top.
4. Lower your hips back down with control. Depending on the height of your bench, your glutes may or may not touch the ground. Either is fine. Repeat.

Rest for 30 to 60 seconds.

SUPERSET #2: Do 3 to 4 sets

EXPLOSIVE BUTT KICKS: 5 reps

1. Stand with your feet about shoulder-width apart. With your chest up and your back straight, swing your arms behind you, bend your knees, and hinge at the hips as if you were getting ready to dive into a pool.

2. Using the power of your arms and forward hip drive, propel yourself off the ground. When you jump, bring both feet up behind you, as if you are kicking your own backside.
3. Land back in the starting position and repeat.

DUMBBELL ROMANIAN DEADLIFTS: 10 reps with two 30- to 35-pound dumbbells

1. Hold a dumbbell in each hand, in front of your hips. Your feet should be about hip-width apart in a comfortable stance, knees slightly bent in a fixed position. Keep your chest up, shoulders back, core tight.
2. With your back and arms straight, hinge at the hips and slide your hips back as you lower the dumbbells toward the floor. Stop when you feel a good stretch in your hamstrings. Do not relax at the bottom of the movement—keep the tension and keep your leg muscles active.
3. Stand up straight again, using your hamstrings to pull you up. Squeeze your glutes at the top.

Rest for 60 seconds.

HAMSTRING CURLS ON STABILITY BALL: 20 reps

This exercise doesn't immediately appear to have a cardio component, but it's actually pretty strenuous, so it should get your heart rate up.

1. Lie on the floor and put your heels on a stability ball with your knees bent at a 90-degree angle. Arms are down by your sides at about a 45-degree angle to help stabilize you. Your palms should face the floor.

2. Lift your hips up, keeping your core tight. Your shoulders and head should remain on the floor.
3. Keeping your feet on the ball and your hips high, slowly straighten your legs, pushing the ball away from you. When you reach full extension, bend your knees and curl the ball back toward your hips with your feet.



Rest for 60 seconds.

SUPERSET #3: Do 4 sets

For High Box Step-Ups and Step-Up Jumps, alternate each leg. For the Dumbbell Walking Lunges, doing both sides counts as one rep (Carrie and I call this a “2fer”).

DUMBBELL WALKING LUNGES: 10 reps with 20- to 25-pound dumbbells

1. Start with your feet shoulder-width apart, chest up, back straight. Hold a dumbbell in each hand, arms down at your sides.

2. Lunge your right leg forward, lowering your back knee as close to the floor as you can, until both knees are bent at 90-degree angles.
3. Drive off your right leg and step your left foot forward to meet your right. Stand up fully. Repeat on the other side (right and left equal 1 rep).

Rest for 60 seconds (or preferably less).

HIGH BOX STEP-UPS (RIGHT LEG ON SETS #1 AND #3, LEFT LEG ON SETS #2 AND #4): 12 reps per leg, with a 15- to 20-pound dumbbell in each hand

1. Stand facing a bench or box holding two heavy dumbbells. Both feet should be close to the box. Put one foot on the bench or box, with just a slight lean forward—only enough to put your weight on the upper foot.
2. Maintaining good posture, drive off the leg that is on the bench or box, to stand up fully at the top—let that leg do the work. (If this is too difficult, you don't have to use the dumbbells.)
3. Lower yourself back down, slowly and with control, keeping the same foot on the bench or box.
4. Repeat using the same leg for all reps. You will do the opposite leg in the next set.

Immediately move to the next exercise—there should be no break between High Box Step-Ups and Step-Up Jumps

STEP-UP JUMPS (RIGHT LEG ON SETS #1 AND #3, LEFT LEG ON SETS #2 AND #4): 10 reps with body weight only. If you are advanced, use the same dumbbells you used in the last exercise.

1. Stand facing a bench or box. Put one foot on the box. Your knee should be bent at a 90-degree angle. (This exercise and equipment is set up the same way as the High Box Step-Ups.)
2. Bend your standing leg slightly, drive off the leg that is on the bench or box, and jump straight up. The foot on the bench or box should leave its surface and “get some air.”



3. Land with the same foot on the bench or box and the same foot on the floor, in the starting position.
4. Immediately jump up again into the next rep. You will do the opposite leg in the next set.

Rest for 60 seconds, or as long as you need to get ready for Superset #4.

SUPERSET #4: 3 sets

LEG PRESS: 10 reps

This exercise uses a leg press machine. The weight for the leg press machine is very equipment-specific, so you may have to experiment to determine what weight works for you. With some machines, you press the plate away with your feet. In others, the plate stays stationary and you push yourself and the seat backward. Remember that for this workout, we are using moderate to heavy weights. You should go heavy enough that 8 to 10 reps are difficult, but not impossible.

1. Sit in the seat of the leg press machine with your back resting against the pad. Place your feet on the center of the plate or slightly higher, about hip-width apart (much like you are setting up for a squat). You may need to adjust the seat or the plate to put you in a comfortable position with your knees close to your body, but not so close that you feel squished. You may then need to adjust your feet again so your knees are bent at a 90-degree angle.
2. With your spine straight and core tight, drive through your heels to push the plate away from your body. Keep the movement slow and controlled. Do not lock your knees at the top—keep them slightly bent.
3. Return to the starting position, slowly and with control.

Rest for 30 to 60 seconds.

BODYWEIGHT SQUATS: 10 reps Set #1, 20 reps Set #2, 30 reps Set #3

1. Stand with hips about shoulder-width apart, or a little wider.
2. Keeping your chest up and your back straight, sink your hips back, drop your rear end, and bend your knees as if you are sitting in a chair. Try to get your knees bent to about 90 degrees.
3. Drive through your heels to stand up completely.

Move immediately to Jump Squats without resting.

JUMP SQUATS: 10 reps

1. Set up exactly like you did for Bodyweight Squats, with your feet hip-width apart.

2. Keeping your chest up and your back straight, sink your hips back, drop your rear end, and bend your knees as if you are sitting in a chair. Squat as low as you can.
3. Jump up from the squat position, landing as lightly as you can, and immediately go into another squat. Repeat.

Rest for 60 seconds.

SUPERSET #5: *Do 3 sets*

Again, rest as little as possible between the exercises—just enough to transition from one exercise to the next. If you can, wait until the end of the superset to rest.

ELEVATED SUMO DEADLIFT ON TWO AEROBIC STEPS (OR BENCHES, OR IF YOU DON'T HAVE OTHER OPTIONS, ON THE FLOOR): *10 reps with one 50-pound dumbbell*

1. Stand with one foot on each of two steps or benches, with your feet about two to three feet apart, toes turned out. Hold a single dumbbell in both hands, hanging in front of you.
2. With your back straight, shoulders back, and core tight, hinge at the waist and slide your hips back behind you as you lower the dumbbell toward the floor. Because you are elevated, you should be able to achieve a greater range of motion. The bottom of the dumbbell can go past the top of the steps.
3. Drive through your heels and fire up your glutes and hamstrings to stand up straight again. Repeat.

Rest as little as possible between Elevated Sumo Deadlift and Elevated Sumo Squat.

ELEVATED SUMO SQUAT: 12 reps at the same weight as the previous exercise, or drop down to 40 pounds, if that helps you get to 12 reps.

1. From the same position you started in for the previous exercise, holding the dumbbell in front of you, keep your chest up and squat down, lowering the dumbbell toward the floor, past the benches.
2. Push through your heels to stand.



No rest!

POP SQUATS ON LOW BENCH: 30 seconds

1. Start in a squat position straddling a low bench with one foot on each side, the narrow way.
2. Jump up onto the bench with both feet while staying in a low squat.
3. Jump back off to the starting position and repeat.

Rest for 60 seconds.

SUPERSET #6: Do 4 sets total—2 right, 2 left (alternate legs on each set)

ECCENTRIC LATERAL BOX STEP DOWN (RIGHT LEG, SETS #1 AND #3, LEFT LEG SETS #2 AND #4): 10 reps

1. Stand on a box. Move your right foot out to the side of the box, and squat with your left leg, to lower your right foot to the ground. The goal here is to lower slowly with control. Lightly tap your toe (or your heel if you are more advanced) to the floor.
2. Straighten your left leg to stand back up on the box.
3. Repeat the entire set with one leg before switching to the opposite leg for Set #2, etc.

Rest as little as possible between Eccentric Lateral Box Step Down and Curtsy Lunge over Bench.

HOW WIDE?

When doing squats, how wide apart should your feet be? You may have heard the old “shoulder-width apart” refrain, but the truth is that everyone is built differently, with different muscle lengths, insertion points, skeletal structure, ankle and hip mobility, and flexibility. When you do squats, your feet should be roughly shoulder-width apart, although some people may feel more comfortable or more stable with their feet set slightly

wider than this. Your toes should point forward, but again, because of individual factors, some people may feel better with their feet slightly turned out. However, this is not a toes-out squat like a sumo squat or a plié. If you keep your knees tracking directly over your toes as you squat and you don’t buckle your knees or splay them outward, that is a good indication of proper form.

CURTSEY LUNGE OVER BENCH (RIGHT LEG SETS #1 AND #3, LEFT LEG SETS #2 AND #4): *10 reps, body weight only (no weights)*

1. Stand on a bench lengthwise and get into a low, narrow squat position, feet and knees together. Transfer your weight to your right leg and bring your left leg back behind you into a “curtsy” position, until your left toe touches lightly on the floor.
2. Staying low, use the strength in your right leg to bring your left leg up and off to the opposite side of the bench. Tap your toe lightly on the ground. The challenge is to work on balance and core stability.

3. Do the first set using the same leg. Switch to the opposite leg for the next set.



Rest for 30 seconds, if needed.

UP AND OVERS: 30 seconds

1. Stand sideways on a step or low bench. Step off to the side with your right leg. One foot will be on the step and one foot will be on the floor.
2. Jump and land with your right foot on the step or bench and your left foot on the ground on the opposite side of the step or bench.

3. Quickly jump again and land with your left foot on the step or bench and your right foot on the ground.
4. Keep going as quickly as you can for 30 seconds.

COOL-DOWN

Use the cool-down for the Fit52 Workout (see pages 54-58).

THE JOURNAL OF YOU

your favorite body part

I think it's important to love *all* your body parts, but maybe you do have a favorite. My legs are probably my favorite body part. What's yours? Is there something you get complimented on a lot, or that you're particularly proud of? Maybe you

haven't thought about it before. Use this chance to think about what your favorite part of your body is and why: What does it do for you? In what ways can you rely on it? Are there ways to maintain it?

If working out is fitness, then being active in your “regular” life is extracurricular fitness. Moving more and finding opportunities to use your lungs and your muscles doesn’t have to be or even feel like a workout, but it can be a workout nevertheless. In reality, most people won’t have time to work out every single day. There are many days when I just don’t have the time. Even though I have a workout room at home, there are literally days when I don’t have time to go in there and spend even 30 minutes exercising. On the road, there are days when I’m booked from early morning to late at night, and there’s no time to hang out in my mobile gym. So what do I do? I get moving every chance I get.

The ways that you can move more in your daily life may not always be obvious. Extracurricular fitness can take a bit of imagination. So in this chapter, I want to help you think outside the box a little. Whatever you are doing, I bet there are ways to do it more actively. These are some of the ways that I stay active when I can’t officially work out, along with some additional ideas that may work for you and your lifestyle, even if they aren’t applicable to mine (like, I don’t work in an office, but I still have those sedentary days, so I have included ideas for staying active when you have a job that requires a lot of sitting).

Let’s get creative so that you never have an excuse for a completely inactive day. Every active thing you do makes you a little bit fitter. One of my favorite inspirational sayings is “Be stronger than yesterday.”

When the Weather Is Nice

First of all, let’s talk about the weather. Why waste a beautiful day sitting on the couch? And for that matter, why waste a beautiful day in an indoor gym? Depending on where you live, you may have plenty of bad-weather days, so good weather is a great excuse to get outside and be active in the fresh air and sunshine.

Just feeling that warm sun or that cool breeze, seeing the green of the trees and the blue of the sky, hearing birds singing or kids playing, can be enough to energize you and make you want to move. So do it! Go for a walk, go for a bike ride, go to the park to play basketball. These are all workouts that aren't workouts. They're just living, moving, being active, and spending time with your partner, your kids, your dog, your friends, or some well-deserved alone time with your headphones in and your favorite songs playing. Some other ideas:

- › **FIND YOUR INNER CHILD.** Don't just watch your kids play tag or red rover or capture the flag. Join in. Young kids still think their parents are cool enough to play with, but that won't last long, so get it while you can! Some other fun things to do outside with kids are to make your own obstacle course, give each other "challenges" (like, "Touch every tree in the yard and run back to me and I'll time you. Now it's my turn.") Set up a zipline (be safe!). Learn how to hula-hoop. Have a water balloon fight. Have a three-legged race. Climb a tree (carefully!). Get some sidewalk chalk and play hopscotch or jump rope.
- › **WALK YOUR DOG.** Dogs need exercise, too! You can both get more fit and healthier if you go on walks together, and knowing your dog needs a walk is like having an exercise buddy—you'll be more likely to get out there and do it. Canine accountability!
- › **HAVE A BEACH DAY.** You don't have to live on the coast. Most communities at least have a lake nearby with a beach. Pack up some healthy snacks and walk along the beach. Go for a swim or play water polo with your family or friends. You could also rent a canoe or a kayak (great arm workouts) or even one of those paddle boats (a great leg workout) and get out on the surface of the lake. Wear sunscreen!



- › **GO GREEN.** If you live somewhere that has hiking trails, check those out. Some cities have cool bike paths through natural areas. Nature is therapy. I've heard that just looking at the color green relieves stress.
- › **PICK UP TRASH.** Teach kids about caring for their community by having a trash pick-up day. Get gloves and trash bags and head to a local park. See who can fill their bag up the fullest.
- › **YOU-PICK.** If you live near a you-pick farm, you can take family or a group of friends to pick strawberries, blueberries, apples, or whatever else is available. You'll get exercise and healthy food to bring home with you.
- › **GO CAMPING.** Setting up a tent, unloading the gear, building a fire, and hiking around the area are all active outdoor activities that can change your perspective about comfort and make you feel more connected to nature.
- › **PLAY TENNIS.** You don't have to be good at it. Grab a racquet and a can of tennis balls and hit some balls back and forth with a friend or family member.
- › **PLAY OTHER CASUAL SPORTS.** Set up an informal game of baseball, softball, or even Wiffle ball. What about kickball, basketball, or volleyball? Or go old school with a game of badminton or croquet. So much better than watching TV or sitting in front of the computer. You don't even need to keep score (unless you're competitive like me!).
- › **GO TO THE POOL.** Swimming is such a great way to exercise! You literally use every part of your body to move yourself through the water. Plus, it's fun! And in my book, if you have an outdoor pool available to you, that's even better. So lather up with some sunscreen and swim some laps or take a water aerobics class.

- › **SNOW DAY!** Snowy cold days can also be beautiful if you bundle up. You don't need to be a little kid to have fun building a snowman or a snow fort or an igloo, or to ride a sled down a hill. While you're at it, make some snow angels. Who cares what the neighbors think? Cross-country skiing is another really great winter fitness activity.

FUN-THEMED PLAYLIST FOR ANY WORKOUT

I love putting together themed playlists. I once made a five-hour-long playlist for a friend's baby shower, where all the songs could loosely be tied to something baby-related—it was epic! Of course, nothing is literal, but hopefully these fitness-related songs will make you smile while you're sweating it out in the gym . . . or anywhere else!

“Body Talks”—The Struts
“Physical”—Olivia Newton-John
“Work Hard Play Hard”—Wiz Khalifa
“Rock That Body”—The Black Eyed Peas
“Stronger”—Kanye West
“Jump”—Van Halen
“Runaway Baby”—Bruno Mars
“Get Low”—Lil Jon & the East Side Boyz (feat. Ying Yang Twins)
“Sexy and I Know It”—LMFAO
“Back That Azz Up”—Juvenile (feat. Mannie Fresh and Lil Wayne)
“I’m Gonna Be (500 Miles)”—The Proclaimers
“Stronger (What Doesn’t Kill You)”—Kelly Clarkson
“Iron Man”—Black Sabbath
“My Body”—Young the Giant
“Work”—Rihanna (feat. Drake)

“Low”—Flo Rida (feat. T-Pain)
“Push It”—Salt-N-Pepa
“Rock Your Body”—Justin Timberlake
“Push It”—Static-X
“Heavy”—Collective Soul
“Pump It”—The Black Eyed Peas
“1, 2 Step”—Ciara (feat. Missy Elliott)
“Run”—Foo Fighters
“Sweat (A La La La La Long)”—Inner Circle
“I Ran (So Far Away)”—A Flock of Seagulls
“Work from Home”—Fifth Harmony (feat. Ty Dolla \$ign)
“Twist and Shout”—The Beatles
“Jump”—Kris Kross
“Your Body”—Pretty Ricky
“U Can’t Touch This”—MC Hammer

Walking

Walking is something that is awesome to do on a beautiful day, but that you can really do on any day—and you should. I believe walking is really important. Our bodies are made to walk. So many things feel better after a good brisk walk in good weather. I try to take a walk on every nice day if I possibly can, even if I only have 20 minutes—but an hour-long walk is *the best*. It’s like rebooting your brain so you feel good again. Some people make walking the primary part of their workout. This is especially good if you’re just starting out. Walking is low-impact, and almost anyone can do it. You can start slow and work up to a faster walk as you get more in shape. This is great training to get you ready for more advanced workouts. If you can take a walk on most days, you are moving in the right direction.

When walking gets too easy, you can start trying new things, like doing lunges up hills, or even running a little. But listen to your body and progress at your own speed—not too fast, but not too slow. Push yourself just enough to be right on the edge of your comfort zone, and you will see results. And on those bad-weather days? If you have access to a treadmill or you can walk inside somewhere (like a mall), you can keep up with your walking program, rain or shine. (But “shine” is always nicest.)

And while you’re at it, you can always throw in some other exercises. When I go on walks with my trainer, we intersperse our walk with calisthenics. We make goals, like every time we get to a stop sign, we have to stop and do 20 squats. Every time we hit a crosswalk, we have to do lunges until the little man on the traffic light says it’s safe to cross the street. Every time we hit a green space, it’s 20 burpees. Make up your own goals like this to give yourself a more complete workout, and don’t be afraid of what people think. Who cares? You’re getting healthy, and that’s what matters.

On the Playground

If you’re like me, you may end up at the playground fairly often. Most parents sit around on the benches and watch their kids play. But why should your kids get to have all the fun? You can do some pretty cool exercises on playground equipment. I have been known to use those monkey bars for pull-ups. Sometimes I hang from them and do leg lifts. If the playground has a bench or a curb, you can do step-ups, jump-ups, or dips. Even swinging can be a workout. If nothing else, you can always jog in circles or do lunges around the play area while you keep your eyes on your kids.



At the Office

I don't work in an office and I don't want you to get fired because I told you to work out at your desk, but there are some things you can do on sedentary days that hopefully would not be a problem at any kind of office job. I might set it up first by telling anybody around me, "Hey, look, guys, don't think I'm weird but I might be doing a few lunges or squats or curls while I'm on the phone. Don't judge me!" If you treat the subject with humor, most people probably won't mind. Of course, if you don't work in that kind of office, feel free to completely ignore this advice! But when I have to spend a long day sitting, like during songwriting sessions or when I'm stuck on the tour bus, these are some of the things I might do:



- › **DO ISOMETRICS.** Even just sitting in a chair, you can squeeze your muscles as tight as you can and then let them go. Do “reps” like this: Squeeze those booty muscles, or tense up your thigh muscles or your biceps. Hold the squeeze for 10, 20, 30 seconds, or squeeze and release in pulses. You can get a workout, and nobody will ever know!
- › **STAND UP EVERY 30 TO 60 MINUTES.** You may not be able to stand up for long, but exercise your calves by going up on your toes and back down 20 times, lift your knees high, do some arm circles, take a good stretch. Depending on your setup, you could also do some push-ups against the wall and a few squats in front of your chair. Or just stand up and sit down 20 times. Look around your environment to see what else you could do. Whatever it is, you’ll be physically and mentally refreshed, so you can be more efficient. Some people set a timer on their watches to remind them when to stand up and stretch.

- › **TAKE WALK BREAKS.** If you can, spend your coffee breaks or even your lunch break walking, and walk outside, if possible. This can make a big difference, breaking up a long day of sitting with actual movement. Maybe one of your work colleagues would like to come along. Or offer to get everyone coffee and use that as an excuse to walk even more. Everyone will love you—it's a win-win.
- › **FIND MORE REASONS TO WALK.** Whenever you have a good reason, don't delay—get up and move. If you need to ask a colleague something, walk over and ask rather than sending a text message or email. If you need a photocopy or you need to fax something (if you're old school like that), do it yourself rather than asking someone else. Then, when you really need to get something done while sitting, focus in and be efficient and just do it, rather than letting yourself get distracted by random computer tasks that aren't really necessary but add hours of sitting to your day.
- › **TAKE THE STAIRS.** If you work in a building with more than one floor, don't use the elevator. Take those stairs! (As long as you don't work on the twentieth floor—although how strong would you be if you walked up nineteen flights of stairs every day?) Or get off the elevator a couple of flights early and walk the rest. Climbing stairs is even better exercise than walking. If you have to go up and down a lot during the day, you can actually get a pretty good workout.
- › **DRINK LOTS OF WATER SO YOU HAVE TO GET UP AND WALK TO THE BATHROOM A LOT.** Just kidding! (Sort of . . .) When you're in the bathroom, do some stretches.
- › **WHenever you're on the phone, walk around.** I don't know about you, but I can't sit still and talk on the phone. If I'm ever on a long chat with someone, I love for my body to be doing something that I don't really have to think about, like organizing things or cleaning up the space around me. It's the perfect opportunity to multitask—just make sure you're not moving so much that you're out of breath while you're trying to close that big deal!

- › **STANDING DESK?** I've heard some offices encourage this and might even provide them for employees who ask. Even if you have to purchase one, a standing desk is a great way to stand more and sit less. The adjustable ones let you stand when you want and sit when you need to, so those may be the best option. I don't have one, but it sounds like a good idea to me.
- › **BIKE OR ELLIPTICAL PEDALS.** There are little pedal-only trainers that can fit right under a desk! Some are more like bike pedals and some are more like elliptical trainer pedals. I have one on the tour bus so that when I'm sitting, I can keep my legs moving.

On the Road

Vacations are great, but they don't have to mean taking a vacation from exercising. You'll feel so much better when traveling if you keep moving. You'll be less bloated, retain less water, have better digestion and more energy, look better, and be in a better mood. You'll also feel more fit for vacation activities. Instead of sitting in a beach chair for hours, you might be more inclined to keep the activity going with a walk or a swim or a game of beach volleyball.

But this is easier said than done. Whenever I'm on the road, I get this feeling like, hey, I'm in a hotel, so I must be on vacation. Time to kick back! I have to remind myself I'm traveling *for work* and I have to stay on it. Now that I have my mobile gym, I admit I don't have to be quite as creative about working out on the road, but I well remember the days when I had to figure out ways to stay active while traveling. Here are some of the things I did:

- › **USE THE HOTEL GYM,** unless it is just not usable. Some of them are nice, and some . . . well, not so much. But many of them have elliptical trainers, treadmills, or exercise bicycles, along with

some basic weight lifting equipment. Even if you just walk on the treadmill for 30 minutes, you'll feel better. I like to bring my workout playlists to keep me motivated. Otherwise, some of those little workout rooms can be pretty unpleasant if you're just walking away on the treadmill and looking at a gray wall in a tiny room or a TV that doesn't really work.

- › **USE THE HOTEL POOL.** Some are too small for lap swimming, but you might be able to get some laps in, especially if the pool isn't too crowded.
- › **WALK THE CITY.** If your hotel isn't in a pedestrian-friendly area, ask the concierge or the desk clerk about good places to walk or hike. They should be able to tell you where to go, and if you're lucky, they'll even drive you. Or you could cab it or take an Uber or Lyft, of course. Depending on where you are, you could have a great time walking through the city, seeing the sights, or wandering through a cool natural area in a part of the country (or world) you've never seen before.
- › **USE YOUR HOTEL ROOM AS A GYM.** You can get a pretty good workout right there in your room with a little creativity. Use a chair to do triceps dips. There are a lot of things you can do with just a chair. Do walking lunges around the room, then do some squats. You could try push-ups and sit-ups on the floor (maybe put down a blanket or unroll a mat if you brought one with you—see “Exercise Equipment for the Road” on page 93). Use your ab roller on the floor. Honestly, if you warm up with a little stretching, do a good set of burpees, or step outside to jump rope, then do some sit-ups, push-ups, triceps dips, and squats, you'll be ahead of the game. Stretch out when you're done, take a shower, and you're ready for whatever your trip has in store for you.

Exercise Equipment for the Road

Everything on this list should fit in your suitcase, and the benefits you'll get from exercising while traveling will far outweigh the inconvenience of any space these things take up. Here are the things I always brought with me, pre-mobile gym:

- › **RESISTANCE BANDS** in a variety of resistance levels. I like the ones with handles. There are hundreds of different exercises you can do with resistance bands. You can look up different routines online and pick your favorites. You probably already have these if you're doing the Fit52 Workout (which is also good to do on the road).
- › **PORTABLE AB ROLLER.** Basically a wheel with handles, this little gadget provides an intense core workout. You get in push-up position, then roll the wheel forward and backward, using your core to control the movements. Break it down, pack it up, and hit the road.
- › **JUMP ROPE.** If you have a place to step outside, you can get a good cardio workout in just a few minutes.
- › **MAT.** You never know what kind of surfaces you might have to work out on. If you bring your own mat, and maybe a few wipes to keep it clean,

you might feel better about doing those sit-ups and push-ups on the hotel room floor.

- › **DECK OF CARDS.** You can come up with your own travel-friendly version of the Fit52 Workout, based on what equipment you packed and what is available in your hotel room or hotel gym. You could also do an entire Fit52 Workout with no equipment at all—just assign equipment-free moves for each suit.



And as long as you're committing to health on the road, keep your eating on track, too. It is all too easy to think: *I'm on a trip! I can order room service!* Or, *Hey, we're right next door to an Arby's . . . sweet* (those curly fries *are* delicious)! But nothing puts on weight and saps energy like a week (or more) of room service and fast food. I know a lot of people who travel for work and have this problem, and I share it—a week of room-service veggie burgers with all the toppings, pasta, and flatbread pizzas is no way to eat right.

Now whenever I go somewhere, I go to the grocery store, or do grocery delivery to wherever I'm staying (which is more and more available these days). I get enough food to last me for the time I will be there so I never have to rely on going out. I can go to restaurants every once in a while instead of for every meal. Restaurant portions are huge, and the food is full of salt and fat. It all tastes good, but it's not good for you every day. If nothing else, I can always find a big salad at a grocery store. More health-oriented stores like Whole Foods have the healthiest salads. For more on road food and what I always bring with me, see pages 5-8.

At Home

On those days when you have a lot to do around the house (and if you're like me, there's *always* lots of stuff to do around the house), multitask those household chores by making them into exercise. Cleaning can be pretty strenuous, but you can make it even more workoutlike with a few adjustments. Here are some of the things I do:

1. **USE THE STAIRS MORE.** Some people save up a batch of things to take up or down the stairs, but sometimes it's healthier to be less efficient. Every time you see something that should go up or down, take it up or down. One thing at a time. You can get a lot of good cardio going up and down your own stairs all day long. You could

your extracurricular fitness inspiration

We all do a lot of the same things—we clean, we work, we play, we exercise. But your life also has unique qualities that mine doesn't. Brainstorm some ideas for extracurricular fitness that work with how you live, where you spend your

time, what you have in your home, and what you do for work. Make a list in your journal. Whenever you need inspiration to get moving more, you can go back to this list. Keep it fresh by adding to it whenever you think of something new.

also do 20 step-ups on the bottom step every time before going up the stairs. If you're relatively coordinated, you can also hop up the stairs. Do little squats with every jump and feel the burn!

2. **JOG IT.** I already mentioned that sometimes I jog around my own house from room to room. I might look silly, but I can get in a lot of steps that way. And you know what they say: Don't sit when you can stand, don't stand when you can walk, and don't walk when you can run! Okay, maybe they don't say that exactly. But it's what I try to do.
3. **ELBOW GREASE.** You could douse your surfaces in high-powered toxic cleaners, or you could use good old-fashioned elbow grease and scrub. Scrubbing your own kitchen or bathroom floor or tub by hand may not be the most pleasant thing you do in a day, but it

will definitely give your arms a good workout. Scrub and scrub and scrub harder, and you may even be able to count it as cardio.

- 4. LIFT HEAVY THINGS.** Every time I have to lift or move something heavy, I don't just move it. I turn it into a weight-lifting exercise. Full bottle of laundry detergent? Gallon of milk? Sack of potatoes? Do some biceps curls. Moving the couch to vacuum under it? See if you can lift it. (But don't hurt yourself!)
- 5. SPEED IT UP.** If you vacuum, sweep, mop, dust, or wash windows faster, you can get your heart rate up.
- 6. TURN UP THE VOLUME.** Crank up the music while you're getting stuff done! Music always gives me a little more spring in my step, and if I can dance my way through my household chores, it only makes the time fly by faster!

I guess my point is obvious: Move more, even when you're not officially "working out"! I hope that you'll want to borrow some of my own nonworkout-workout ideas from this chapter, and that the concept of extracurricular fitness will spark even more ideas for you. There are always ways to move more. What's stopping you? Why not take a break from reading this and go do some jumping jacks or squats right now? You won't regret it.

The 12 Things I Eat the Most

- 1. STIR-FRIES:** This is definitely one of my go-to dinners. I buy either broccoli slaw or bags of raw, ready-to-eat mixed vegetables like broccoli, cauliflower, and carrots. I throw them in a pan with a little water. I add some protein, such as vegan “chicken” or “beef,” and then I add either a little cooked brown rice or quinoa. I sprinkle on some soy sauce or Liquid Aminos (a soy sauce–like product made by Bragg) and call it done! It’s barely even a recipe. It’s super quick and simple and really filling.
- 2. AVOCADOS:** I probably eat at least half an avocado every day. Avocado toast is one of my favorite breakfasts. Avocados are a super-trendy food right now, and for good reason. Fresh avocado mashed onto some good sprouted or seed bread (such as Ezekiel bread or Dave’s Killer Bread) has the good kind of fat and helps keep me full for hours. Sometimes I’ll even throw an avocado in my snack bag (I generally carry a small lunch-size cooler bag with me everywhere I go, for when hunger hits). I’ll cut it in half, remove the pit, sprinkle with a little salt and pepper, and scoop it out with a spoon. So simple and yummy!
- 3. BERRIES:** I eat a ton of blueberries, strawberries, and raspberries, either fresh on my plate in the morning with breakfast, or frozen in my smoothie later in the day. They are so sweet and good, but they don’t have any added sugar and they have a lot of vitamins, so I know they’re good for me.
- 4. SMOOTHIES:** Speaking of berries, I absolutely love smoothies for a snack or for lunch (I’ve included recipes on page 105 and throughout the enhancement). They’re quick and adaptable because you can put any fresh or frozen berries in them, and any other healthy ingredients. I’m usually headed somewhere around lunchtime, like





a meeting or a playdate with my son, so I often whip up a smoothie to drink on the way. If I've got to grab lunch on the go, this is a delicious and surprisingly filling way to do it.

5. **BRUSSELS SPROUTS:** I know that some people have less-than-fond childhood memories of Brussels sprouts, because back in the day, people usually boiled them into a bitter mush. But when they're cooked right, they're one of my favorite side dishes ever! I keep it simple, and either sauté them in a little olive oil with some salt and pepper and maybe a little Mrs. Dash seasoning, or I toss those same ingredients on a baking sheet and roast them in the oven. If I can find Brussels sprouts shredded at the store, I even like them raw in a salad-type dish. I would definitely encourage you to give veggies that you didn't like as a child another chance. Not only are many vegetables better when cooked by a different method than boiling, but palates change, and adults are less sensitive to certain tastes than kids are. You may like the taste of something now that you didn't like when you were growing up. Keep an open mind, and you never know what goodness you might rediscover!
6. **ROASTED VEGGIES:** I roast so many veggies, it's crazy! I probably roast veggies more than I do any other kind of cooking, and roasted vegetables are my favorite thing to eat. My dinners usually consist of some sort of meatless protein (like meat substitutes from Gardein, MorningStar Farms, etc.) and a plate full of roasted veggies. I don't really use a recipe—I'll just toss whatever fresh veggies I have in a little bit of olive oil and season them with whatever I've got nearby, like salt and pepper or garlic or some sort of seasoning blend. I put them on a baking sheet and roast them in the oven at 375°F until they're just starting to get crispy. Fresh veggie goodness! I think roasted veggies are one of the best ways to keep your diet simple. They are always a smart choice, and they're really great at filling me up.

- 7. A GOOD OLD-FASHIONED SANDWICH:** This might sound a little boring, but I eat a lot of sandwiches. There's just something about a sandwich that feels like lunch, and I find it comforting and satisfying. I make them with Ezekiel bread or Dave's Killer Bread, some Tofurky slices (of course, you can use lean deli meat instead if that's your thing), tomato slices, avocado, red onion slices, raw spinach, and some mustard. This is another way to keep it simple and fill yourself up with good fuel for the rest of the day.
- 8. DARK CHOCOLATE:** This is my go-to dessert—of course it would be something that doesn't require cooking. My issue with making your own dessert is that you end up with an entire pie or cake or a whole batch of cookies you'll be eating for days every time you walk through the kitchen. But with dark chocolate, I can eat two or three squares and I'm done. I buy dark chocolate that is around 85% cacao. If I can find individually wrapped chocolates with a high cacao percentage (Ghirardelli makes some), I'll keep those in my purse or lunch bag. It's a good little treat that satisfies my need for something sweet following a meal, and it's actually good for me! If you're a milk chocolate eater, trust me, you can eventually get used to this much healthier substitute. Dark chocolate is what real chocolate is all about.
- 9. EGGS:** I used to avoid eggs most of the time because I didn't approve of the way egg-laying hens are treated in factory-farm situations. I'd seen a lot about this in various documentaries and read about it in articles, and it bothered me enough that I decided eggs were off my list. But then . . . we got our own chickens! They are sweet and happy little pets, and we very much enjoy getting fresh eggs from them every day. This certainly isn't an option for

everyone, but I know of lots of little family farms in our area that sell fresh eggs. Maybe you have neighbors near you who keep chickens and might sell you some of their eggs. Local farmers' markets also often have fresh local eggs (and while you're at it, you can fill up your bag with some fresh local seasonal fruits and veggies). Whatever way you can manage it, if you can get your hands on some fresh organic eggs (and you feel comfortable eating them), go for it! Eggs are an amazing source of complete protein and I use them in some of my favorite recipes.

- 10. TOFU SCRAMBLE:** I am more of a savory breakfast person than a sweet breakfast person, and this is my all-time favorite thing to eat in the morning before I work out. I included a recipe for tofu scramble on page 118, but basically, I sauté onions, bell peppers, and spinach with a crumbled-up quarter of a block of firm or extra-firm tofu. When the tofu starts to brown, I top it all with some salsa, and voilà! It's great with toast for breakfast, but I would eat this for any meal (and have).
- 11. SOUP:** This is another easy grab, whether you're looking for something quick at home or at a restaurant. Just look for vegetable-based brothy soups, not cheesy or creamy soups, which have a gazillion calories and a ton of fat and pretty much zero nutritional value. Nothing beats a hot bowl of good veggie soup, in my opinion, and the more veggies, the better. If there are beans or chickpeas thrown in for good measure, sign me up! The only thing to watch out for is the sodium. Most packaged soups are loaded down with salt, so when you're picking some out from the store, don't forget to read those labels and compare (most major soup brands have lower-sodium versions of their popular flavors).

EAT YOUR CHOCOLATE!

Dark chocolate is super high in antioxidants—it has as many antioxidants as tea! This is my personal favorite benefit, although I could probably write an entire chapter on the many benefits of dark chocolate. Just stick to Carrie’s advice and

choose the forms closest to how they occur in nature, which means choosing the least-processed forms (like raw cacao powder and cacao nibs), or dark chocolate bars with a minimum of 60% cacao (the higher the cacao percentage, the better).

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- 12. BROCCOLI SLAW:** So versatile! From making “spaghetti” without the pasta to using it in salads or quiches or stir-fries (is it fries or fries? I’m never sure), broccoli slaw is a definite staple in my diet. Mike loves this as a spaghetti replacement—I just cook it in a pan with a little water until it softens but isn’t mushy and top it with some low-sugar spaghetti sauce. I often add onions, garlic, and some “ground beef” (Boca is my go-to meatless ground beef substitute.) It’s another quick-and-easy side, or can be a meal if you make enough of it.

What I Eat (and Don't Eat) When I'm Expecting

I was pregnant when I was writing much of this book, so I thought I would take a minute to tell you about how I eat when I'm expecting. I originally wanted to make a list of pregnancy foods for you to read about, but it's hard (or downright impossible, actually) for me to tell you what you should and shouldn't eat while you're pregnant. Every body and every pregnancy are completely different. All I can do is tell you a little bit about what I did.

To be honest, I don't really eat much differently when I'm pregnant than when I'm not. However, I'm a firm believer in those pesky pregnancy cravings—I do think they mean something, but I think a lot of us go about satisfying them in a less-than-healthy way. For instance, when I was pregnant with Isaiah, I wanted pumpkin . . . lots and lots of pumpkin. It would've been really easy for me to get my fix with some naughty (but certainly yummy) pumpkin pie or some sort of pumpkin-spiced sugary drink from the nearest coffee shop. Instead, I tried to think about *why* I might be craving pumpkin, because, let's be honest,

who craves that much pumpkin? It was weird.

So . . . I googled. As it turns out, pumpkin is an amazing source of beta-carotene, which gets converted to vitamin A in the body. It also has a decent amount of vitamin C and other good antioxidants, as well as lots of fiber to help keep me (and baby) full. So, I decided to believe my cravings. I needed pumpkin! But I didn't need sugar. I made myself a sort of pumpkin "pudding" with things like cocoa powder, maple syrup, vanilla, and even some protein powder for good measure. It did the trick to kill my pumpkin craving in a healthy way. (The recipe is on page 138.)

When I was pregnant with Jacob, I wasn't really craving pumpkin as much, so I figure that I must have been doing a better job of covering my nutritional bases. My point is, follow your body and whatever it is telling you to do, but try to think about the *why* behind it and make decisions accordingly. Try to find a way to satisfy even your weirdest cravings with something that nourishes you.

WHAT A NUTRITIONIST EATS

People often want to know what nutritionists eat. Here is an example of my typical day, including how I plan it out:

GOALS

Food: 1,600 calories (55% carbs, 15% fat, 30% protein)

Water: 80+ ounces

Focus: Keep my body healthy and strong by fueling it with real, powerful food. Maintain weight and energy.

SCHEDULE

5:30 a.m.: Wake up and drink 16 ounces of water with lemon. Take probiotics.

5:45 a.m.: Two shots of espresso with Nutpods creamer

7:30 a.m.: Have breakfast and take vitamins (women's multi, buffered vitamin C, and Skin Savior) with 8 ounces of water

Breakfast:

Note: I'm not a vegetarian, but I try to eat plant-based for about 80 percent of my meals. This means I will typically have some meat or seafood at dinner, but not usually any at other meals or in snacks.
Egg scramble made with 2 eggs, onions, bell peppers, and spinach, topped with 1/4 avocado and 2 tablespoons salsa
2 Cuties (mandarin oranges)

10:00 a.m.: Work out and drink 20 ounces of water

10:30 a.m.: Have a snack and drink 8 ounces of water

Snack: Green Smoothie

In a high-speed blender, blend together:
2 cups dark greens (spinach, kale, spring greens, collard greens, beet greens, turnip greens, etc., or a mix)
1 cup unsweetened coconut milk or another nondairy milk
1/2 cup frozen mixed berries
1/2 frozen banana
1 scoop collagen peptides
2 tablespoons hemp seeds
1 teaspoon camu camu powder
Zest of 1/2 lemon
Juice of 1 lemon
Ice, when I want it frostier
1:30 p.m.: Have lunch and drink 12 ounces of water

Lunch: Fermented Salad

In a large bowl, combine the following, and toss until well mixed. Serve just after mixing.
2 cups mixed greens
1/2 cup cooked quinoa (or whatever grain I have already cooked)
1/4 cup prepared hummus
1/4 cup shredded carrot
1/4 cup pickled onion
1/4 cup sauerkraut

4:00 p.m.: Have a snack and drink 8 ounces of water

Snack: Adult Ants on a Log

2 tablespoons natural almond butter (no-sugar-added)

4 celery stalks

Pumpkin pie spice (no-sugar-added), for sprinkling

1/4 cup chopped unsweetened dried cherries or fresh blueberries

Spread the almond butter into the celery stalks, sprinkle with pumpkin pie spice, and press the dried cherries or fresh blueberries into the almond butter in a line along the whole length of the celery stalk.

7:00 p.m.: Have dinner and drink 8 ounces of water

Dinner: Asian Lettuce Wraps

Serves 4 to 6

For the sauce:

1/3 cup plus 1 tablespoon coconut aminos (a coconut-derived sauce similar to soy sauce)

3 tablespoons natural almond butter (no-sugar-added)

1 tablespoon raw honey or pure maple syrup

2 teaspoons toasted sesame oil

1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon sriracha

For the filling:

1 pound lean ground chicken or turkey breast (or, for a vegetarian version, 1 3/4 cups seasoned steamed lentils, 1 cup finely diced mushrooms, and 1/4 cup chopped walnuts)

1 red bell pepper, chopped

1 cup chopped purple cabbage

1 cup shredded carrots

1 cup finely chopped broccoli

8 scallions, chopped

1/2 cup celery

1/2 cup chopped jicama

For serving:

8 to 12 lettuce leaves (Bibb, Boston, and romaine work well), depending on how many people you are serving

1/2 cup unsalted cashew pieces

Toasted sesame seeds or hemp seeds

Make the sauce: Combine all the ingredients for the sauce in a blender and blend until smooth. Set aside.

Make the filling: In a large nonstick skillet, brown the ground chicken or turkey over medium-high heat, breaking up the pieces into medium-size chunks. (If you are making the vegetarian version, warm up the lentil mixture in the skillet.) Add the bell pepper, cabbage, carrots, broccoli, scallions, celery, jicama, and sauce to the meat or lentil mixture. Cook, stirring occasionally, for a few minutes, until the scallions and bell pepper are softened. Keep warm.

To serve: Spoon about 1/3 cup of the filling onto each lettuce leaf. Sprinkle chopped cashews and toasted sesame seeds over the top, fold or roll up the lettuce leaf, and enjoy!

Evening Snack

1 ounce of dark chocolate, or a glass of red wine 2 or 3 nights per week

10 FOODS I TRY TO AVOID AND THE HEALTHY SWAPS I USE INSTEAD

1. **MEAT:** Obviously. Again, that's just my choice and what's best for me, but I've never felt like my health or nutrition is lacking because I skip meat. I've never been told I'm protein deficient or anemic, and I've never felt like the fuel I've chosen for myself has let me down!

HEALTHY SWAPS: Vegan protein sources that can stand in for meat. I've already mentioned many of these, such as Gardein "chicken" and Boca "ground beef." Other good options are tofu and beans or legumes like chickpeas or lentils.

2. **SUGARY DRINKS:** I don't drink my calories. Well . . . let me revise that statement. Other than red wine, I don't drink my calories. You can't see me right now, but I'm smiling as I write this because I wasn't always this way, and the thought makes me nostalgic. When I was just a kid, we always had bottles and cans of pop lying around (yes, I call it pop), and since I'm from the South, we drank sweet tea (although I'll give my mom credit for not completely overloading it with sugar). There was also a period in my life when I enjoyed those super-sweet whipped-cream-topped frappé mocha whatevers from the coffee shop . . . that is, until I learned that they basically have as many calories in them as an entire meal *should* have, as well as, like, two days' worth of sugar—no thanks!

HEALTHY SWAP: Now that I'm a little older and a little wiser, I really only drink three things (other than smoothies, which are more like a meal to me):

- › Water . . . oh so much water . . .
- › Black coffee (coffee actually contains a lot of antioxidants so it can be good for you in moderation if it doesn't make you jittery—just don't "junk it up" with sugar and cream, although a bit of unsweetened almond milk is a nice addition sometimes)

› Red wine, as I said before

By not drinking my calories, I make sure I get to use food as my fuel, not useless liquid sugar that will only make my blood sugar spike and then later crash and won't do anything to fill me up.

- 3. “DIET” DRINKS WITH ASPARTAME:** Just because I'm not drinking sugary drinks doesn't mean I'm advocating for drinking their diet counterparts. No way. Back in high school and pretty much all through college, I drank a diet pop with my breakfast every day, unless it was one of those sad mornings when I didn't have any in the fridge. When that happened, there was a good chance I was going to get a terrible headache. Once I started noticing this pattern, I became concerned that the diet drinks (or my addiction to them) could actually be causing the headaches. I started looking things up on the internet and found a lot of disturbing information regarding aspartame, the most popular artificial sweetener in diet drinks. I'm no doctor and have done no laboratory studies of any kind on this subject, but I will tell you that once I stopped drinking things containing aspartame, those headaches were drastically reduced. Take that for what it's worth!

HEALTHY SWAP: Sparkling water has all the fizz and none of the bad stuff. The flavored ones are fine, as long as they don't contain sweetener or artificial sweetener.

- 4. FRUIT JUICES:** Are you sensing a theme? I feel like I'm on a bit of a “what not to drink” tangent here, but fruit juice is a trap that so many people fall into, thinking they're being healthy when they could actually be sabotaging their entire diet. I like juice bars just as much as the next gal, but when I go in, I usually opt for juices that are green, with no or hardly any fruit. Maybe there's some apple or beet in there, but that's as far as I'll go. I definitely don't get the ones with mango or banana or any other high-sugar fruits. When you drink these super-sweet juices, you're getting all the

concentrated sugar but none of the fiber from the whole fruits and/or vegetables. You're also getting a lot more fruit sugar in one serving of juice than you'd get in a serving of whole fruit. Fruit is good, but it's far better to eat it than to drink it.

HEALTHY SWAP: The whole fruit instead of the fruit juice. The fruit is the package the juice came in, and I think it's all meant to go together.

- 5. USELESS STARCHY FOODS:** I'm mainly talking about white bread and pretzels and pasta and sugary treats that have no nutritional value. Read those labels, people! If it doesn't have any protein or fiber or (hopefully good) fats, chances are, it's just plain pointless. Pure starch won't do anything to fill you up or keep you going, and it could make you even hungrier.

HEALTHY SWAP: If I'm going to have grain, I make sure it's the whole grain. I swap Ezekiel bread for white bread, and roasted chickpeas or whole-grain crackers for pretzels, and when it comes to pasta, I'm most likely to use broccoli slaw instead. If you're going to have pasta, there are many different varieties out there made from whole grains like quinoa or brown rice, and many are also gluten-free (if that matters to you). I don't know what on earth it is we're doing to our food that is making so many people gluten-intolerant. Some people say that nobody can easily digest gluten very well. If you don't seem to have a problem with gluten, then choosing to eat it is up to you, of course. I try to avoid it most of the time, just because it seems to me that anything causing that many health problems for that many people must not be a good thing to eat all the time.

OTHER BEVERAGE OPTIONS

For more variety in your beverages, I would also recommend herbal teas and kombucha, which is a fermented tea drink that tastes a little like a

mild fruity vinegar (an acquired taste, maybe, but many people love it and it has probiotics in it, which are good for healthy digestion).

- 6. EGGPLANT:** I have absolutely no nutritional reasoning behind never wanting to eat this food. I just can't stand eggplant! We all have that one food that makes us gag, and this is mine.

HEALTHY SWAP: Literally any other vegetable on the planet.

- 7. FAST FOOD:** This is one of my “*almost* never” foods, because let's face it, sometimes you're in a bind and you've got to grab *something* . . . *anything*, or else you'll end up a hangry mess and nobody will want to deal with you (been there).

HEALTHY SWAP: Of all the fast-food options out there, Subway is probably my favorite because you can find one almost anywhere and you can get a bunch of fresh veggies on whole-grain bread, or just a salad. They even have veggie “patties” and avocado. Some other fast-food restaurants also have salads with good ingredients, and some even have soup. I always do my best to pack my lunch and snacks so I don't have to be put in the position of caving in to the fast-food drive-thru. Generally, every purse, backpack, desk

ABOUT GLUTEN

Gluten, one of the main proteins in wheat and similar grains, can be inflammatory for some people, and gluten-filled products also tend to be highly processed. In my family, we try to be mostly naturally gluten-free. In other words, we eat foods that simply do not naturally contain gluten, such as potatoes, or flours made from almonds or chickpeas (pasta made with chickpea flour is great). An added bonus: All these foods are naturally more nutritionally

dense than foods with processed wheat flour. But sprouted whole grains, which can be found in some of the breads mentioned in this book, have great nutrients to offer. Sprouting the grains makes the vitamins and minerals more bioavailable (ready for your body to use) and breaks down their starches, making them easier to digest. If you do not have celiac disease and you don't think gluten is a problem for you, try sprouted grains to see how you tolerate them.

drawer, suitcase, and even my car contains some sort of bar or healthy snack that can, hopefully, tide me over until I get home. Be prepared!

- 8. CHIPS:** Chips are a deep, dark rabbit hole that will suck you in until you're basically sticking your head in the bag trying to get those last salty greasy tiny little crumbs into your mouth. I'm always sad when I read the serving size and the nutritional information for chips (potato and corn alike). So many calories and so much fat for so few chips! To me, it's just not worth it, especially because I know that once I start, I'll eat two or three servings at least. These are not a safe food for me!

HEALTHY SWAP: Sometimes I enjoy some nacho- or ranch-flavored kale chips, or maybe some Mary's Gone Crackers gluten-free seed crackers, if I just have to get my crunchy-snack fix. Also, some roasted chickpeas might satisfy that salty/crunchy craving.

9. **CANDY:** Other than my little bits of super-dark chocolate, I just don't do candy. It's really not my thing, but even if it were, it's nothing but sugar. It's useless. I would rather eat a big plate of real food than a little piece of candy.

HEALTHY SWAP: A little bit of 85% cacao dark chocolate. That's all I need.

10. **FRIED FOOD:** This is another one that should fall under that "*almost never*" category, because let's be honest—even dirt would taste good if you deep-fried it! But my brain knows that this is definitely a cooking method people should avoid. So much grease. So much fat. So unnecessary. Whenever I eat french fries or tempura or any other fried or fritter-type food, I enjoy it for a second and then I *feel* gross . . . and the next morning, I swear my body is just plain angry with me! It might seem right in the moment, but let's all do ourselves a favor and choose better.

HEALTHY SWAP: Roast it, sauté it, or bake it. Anything you might fry will be delicious cooked in these other ways, and so much better for you. And no food hangover!

A Simple Plan to Lose Weight and Get Healthier

We all get off track every once in a while . . . myself included. I know life throws us all curveballs, and sometimes we find ourselves headed down a path that we know isn't the best for us. Right now, I want to tell you my strategy for getting back on the "fitness train." My number one piece of advice, especially if you have a long way to go from "right now" to "super healthy," is to take it one step at a time. I go through this every year after the holiday season. If I've gone a little overboard and I'm not feeling great, I tell myself, *Okay, Carrie, you've had your fun. It's time to get back on the horse.* But I don't put so much pressure on myself that it feels intimidating and stressful. You don't have to do it all at once or completely overhaul your entire life in one day.

When trying to lose weight, experts say that what you eat can

be more critical than how much you exercise* (even though exercise has many other significant benefits).

Vigorous exercise can have the effect of making you hungrier, so it makes sense to get your eating in order. You have to be ready to handle that. Make a plan for what you're going to do. Set goals and work toward them. Maybe your goals are very specific, like a calorie count and an organized walking program. Maybe they're simpler, like eating less sugar and more vegetables and trying to move around more. Whatever your goals are, be accountable to yourself about what you're doing, and track your progress. As you begin to get stronger and feel better and lose extra weight that you are tired of carrying around, you'll get more and more motivated. It's a great feeling to notice your own progress.

Food is step one. Start eating more natural whole foods, especially vegetables. Then start making healthy swaps so you're eating less sugar and fat, and fewer empty calories. Little by little, make shifts that feel doable to you. Next, start walking, if you haven't been exercising. Or just try to move more. As you start to feel better and your eating habits improve, you could add some weights. Adjust as you go, gradually adopting more positive changes as you get stronger and figure it out. But keep it personal to you. This is about you, not anybody else.

The stronger you get and the better you feel, the more you can challenge yourself. Walk farther, or even run. Lift heavier weights. Whatever feels right to you. Always continue to eat good food to fuel

whatever you're doing, rather than junk that will go against your plan. Keep it all in sync—good food here, more movement there—and you will get the best results. Getting healthy is a big picture. It's never about just one thing. Shift your big picture in manageable ways, and your health and weight will shift, too.

** Many studies have demonstrated that what you eat is more influential than exercise for weight loss specifically. Here are a couple of articles that mention some of them: "Exercise or Diet? One Is More Important for Weight Loss," https://www.huffpost.com/entry/diet-or-exercise-for-weight-loss_n_56b39481e4b08069c7a660d0; and "To Lose Weight, Eating Less Is Far More Important Than Exercising More," <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/16/upshot/to-lose-weight-eating-less-is-far-more-important-than-exercising-more.html>.*

The Tools in My Kitchen

I don't use a ton of tools—no fancy gadgets—but these are the basic items that I rely on in my kitchen. Anyone can cook, as long as they have these basics. At the same time, the more you cook, the more you'll develop your own unique cooking style and your list of essential cooking tools for your journey to good health.

- › **FOOD SCALE:** Serving sizes are just plain hard to figure out. Different foods are labeled in different ways, and there's nothing more frustrating than trying to figure out how many grams or ounces something is when you're logging your meals. A food scale can help take some of the guesswork out of the equation. It doesn't have to be complicated. I ordered a cheap digital scale from Amazon for around \$15.
- › **A STURDY ROASTING PAN OR BAKING SHEET:** Since I roast vegetables on a regular basis, I need a good sturdy vessel for my veggies.
- › **A GOOD KNIFE AND CUTTING BOARD:** I use these constantly. At least one night a week after the kids have gone to bed, I'll spend a few minutes chopping vegetables to have them ready for the week. I'll always chop up bell peppers and onions because I use them so often in my stir-fries, tofu scrambles, and omelets, among other things. If I can't find prechopped broccoli and cauliflower at the grocery store, I'll buy heads of those as well and chop them up at night to save time.
- › **A HIGH-QUALITY BLENDER:** I love making smoothies, but I absolutely can't stand it when my smoothies are full of chunks and seeds and pieces of ice that the blender couldn't take care of. I use a Vitamix—I know these are expensive, but there are many other options out there, so do some research and ask friends for brands they like. If you're planning on making lots of soups and smoothies

yourself, I would definitely invest in a good, high-powered blender. I've had mine for years and it gets used *a lot*.

- › **OLIVE OIL MISTER/SPRAYER:** I use a lot of extra virgin olive oil (EVOO), but it's easy to use way too much when I'm pouring it out of the bottle. I could end up drowning my food in oil without realizing it. An olive oil sprayer enables me to lightly coat the outside of my veggies before I roast them or to lightly spray some EVOO onto my salad without overdoing it. You can also buy olive oil sprays at the grocery store. Just be sure to read the label and avoid anything that contains strange chemicals, which you really don't want to be spraying onto your food along with your EVOO.
- › **SAUTÉ PAN OR SKILLET:** My sauté pan is essential because cooking with it is so quick, and so simple! I envy people who can whip up casseroles and healthy muffins and whatnot at the drop of a hat, but as you've gathered by this point, that's just not me. This is why I mostly roast and sauté everything. I feel like this keeps my food in as close to a natural state as possible. A little heat plus a little oil is perfection, in my opinion!
- › **APPLE PEELER/CORER/SLICER:** My mother-in-law bought me this gadget a couple of years ago, and now I'm not sure I could live without it. The one I have is called the Johnny Apple Peeler (there are several versions of this device). It looks kind of crazy, but you stick the apple on some spikes at the end of a metal rod, start cranking the handle, and, like magic, it cores, peels, and slices your apple into spirals. Isaiah loves apples and so do I! I'll either eat an apple with some raw almonds for a snack, or I'll make baked apples drizzled with a little maple syrup and sprinkled with some cinnamon for a healthy dessert (see page 136). This is one of those kitchen tools I never knew I needed, but I'm so glad I have it. Thanks, Karen!

- › **STRAINER:** Don't forget to scrub and rinse your fruits and veggies before you eat them—a colander makes this a lot easier. I've seen some scary reports about pesticides on our foods and what they could be doing to our (and our children's) bodies and minds. I know that it's not possible or affordable for most of us to buy organic produce all the time. So make sure to rinse your produce, especially if you're not buying organic!
- › **STORAGE CONTAINERS:** These are required for packing healthy options to take with you to work. Plan ahead and prep your meals a few days in advance, or if you're making a healthy dinner, simply make double and store the rest for a future grab-and-go meal. Just make sure your containers are microwavable, BPA-free, and leakproof! And, of course, you might want to grab a reusable (or even freezable) lunch tote to carry those healthy lunches in.
- › **SPIRALIZER:** This one is nice to have, but it's not absolutely necessary, in my opinion (my bestie, Ivey, would disagree . . . she uses hers pretty much on a daily basis). I eat lots of zucchini noodles and broccoli slaw, but I can often find these veggies already noodle-ized or shredded at the grocery store. If you have the time and energy to spare, go ahead and go for a spiralizer. If not, be like me and buy straight from the grocery store.

A note on the recipes in this book: The recipes in this book are so customizable and adaptable that the nutritional information won't always be exact—much depends on how you vary the recipes and what ingredients you choose. Please keep this in mind and consider the nutritional information in this book to be a general baseline only.

MY GO-TO BREAKFAST RECIPES

Quick Tofu Scramble

Prep time: 12 minutes

Total time: 15 minutes

Serves 1

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/2 cup diced yellow onion
- 1/2 cup diced bell pepper (any color, or a combination)
- 1 cup crumbled or finely diced firm or extra-firm tofu (about 1/4 block)
- 1 cup tightly packed spinach (about 2 ounces)
- 1 1/2 teaspoons Mrs. Dash chipotle seasoning, or any other spicy seasoning or sauce, such as red pepper flakes or chipotle powder, or to taste
- 2 tablespoons any salsa you like (optional)
- Toast or a light English muffin, for serving

My favorite breakfast of all time is tofu scramble. It's simple and quick, it has lots of protein, and it holds me over until lunch. To make this for two people, just double the recipe. As a warning—this does make quite a bit of food, so be prepared to be filled up!

I originally started playing around with this recipe to find a replacement for scrambled eggs. Eggs are a staple in so many people's breakfasts, but as I said before, I have a bit of a problem with most commercially produced eggs. My solution was simple: tofu. Tofu is versatile, and it can become pretty much whatever you want it to be, depending on how you prepare it.

You can make this recipe your own by varying the ingredients. I love chopped onion and bell pepper and spinach in my scramble, but you can throw in any other veggies you might have in the fridge in addition to these, or instead of them. I've used mushrooms or leftover broccoli or Brussels sprouts from dinner the night before. It all just adds to the veggie goodness!

Note: If you make this in a nonstick pan, you won't need to use as much oil.

NUTRITION FACTS*(per serving)*

320 calories
21.5 g fat
14 g carbs
17 g protein
5 g fiber
10 g sugar

In a medium skillet, heat the oil over medium heat until it starts to shimmer, then add the onion and bell peppers and sauté until they are soft. Reduce the heat to medium-low, add the tofu, and cook, stirring occasionally, until the tofu begins to brown a bit. Add the spinach and Mrs. Dash and cook, stirring, until the spinach is just wilted, 2 to 3 minutes. Put the scramble on a plate and top with the salsa (if using). Enjoy with some sprouted grain toast (such as Ezekiel) or a light English muffin on the side.

Carrie and Mike's Favorite Crustless Quiche

Prep time: 30 minutes

Total time: 1 hour

Serves 8

- 1 to 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 medium yellow onion, diced
- 2 cups chopped mushrooms (any kind)
- 1 medium bell pepper (any color), diced
- 1½ cups chopped broccoli, broccoli slaw, or shaved Brussels sprouts
- 2 large eggs
- 3 egg whites (about ½ cup)
- 1 cup grated fat-free or reduced-fat cheddar cheese or cheese blend of your choice
- 1 (3.5-ounce) container Athenos reduced-fat feta cheese
- 1 tablespoon Mrs. Dash chipotle seasoning or other spicy seasoning or sauce, such as red pepper flakes, chipotle powder, or sriracha, to taste (sometimes I add a few shakes of turmeric—this is optional, so season it to your taste)

Quiche is a crowd-pleaser. The problem with most quiches is that they're usually super crusty, super cheesy, and super not-good-for-you! But . . . they sure are great to have on hand, so I started playing around with traditional quiche recipes, swapping out ingredients and rethinking what might make this timeless treat healthier.

My first step was to nix the crust. Step two was to (you guessed it!) add more veggies. And I thought maybe I could cut down the fat without cutting down the protein by adding some egg whites. So, here's what I came up with.

This is the quiche I make most often, now that we have our own chickens and get our eggs humanely. As you'll see, though, it's more veggies than eggs. Mike and I both enjoy this for breakfast, but really, it's good for breakfast, lunch, dinner, or a snack. It's always in our refrigerator for a quick grab, and it's also good for company.

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. In a large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the onion and cook, stirring, until translucent, about 5 minutes. Throw in the mushrooms, bell pepper, and broccoli and cook, stirring often, until the vegetables are tender, 7 to 10 minutes.

1/2 teaspoon sea salt
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
Giant handful of spinach
Cooking spray
Olive oil spray
2 tablespoons bread crumbs
(I like gluten-free)

NUTRITION FACTS

(per serving)

144 calories
7 g fat
7.5 g carbs
12 g protein
2 g fiber
3.75 g sugar

3. While the veggies cook, put the eggs and egg whites in a bowl and mix with a fork until they are fully combined. Stir in the cheddar and feta and set aside.

4. When the veggies are soft, season with the Mrs. Dash, sea salt, and black pepper. Add the spinach and stir until it's wilted. Turn off the heat and let the veggie mixture cool while you prepare the "crust."

5. Spray a glass pie dish lightly with cooking spray, then coat it lightly with olive oil spray. Shake the bread crumbs over the bottom and then shake and swirl the pie dish until the crumbs cover the bottom evenly.

6. Add the veggie mixture to the egg-cheese mixture and stir to combine, then pour it all into the prepared pie dish.

7. Bake the quiche for about 30 minutes, until it is firm in the center. (The time really depends on the oven—I have a convection oven, so it's faster.) Serve warm, or let the quiche cool for 10 to 15 minutes, cover it, and store it in the refrigerator to enjoy later. It should keep for up to two days.



Any-Flavor Overnight Oats

Prep time: 5 minutes

Total time: 2 to 12 hours

Serves 1

1/2 cup rolled oats

3/4 cup unsweetened vanilla
almond milk

1/2 small apple or peach,
cored or pitted and
chopped into small pieces

1/4 cup blueberries

1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla
extract, or to taste

Dash of apple pie spice
(pumpkin pie spice or
ground cinnamon are fine
alternatives)

1 tablespoon real maple
syrup

2 tablespoons sliced or
slivered almonds

A few years ago, I noticed that overnight oats were becoming “a thing.” I think it’s because so many people are looking for easy, healthy, grab-and-go breakfast ideas. Oatmeal has been a staple on breakfast tables for generations—maybe Grandma knew what she was talking about!

Prepare this dish the night before you want to eat it. By morning it will be the perfect texture. It’s fun to try different combinations of fruit and nuts in your overnight oats. I like apples and peaches because they stay a little crisp as they soak, but you could try other berries, pears, maybe a few raisins, or whatever fruit you like. Frozen fruit works, too, because by morning, it has defrosted. Sometimes in the winter, I’ll add 1/4 cup pumpkin puree, shake on some pumpkin pie spice, and use pecans instead of almonds. It’s like having pumpkin pie for breakfast!

1. In a container with a lid (like a mason jar), mix together the oats, milk, apple, blueberries, vanilla, and apple pie spice. (You could also mix this in a bowl first, then transfer to a container with a lid, if that’s easier for you.) Cover and refrigerate overnight.

NUTRITION FACTS*(per serving)***419 calories****16 g fat****49 g carbs****12 g protein****9 g fiber****23 g sugar**

2. The next morning, drizzle the maple syrup over the top and sprinkle with the almonds. Enjoy this cold, right out of the jar, or warm it in the microwave.

Sweet and Salty!

Sugar and salt are acquired tastes, and when you cut back on them, you eventually lose your taste for them. Since I don't typically use much of these in my food (in the name of health) and these recipes are written the way I make them, to you they may taste like they need more salt or sweetener. As you get used to cutting back on these, your palate will adjust and you will become satisfied with much less salt and sugar, but at first, if you need to add more salt or sweetener to any of these recipes, go ahead. I recommend using natural sea salt because of the minerals it contains, and only sweetening with natural sweeteners like maple syrup. Every little upgrade makes a difference for your health.

My Favorite Lunch: Quick-and-Easy 10-Minute Stir-Fry

Prep time: 10 minutes

Total time: 10 minutes

Serves 1 as a main dish or 2 as a side dish

1 serving Gardein Beefless Tips (10 pieces) or your favorite lean protein
Olive oil spray (optional)
¼ cup chopped yellow onion
1 (6-ounce) bag or ½ (12-ounce) bag fresh or frozen vegetable stir-fry mix (any type—I like the one with broccoli, broccoli slaw, and snap peas)
1 cup cooked brown rice (if you don't want to make it from scratch, use Minute Ready to Serve brown rice)
Bragg Liquid Aminos or low-sodium soy sauce
Any other seasonings you like, such as garlic powder, teriyaki sauce, Chinese five-spice powder, or chili sauce

As you well know, I love veggies. What better way to incorporate all kinds of veggies into your diet than a stir-fry? I'm all about getting more food for my calories, and this dish is great because it's super filling and all those veggies mean you get to eat a lot of it. It's one of my favorite lunches, especially after a good long workout.

1. In a small pan, lightly sauté the Beefless Tips over medium heat according to the package instructions, or cook your favorite protein in a bit of olive oil spray—you won't need to use much if you use a nonstick pan. When the protein is almost cooked through, add the onion and cook until it is soft, 4 to 5 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, in a large saucepan, combine the veggies and ¼ cup water. Bring the water to a simmer over medium heat, then cover and cook until tender, about 3 minutes. Turn off the heat.

NUTRITION FACTS

(per serving)

488 calories

9 g fat

68 g carbs

29 g protein

8 g fiber

7 g sugar

3. Add the protein-onion mixture to the pan with the veggies, then add the rice. Stir in the liquid aminos and any other seasonings you like and cook over low heat until the rice is warmed through. Serve immediately.

what mike likes You could make this with 4 to 6 ounces chicken; just cook it exactly as you would cook the Beefless Tips. Or prepare it as a side dish and serve it with grilled salmon.



SNACK IDEAS

Most of the snack recipes in this chapter come from Cara (those start on page 139). They are all quick and easy, but if you have even less time than that, go for bars (see pages 7-8 for my favorite kinds) or fresh fruit. An apple and a handful of almonds is about as quick as it gets. The only thing I actually make for a snack is a smoothie. Here's my recipe.

Carrie's Purple Power Smoothie

Prep time: 5 minutes

Total time: 5 minutes

Serves 1 as a meal
replacement or 2 as a snack

1 cup unsweetened vanilla
almond milk
1/2 cup beet juice
1 cup mixed berries
(blueberries, strawberries,
and raspberries—I use
frozen, but fresh would
work, too)
1 tablespoon cacao nibs
(optional)
1 1/2 teaspoons MCT oil
(optional)
Handful of spinach or kale
1 scoop protein powder
Handful of ice

This is one of my go-to smoothies. If I'm making extra for Isaiah, I skip the beet juice, because he hates beet juice. Also, I'll add greens (like a handful of spinach or kale) if I have them in the fridge. But if I don't happen to have any, I won't worry about it.

If I'm making this for my afternoon snack, I'll probably only use half the cacao nibs (little pieces of the cocoa bean without any sugar—just pure chocolate goodness), or I'll skip them altogether. I'll do the same for the MCT (medium-chain triglyceride) oil. Not everybody likes it, but you might want to try it to see how it makes you feel. You can find it in most health food stores, the health food aisle of your grocery store, or online. Both the cacao nibs and the MCT oil are calorie-dense additions, but with the good kind of fat that helps you burn more fat. If this is going to be my entire lunch or I'm feeling like I just need some extra workout fuel, I'll usually add them.

As for the protein powder, I always include that, but I may vary how many scoops I use. There are a lot of good protein powders out there. I like the vegan ones, of course. Orgain is good, as is Garden of Life brand (Mike likes this one, too).

NUTRITION FACTS

(per snack-size
serving)

173 calories
7 g fat
11 g carbs
14 g protein
4 g fiber
7.5 g sugar

The point is that this smoothie is adaptable. If you have greens, throw in greens. You can use any berries, or even some other lower-sugar fruit instead. You could use a little unsweetened cocoa powder or cinnamon if you want to. Any healthy additions can help power up your afternoon.

Combine all the ingredients in a blender and blend until completely smooth. Sip and savor the nutrient density!



DINNER AT MY HOUSE

Carrie's Tortilla Pizza

Prep time: 20 minutes
(including chopping veggies)
or 5 minutes (if the veggies
are prechopped)

Total time: 20 to 35 minutes

Serves 1

Olive oil spray
1 sturdy whole-grain tortilla
(I like Ezekiel tortillas),
about 8 inches in diameter
¼ cup prepared spaghetti
sauce or marinara sauce
Handful of spinach

OPTIONAL TOPPINGS

(Choose based on your own
tastes, but be careful not
to overload your crust with
tomatoes, mushrooms, and
other “wet” toppings, or
your tortilla crust will get
soggy)

4 thin slices fresh tomato,
patted dry
2 tablespoons chopped
onion
2 tablespoons chopped bell
pepper
2 tablespoons chopped or
thinly sliced mushroom

Pizza is the best. I mean, who doesn't love it? If I could get away with eating it for every meal, I probably would. (Mike would say the same thing.) I'd eat it for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and . . . maybe throw one in for a snack somewhere, too! But of course, the “pizza diet” isn't a thing, and ordering it even semi-regularly isn't exactly part of a healthy lifestyle. So, I wanted to find a guilt-free way to enjoy one of the world's most beloved (and naughty) foods. I make my tortilla pizza a lot because everybody in my family likes it. This recipe makes one personal-size pizza, but you can make one for each person in your family so everyone can choose their own toppings. Personally, I pile on the veggies. Mike likes meat and some veggies on his. Isaiah likes meat and cheese (I slip in veggies whenever I can, though). This is a fun one for kids to get in on making as well. Let them choose their toppings and assemble their own pizza. I find that it's often easier to get a child to eat something they had a hand in making.

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F. Lightly spray a baking sheet or pizza pan with a little olive oil.
2. Put the tortilla on the prepared baking sheet. Spread the spaghetti sauce over the tortilla. Spread the spinach out evenly over the sauce. Sprinkle the veggie toppings of your choice evenly over the

1 tablespoon chopped or sliced pitted olives
2 teaspoons capers
2 slices vegan “meat” (such as Tofurky or Yves Veggie Cuisine) or other lean meat of your choice
1/4 cup shredded vegan cheese (such as Daiya) or shredded cheese of your choice
Favorite Italian seasoning (garlic powder, Mrs. Dash Italian seasoning, basil, etc.)

NUTRITION FACTS

(per serving)

366 calories
14.5 g fat
33 g carbs
29 g protein
16 g fiber
5 g sugar

spinach. Tear up the “meat” and spread it over the veggies. Sprinkle the cheese over the top and shake some seasoning over the whole thing.

3. Pop the pizza in the oven and bake for about 15 minutes, rotating the pan once halfway through. The pizza is done when the edges start to crisp and the cheese is bubbling. Cut with a pizza cutter and enjoy!

what mike likes You could add organic lunch meat, ground turkey, or ground beef to this pizza.



Black Bean Quesadilla

Prep time: 6 minutes

Total time: 10 minutes

Serves 1

Olive oil spray
1 whole wheat tortilla,
8 inches or larger
1/4 cup Amy's Vegetarian
Organic Refried Black
Beans or low-sodium
black beans
2 tablespoons chopped red
or yellow onion, or more if
you like
2 tablespoons chopped bell
pepper (any color), or
more if you like
1/4 cup shredded vegan or
dairy cheese
1/4 cup cooked vegan "meat"
(like Boca Crumbles
or MorningStar Farms
chicken strips) or your
favorite lean meat
Handful of spinach
Mrs. Dash chipotle
seasoning or your favorite
taco seasoning
Salsa (optional)
2 tablespoons low-fat sour
cream (optional)

I try to avoid eating at Mexican restaurants—everything I want to order is so fried and cheesy! Of course, it's all amazingly delicious, but I end up eating my weight in carbs and cheese. So I try to get my fix in other ways. Here is my healthy-swap recipe for quesadillas.

1. Lightly spray olive oil onto a griddle or large pan and turn the heat to medium. Add the tortilla. As the tortilla heats up, spread the black beans on one half, then add the onions, peppers, cheese, "meat," spinach, and Mrs. Dash. Keep everything on one side of the tortilla.
2. When the tortilla starts to brown, fold the empty half over the full half. Continue to brown it until the cheese melts, flipping it every so often so it browns evenly.
3. Transfer the quesadilla to a plate and cut it into 2 wedges. I like to spoon salsa and maybe even some sour cream on top of the quesadilla, but you can skip that if you prefer.

NUTRITION FACTS*(per serving)***291 calories****9.5 g fat****34 g carbs****11.5 g protein****8.5 g fiber****2 g sugar**

what mike likes Mike might substitute some cooked chicken breast or ground bison for the vegan meat in this quesadilla.

Healthy Taco Salad

Prep time: 5 minutes

Total time: 5 minutes

Serves 1

2 big ol' handfuls of spring mix or any other mixed lettuce combo
1/4 cup chopped red onion, or to taste
1/4 cup chopped bell pepper, or to taste
1/2 cup halved or quartered cherry tomatoes, or to taste
1/4 cup black beans or chickpeas
1/4 cup cooked brown rice or quinoa (optional)
1/4 avocado, sliced
1/2 cup vegan ground "beef" or "chicken" strips or a vegan black bean burger patty—or you could make Cara's Tex-Mex Quinoa Burgers on page 158

In my quest to make my favorite Mexican foods healthier, I decided to take on the traditional taco salad by making it . . . well . . . more saladlike. You won't find any empty calories here. This salad will fill any belly (even mine), and it has a lot more nutrition and a lot less fat and fewer calories than the version my mom used to make for us growing up. When I make this recipe for a group, I chop up veggies and let my diners assemble their salads themselves. This salad is super versatile and really works with whatever you've got in your fridge. You can increase the amounts in the recipe below depending on how many people you're serving.

Note: This salad is very filling as it is, but if you feel like you need a little something more in it, I recommend adding cooked brown rice or quinoa, especially if you already have some on hand.

2 tablespoons light sour
cream (vegan or regular)
2 tablespoons shredded
Mexican blend or cheddar
cheese (vegan or regular)

Salsa

NUTRITION FACTS

(per serving)

335 calories

18 g fat

23 g carbs

15 g protein

11 g fiber

6 g sugar

Put the lettuce in a bowl. Add the onion, bell pepper, tomatoes, beans, rice (if using), avocado, and protein. Top with the sour cream and cheese, and finish with salsa as your dressing.

what mike likes Mike might add some lean ground bison with taco seasoning to this salad.

Carrie's Ugly Slow Cooker Lasagna

Prep time: 30 minutes

Total time: 2 to 4 hours, plus
30 minutes

Serves 4 to 6 (or more),
depending on how many
veggies you use

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 medium yellow onion,
diced
- 1 large bell pepper (any
color), diced
- Cooking spray
- 1 (24-ounce) jar spaghetti
sauce or marinara sauce
(you may not need it all)
- 1 (12-ounce) box no-boil
whole wheat lasagna
noodles (you may not use
them all)
- Big handful of spinach
- Other veggies you might
want to sprinkle in—you
could sauté any of these
along with the onions and
peppers, or leave them
raw: sliced mushrooms,
chopped-up broccoli,
more diced bell peppers,

Lasagna is most definitely a comfort food. There's just something about it: warm, thick noodles, sauce, and cheese—yum! Most of us have been eating it for our entire lives. Plus, it's easy to make in large quantities, so if you've got a big family, pasta dishes like this are probably no stranger to your table. Here is my healthier take on this comforting classic. I call it my "ugly" lasagna because when you scoop it out of the slow cooker into a bowl, it's not all nicely layered. It's just a big pile of comfort food!

Speaking of feeding big families, this recipe is pretty adaptable based on how many you want to feed and how big your slow cooker is. If you use all the noodles, all the sauce, and a ton of veggies, this could serve more than the 4 to 6 people mentioned above. If you use half the noodles, half the sauce, and not so many veggies, you could serve just a few. In general, estimate 2 to 3 ounces dry pasta and $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 cup sauce per person.

1. In a large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the onion and bell pepper (and any other veggies you want to add) and cook, stirring, until the onion is just turning golden brown and the bell pepper is soft. Set aside.

quartered cherry
tomatoes, half-moon
slices of zucchini and/
or yellow squash, sliced
okra, shredded carrots,
shredded cabbage, etc.
1 (8-ounce) package
shredded vegan cheese
(such as Daiya) or
reduced-fat shredded
cheese
Your favorite Italian
seasoning

NUTRITION FACTS

(per serving)

309 calories
13.5 g fat
35 g carbs
7 g protein
6.5 g fiber
10.5 g sugar

2. Spray a slow cooker with a light coating of cooking spray, then cover the bottom with a thin layer of the sauce (just enough to coat the bottom).

3. Break the noodles and fit them over the sauce to mostly cover the bottom in one layer. Spread a thin layer of spinach over the noodles and sprinkle with the onion–bell pepper mixture and whatever other veggies you have prepared. Top with a thin layer of sauce and then a thin layer of cheese and a few shakes of Italian seasoning.

4. Repeat layers of noodles, spinach, extra veggies, sauce, cheese, and seasoning, until you reach the top of the slow cooker or run out of ingredients. End with a final layer of sauce and seasoning.

5. Cover and cook the lasagna on high for 2 to 3 hours or on low for 3 to 4 hours. Check it periodically to make sure the edges aren't burning. It should be done within a couple of hours, but you can test to make sure the noodles are tender. When you're ready to serve it, scoop it out into bowls. It ain't pretty . . . but it sure is delicious!

DESSERTS BY CARRIE

Baked Apples

Prep time: 10 minutes

Total time: 40 minutes

Serves 4

- 3 Gala apples or your preferred variety, peeled, cored, and chopped or sliced (see Note)
- 2 tablespoons real maple syrup
- 1 tablespoon Earth Balance buttery spread, melted
- 1 teaspoon apple pie spice or ground cinnamon

Apple pie is as American as it gets, at least when it comes to dessert. This recipe is all about having that warm apple-cinnamon goodness without the guilt. It's easy to make and can be modified or topped in lots of ways. However you enjoy it, just keep it simple!

I put this in the oven when I start making dinner, and I turn off the oven after 30 minutes, but I let it stay in there so it's still warm when we're ready for dessert. Serve this with ½ cup Halo Top ice cream (or your favorite dairy-free ice cream or whipped cream), and it's a real treat! You can even top it with some chopped walnuts or pecans or ¼ cup of your favorite granola, or mix in some rolled oats. Use any leftovers for your oatmeal tomorrow morning.

Note: This would be a great time to use an apple peeler/corer/slicer like I mention on page 116!

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F.
2. Slice or chop the apples into large pieces and put them in a large bowl. Add the maple syrup, melted buttery spread, and apple pie spice and toss to combine. Transfer the apples to a small baking

NUTRITION FACTS*(per serving)*

121 calories
3 g fat
35 g carbs
0 g protein
3 g fiber
20 g sugar

dish with a lid (I use a 1-quart dish). Cover the dish and bake for 25 minutes, then give the apples a good stir and bake, uncovered, for 5 minutes more, until they start to turn golden. The apples should be just tender.

3. Serve with your favorite toppings, and make sure to scoop up and use the cooking liquid at the bottom of the dish as a sauce.



Healthy Pumpkin Chocolate Pudding

Prep time: 5 minutes

Total time: 5 minutes

Serves 5

1 (15-ounce) can pure pumpkin puree
1/2 cup chocolate protein powder
2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
1/2 cup unsweetened vanilla almond milk
3 tablespoons real maple syrup
Dash of pure vanilla extract
Dash of ground cinnamon

NUTRITION FACTS

(per serving)

172 calories
2.5 g fat
16 g carbs
16 g protein
4 g fiber
12 g sugar

This is the recipe I invented when I was pregnant with Isaiah and craving pumpkin (see page 104). It's easy to put together and really satisfying, with lots of nutrition for a growing baby, or just for you! Mix this all together, and you can eat it immediately, or chill it for a while in the fridge for later. It tastes even better after spending the night in the refrigerator.

1. Scoop the pumpkin puree into a medium bowl.
2. In a separate medium bowl, whisk together the protein powder and the cocoa powder. Add the almond milk and whisk to combine.
3. Add the protein powder mixture to the pumpkin and mix well. Stir in the maple syrup, vanilla, and cinnamon. Enjoy immediately, or cover and refrigerate up to overnight before serving.

Recipes from Nutritionist Cara Clark

I've already introduced you to my nutritionist friend Cara, and she has graciously agreed to contribute some of her own recipes to this book. She is a bit fancier with her cooking than I am, so these recipes have a different flavor (so to speak), but they are all delicious and super healthy.



BREAKFASTS WITH CARA

Best Smoothie Bowl

Prep time: 5 minutes

Total time: 5 minutes

Serves 1

1/2 cup unsweetened almond milk, plus more if needed
1/2 frozen banana
1/2 cup frozen berries
1 (3.5-ounce) packet frozen açai puree
Handful of any fresh greens (raw spinach is the least bitter)

TOPPINGS

2 tablespoons low-sugar granola (you could replace this with raw oats, muesli, or just some chopped nuts, if you prefer)
1 tablespoon natural almond butter, no sugar added
1 tablespoon hulled hemp seeds
1 teaspoon goji berries
Fresh berries and banana slices (optional)

Cara here—Carrie asked me to contribute some of my favorite recipes, and here is a go-to breakfast I often recommend. Smoothie bowls contain all the creamy nutritional goodness of a smoothie with more filling, chewy ingredients that make you feel like you actually ate something. It's almost like starting your day with a salad-dessert combo. The fiber from the greens and seeds will keep you full and satisfied for at least 4 hours, and all those color-rich veggies and fruits will energize you while they help build up your immune system.

Note that this recipe is much thicker than a smoothie you would drink because it goes in a bowl and you eat it with a spoon. Even with a high-speed blender, it can be hard to get this to blend easily, so you'll probably have to tamp it down a few times to get everything fully blended. You can always add more almond milk, but do so only a little bit at a time. The smoothie should have the consistency of soft-serve ice cream.

NUTRITION FACTS*(per serving)*

408 calories
21 g fat
47 g carbs
12.5 g protein
9 g fiber
20 g sugar

1. Put the almond milk in a high-speed blender, then add the banana, berries, açai, and greens. Blend the smoothie, tamping down as necessary, until smooth. Add more almond milk a tablespoon at a time if it's too thick.

2. Pour or scoop the smoothie into a bowl and add the toppings. Enjoy immediately.

cara says

AÇAI AND GOJI BERRIES . . . NOT IN THE PRODUCE SECTION

If you're into health food, you probably know all about açai and goji berries. But if you're not a health nut yet, you may not be familiar with these "superfood" berries.

- › **AÇAI** (pronounced *ah-sigh-EE*) berries grow on açai palm trees. They are a vibrant purple color and they resemble blueberries or purple grapes. They have an extremely high antioxidant content. They are mostly seed and spoil quickly, so the best way to get them is to buy the frozen pulp or freeze-dried powder at a health food store or in the freezer section or health food aisle of a regular grocery

store. Can't find them? You can always substitute blueberries.

- › **GOJI** (pronounced *GO-gee*) berries are another superfood, and they come from China and surrounding areas. They are used in Chinese medicine and Asian cooking, but have recently caught on in the U.S. You can most easily find them in dried form—they are chewy, kind of like raisins. They taste a little like a sweeter version of cranberries, but with more nutrient density. However, if you can't find them or don't want to use them, you could always substitute unsweetened dried cranberries or dried cherries.

Chia Seed Pudding

Prep time: 5 minutes

Total time: 2 to 12 hours

Serves 2

- 1 cup unsweetened almond milk or other unsweetened nut, hemp, or oat milk
- ¼ cup chia seeds
- 2 tablespoons unsweetened raw cacao powder or cocoa powder
- 1 tablespoon real maple syrup (or a little bit more if you need it sweeter)
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- ¼ cup chopped strawberries, for topping
- ¼ cup cacao nibs, for topping (optional)

NUTRITION FACTS

(per serving)

398 calories

19 g fat

30 g carbs

11 g protein

19 g fiber

18 g sugar

This dish is delicious enough to serve for dessert, but since it is nutrient-dense, low in sugar, and will fill you up with the perfect ratio of protein to omega-3 fat (the good kind), along with fiber, it's perfect for breakfast! The maple syrup brings all the flavors together with its delicate sweetness, while providing you with minerals and antioxidants you can't get from refined sugar. And . . . chocolate for breakfast? I'm in! If you make five of these babies on the weekend and store them in the fridge, you can have an awesome grab-and-go breakfast every day all week long.

Note: Kids don't always like the texture of the whole chia seeds in this pudding, but if you blend it before putting it in the pint jars, it comes out smooth—a great breakfast or snack for kids.

In a medium bowl, stir together the almond milk, chia seeds, cacao powder, maple syrup, and vanilla. Divide the mixture between two 1-pint mason jars. Cover and refrigerate overnight or for at least 2 hours. When the pudding has thickened, top with the strawberries and cacao nibs (if using) and enjoy!

CACAO OR COCOA— WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

I recommend raw cacao powder and cacao nibs over cocoa powder and chocolate chips, and here's why: Cocoa powder is roasted, but raw cacao powder is the cold-pressed, ground version, so it has more of its enzymes and nutrients intact. Cocoa powder is good for you, too (as long as it's unsweetened!), but cacao has that little something extra. Cacao nibs are pieces

of the cocoa bean, no sugar added, so they have that crunchy chocolate taste but no refined sweetener. It's easy to learn to love them. All that being said, if you would rather use unsweetened cocoa powder and dark chocolate chips (with at least 85% cacao), that works, too, although I would keep the chocolate chips to 1 or 2 tablespoons.

CARA'S FAVORITE LUNCHES

Healthy Quinoa Bowl

Prep time: 15 minutes

Total time: 15 minutes

Serves 4

1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
Zest and juice of 1 juicy lime
(3 to 4 tablespoons juice)
2 cups cooked quinoa
1 cup cooked black beans
1 yellow or orange bell
pepper, diced
2 scallions, chopped
1 bunch fresh cilantro,
chopped
Sea salt and black pepper

NUTRITION FACTS

(per serving)

204 calories

3 g fat

30 g carbs

8.5 g protein

8 g fiber

6 g sugar

This happens to be one of my all-time favorite meals. It's filling because of the hearty quinoa and the delicious combination of flavors, so you don't need to eat a huge amount of it to feel satisfied. It's like going to your favorite Mexican restaurant, but better, because this doesn't contain any industrial seed oils (highly processed oils like vegetable, corn, and soybean oils) or unnecessary sodium. Quinoa is one of my favorite vegetarian proteins because it contains all nine essential amino acids.

1. In a small bowl, whisk together the vinegar, lime zest, and lime juice.

2. In a large bowl, combine the quinoa, beans, bell pepper, scallions, and cilantro. Pour the dressing over and gently toss to combine. Taste and season with sea salt and black pepper, then serve.

what mike likes Instead of or in addition to the black beans, Mike might add about a pound of chopped cooked chicken breast or ground turkey to this bowl.

QUIRKY QUINOA

Quinoa looks and tastes like a grain, and we cook it like a grain, but it's actually a seed. It comes from the flowers of the *Chenopodium quinoa* plant, which belongs to the same family as spinach, chard, and beets, and yes, it's gluten-free.

Some important things to know about quinoa: Always rinse it well in a fine-mesh strainer under cold water for at least a full minute before cooking it. Quinoa naturally has a bitter, soapy-tasting coating on it, so your quinoa will taste better if you rinse this off before cooking. Also, I suggest cooking up a big batch of this versatile food in your slow cooker,

Instant Pot, or rice cooker and storing it in the fridge to have on hand at all times. You never know when you might want to add some to a recipe.

Quinoa comes in many colors—white, red, black, purple, orange, and more. You can buy tricolor quinoa, which is a mixture of the black, red, and white varieties. They all taste a little different. It might just replace rice as your favorite side dish! That being said, you can always replace quinoa with a whole grain, such as brown rice, barley, or bulgur, if you don't like it or don't have it handy. But hey, take a chance on quinoa. You won't regret it!

Cara's Super Salad

Prep time: 25 minutes

Total time: 25 minutes

Serves 1 as a main course
or 2 as a side dish (or if you
don't like giant salads the
way I do!)

2 cups mixed greens
Chopped cucumber, bell
pepper, and/or tomato
(however much you like)
1/2 cup chopped or
shredded cabbage
1/4 cup shredded carrot
1/4 avocado, diced
1/4 cup fresh or thawed
frozen corn kernels
1/4 cup diced strawberries
2 tablespoons chopped
walnuts (toast them if you
want them to have more
flavor, but don't worry
about it if you don't have
the time or inclination)
1 or 2 hard-boiled eggs,
sliced (optional)
1/2 to 1 recipe Lemon-Tahini
Dressing (recipe follows;
optional)
1 or 2 scallions, sliced, for
garnish

Forget ordinary green salads. I like to jazz up my salad with plenty of colorful, antioxidant-rich veggies full of essential micronutrients (vitamins and minerals). This adds not just color but texture and flavor to what might otherwise be a boring old bowl of lettuce. Added salad bonus: All that chewing is good exercise and can increase your metabolism! If salad is your main course, always add some carbs, fat, and protein from whole food sources. In this recipe, I've added corn and strawberries for carbs, avocados and dressing for fat, and walnuts for fat and some protein.

In a bowl, toss together the greens, vegetables, cabbage, and carrot. Top with the avocado, corn, strawberries, walnuts, and eggs (if using). This salad is fine plain, but if you like, drizzle it with the dressing; use half the dressing to serve one, or all of it for a richer salad or to serve two. Garnish with the scallions and serve.

what mike likes You could make this salad a side dish with grilled chicken breast or a grilled salmon fillet.

NUTRITION FACTS

(for the salad as a
main course, to serve 1)

290 calories
14.5 g fat
23 g carbs
9 g protein
15 g fiber
12 g sugar (from fruit)

Lemon-Tahini Dressing

Prep time: 3 minutes

Total time: 3 minutes, or
a few hours with optional
chilling time

Serves 2

3 tablespoons fresh lemon
juice
2 tablespoons tahini
1 garlic clove, minced
Sea salt and black pepper
Dash of cayenne pepper

NUTRITION FACTS

(per serving)

75 calories

6 g fat

4 g carbs

9 g protein

1 g fiber

1 g sugar

I always like to have leftover dressing, which I keep in a jar in the fridge. This recipe makes two servings, so you can use half on your Super Salad (page 146) and save the rest for your next salad.

Combine all the ingredients in a small bowl with 2 tablespoons water and whisk together until well combined. For best flavor, cover and refrigerate for a few hours to allow the flavors to meld. This dressing can be stored in the refrigerator for a few days.

cara says

TA-WHO-NI?

Tahini is the sesame seed's answer to peanut butter. It's just sesame butter, and it's delicious. You can find it pretty much anywhere these days, even at Walmart. It comes from Middle Eastern cuisine, and it's one of the main ingredients in hummus. In fact, if you can't find tahini or don't want to use it, or if you want a lower-fat option, you can always substitute the same amount of hummus for tahini in recipes.

Cara's California Power Bowl

Prep time: 20 minutes

Total time: 20 minutes

Serves 1

1 tablespoon avocado oil
1/2 red bell pepper, sliced
1/2 red onion, sliced
1/2 teaspoon sea salt
Dash of black pepper
1 cup spinach or spring mix
Juice of 1/2 juicy lemon (1 to 2 tablespoons)
1/2 cup cooked brown rice
1/4 cup cooked fresh or frozen corn
1/4 avocado, diced
1 tablespoon raw sunflower seeds

NUTRITION FACTS

(per serving)

438 calories

24 g fat

41 g carbs

9 g protein

9 g fiber

7 g sugar

To me, this bowl never gets old. It can satisfy any level of hunger. Sautéing the veggies makes them easily digestible—this can be helpful for people who have trouble digesting too many raw vegetables. Cooking also enhances the flavors and blends them together. This meal is sure to hold you over for at least 4 hours and may even feel like you're "cheating" the system, but trust me, you're providing your body with the fuel you need to check off every item on your daily to-do list. If you want something even more substantial with more protein, you could add some black beans, pinto beans, or baked tofu cubes.

1. In a small skillet, heat the avocado oil over medium heat. Add the bell pepper and onion and sauté for 3 to 4 minutes, until they are soft. Season with the salt and black pepper.

2. Put the spinach in a serving bowl and top with the lemon juice. Add the rice and corn and toss until everything is mixed. Top with the warm peppers and onions, then the avocado and sunflower seeds. Serve immediately.

what mike likes You could add some chopped cooked chicken breast or salmon to this bowl.



Cara's Cucumber Salad: Spiralized!

Prep time: 10 minutes

Total time: 10 minutes

Serves 1

2 medium cucumbers (10 to 12 ounces each) or an equivalent amount of smaller or larger cucumbers, spiralized or sliced into long noodles with a vegetable peeler
1 cup cherry or grape tomatoes, halved
1 medium shallot, thinly sliced
¼ cup crumbled feta cheese or goat cheese (for a vegan option, you can substitute vegan feta, or ¼ cup nutritional yeast—find this savory, cheesy flavoring in the health food aisle)
¼ cup sliced pitted kalamata olives
⅓ cup extra-virgin olive oil
Juice of ½ lemon
¼ cup red wine vinegar
2 teaspoons chopped fresh oregano leaves
1 garlic clove, minced
½ teaspoon sea salt
Black pepper

Have you ever noticed that eating the same foods over and over again gets old? Try them in a different shape, and you may get interested again. It's the same principle that applies when we give toddlers something new to keep their attention. Spiralizing any vegetable gives it a different texture and makes it even more versatile—try spiralizing zucchini, carrots, butternut squash, even broccoli stems. In this salad, it gives cucumbers a whole new lease on life and gives you the impression that you're eating noodles. However, unlike carb-heavy pasta that can make you crash, the energy you get from eating spiralized cucumbers will go on and on. Throw in some garlic for its powerful immune-boosting properties and the savory suggestion of an Italian dinner.

1. In a medium bowl, combine the cucumber “noodles,” tomatoes, shallot, cheese, and olives.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together the olive oil, lemon juice, vinegar, oregano, garlic, salt, and pepper to taste until fully combined. (Or just combine it all in a jar, cover, and shake.)
3. Drizzle the dressing over the salad and toss to coat everything. Get out your fork and twirl those “noodles”!

NUTRITION FACTS

(per serving)

354 calories

30 g fat

14 g carbs

7 g protein

4 g fiber

7 g sugar

CARA'S FAVE SNACKS

Green Smoothie

Prep time: 10 minutes

Total time: 10 minutes

Serves 1

Big handful of any dark leafy greens

1 green apple, cored and coarsely chopped

1/2 frozen banana

1 celery stalk, coarsely chopped

Small handful of fresh parsley leaves

Juice of 1 lime

2 tablespoons hulled hemp seeds

1 teaspoon matcha green tea powder (optional)

6 to 8 ounces unsweetened coconut milk or nut milk

1/2 to 1 cup ice, if desired

Green smoothies look healthy, and they're packed with nutrients, but they taste like dessert. This is a power snack that only takes a few minutes to prepare but has huge nutritional benefits. Some hard-core health foodies like their smoothies made with vegetables only, but others (especially those new to the green smoothie concept) can't quite stomach that intense flavor. This smoothie has plenty of greens, but enough sweetness that they go down easy. If you can handle a little caffeine, add some matcha for nutritional bonus points.

Combine the greens, apple, banana, celery, parsley, lime juice, hemp seeds, and matcha (if using) in a blender. Pour the milk over the top and add ice if you want it frostier. Blend until everything is smooth and well combined. Pour into a glass. Sip slowly and savor the goodness.

NUTRITION FACTS

(per serving)

285 calories

11.5 g fat

34 g carbs

9 g protein

9 g fiber

24 g sugar (from fruit)

GREEN TEA ON STEROIDS

Well, not really—matcha doesn't contain steroids, but it does have a stronger taste than regular green tea. Matcha is a high-quality green tea that is ground into a powder and whisked into hot water (as opposed to regular green tea, which is steeped in hot water). Originating in China, where it was called "beaten tea," matcha became popular centuries ago in Japan as a ceremonial drink, and its preparation is the basis for the Japanese tea ceremony, or "The Way of the

Tea." Matcha is also a potent source of antioxidants. Because of its strong taste, I like to add it to smoothies rather than drinking it straight. The combination of other flavors from the veggies and fruits in a smoothie can make the matcha go down a bit easier. You might like the taste, but start small and work your way up. They say a cup of matcha has more than triple the antioxidants of a cup of regular green tea!

PB&B Rice Cakes

Prep time: 5 minutes

Total time: 5 minutes

Serves 1

2 tablespoons natural
almond butter, no-sugar-
added
2 brown rice cakes
Dash of ground cinnamon
(optional)
2 teaspoons hulled hemp
seeds
1/2 cup fresh blueberries

NUTRITION FACTS

(per serving)

340 calories

21 g fat

26 g carbs

11 g protein

6 g fiber

**9 g sugar (from
fruit)**

You can put a lot of different things on a rice cake, making this crunchy, low-cal snack the perfect palette for whatever you are craving. You can make a rice cake snack in 5 minutes and finish it in under a minute.

This version combines protein, carbs, and fat for plenty of staying power—it's the perfect PB&B (that's peanut butter and blueberries). When you need something super quick and you want finger food, reach for the rice cakes, and feel free to change up the toppings depending on what you have stocked in the refrigerator.

Spread the almond butter over the rice cakes. Sprinkle with the cinnamon, if you like, and divide the hemp seeds and blueberries evenly between them. Crunch away!

cara says

HEMP SEEDS: 100% LEGAL!

Rest assured, not only are hemp seeds (sometimes called hemp hearts) perfectly legal and completely without any psychotropic effect, but they are mild-tasting and one of the rare plant foods that contains complete protein in one package. They also have the perfect ratio of omega-3, -6, and -9 fats: all of the nine essential amino acids. I often add them to snacks, smoothie bowls, smoothies, salads, and oatmeal for a protein boost.

Chocolate Chip Energy Bites

Prep time: 30 minutes

Total time: 1 hour

Makes 18 bites

¾ cup natural creamy
peanut butter
3 tablespoons raw honey
1½ cups rolled oats
½ cup mini dark chocolate
chips
¼ teaspoon sea salt

NUTRITION FACTS

(per 3 pieces)

412 calories

27 g fat

30 g carbs

14 g protein

7 g fiber

15 g sugar

Like a cookie with less sugar and more nutrients, energy bites won't send your blood sugar on a roller-coaster ride. And I'll give you a secret tip: These taste just as good coming from the freezer as they taste freshly made. This is a basic recipe, but it's very versatile and adaptable, so feel free to add superfood ingredients like chia seeds, hemp seeds, ground flax, or maca powder. Another bonus: These little guys will crush even the strongest hormone-based sugar cravings.

1. In a small saucepan, heat the peanut butter over low heat, stirring occasionally, until it gets runny. Remove from the heat and stir in the honey. Set aside.
2. Toss the oats and chocolate chips together in a large bowl. Drizzle the peanut butter-honey mixture over the top. Sprinkle with the salt, then mix everything together. Cover and refrigerate for about 30 minutes to allow the mixture to firm up. Remove from the fridge and form the mixture into eighteen 1-inch balls, or line a baking sheet with parchment paper, press the mixture into a rectangle, and cut it into 18 squares. Store the bites in a large resealable bag or bowl in the fridge for up to a week or freezer for up to a month.



Pumpkin Spice Granola

Prep time: 10 minutes

Total time: 30 to 35 minutes

Serves 12 (1/3 cup per serving)

1 cup rolled oats
1 cup raw pecan halves or pieces
1 cup unsalted raw sunflower seeds
1/2 cup raw almonds
1/4 cup unsweetened dried berries
1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
1/2 (15-ounce) can pumpkin puree
1 tablespoon raw honey

NUTRITION FACTS

(per serving)

314 calories
22 g fat
17.5 g carbs
8 g protein
6.5 g fiber
8 g sugar

Welcome to heaven on Earth. This grab-and-go option does take a little more time to make than grabbing a rice cake, but it's so worth it. The taste is divine, and the satisfaction level is high. Even though it's pumpkin spice flavor, it never goes out of season! And you actually toast in the spiced pumpkin puree to make sure you're getting at least one fruit and one vegetable per serving. Store this in a jar in the refrigerator—although I bet it won't last long. This can be a snack (or even breakfast), or a topping on overnight oats, a smoothie bowl, or chia seed pudding. I predict the whole family will love this.

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat.
2. In a large bowl, combine the oats, pecans, sunflower seeds, almonds, dried berries, and pumpkin pie spice and toss thoroughly with your hands.
3. In a separate large bowl, whisk together the pumpkin puree and honey. Pour in the dry ingredients and mix with your hands or a spatula until the pumpkin puree is coating everything.
4. Spread the mixture out on the prepared baking sheet. Bake for 10 minutes. Stir the granola, rotate the pan 180 degrees, and bake for 10 to 15 minutes more, until the granola is mostly dry.
5. Let cool, then enjoy immediately or transfer to airtight containers and store in the fridge for up to a week or the freezer for up to a month.

Cara's Cowboy Caviar

Prep time: 20 minutes

Total time: 20 minutes

Serves 8

- 1 (15-ounce) can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 (15-ounce) can black-eyed peas, drained and rinsed
- 2 different colored bell peppers, chopped
- 3 Roma (plum) tomatoes, diced
- 1 cup thawed frozen sweet corn
- 1/2 small red onion, diced
- 1/4 cup coarsely chopped fresh cilantro
- 1/4 cup avocado oil
- 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
- Juice of 1 juicy lime (about 3 tablespoons)
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon sea salt
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon cracked black pepper
- Corn chips or plantain chips, for serving

If this doesn't have you salivating, I don't know what will! I'm no cowboy, but this is by far my favorite dip to eat on a chip or even straight from a spoon. Like the other snacks in this book, this one is rich in fiber and plant-based protein, and the pop of colors makes it even more appealing (and healthy). Eat this dip with your favorite organic corn or plantain chips. You can also throw it on top of a salad or mix it into your tofu scramble or scrambled eggs.

Combine all the ingredients except the chips in a large serving bowl and mix gently until well combined. Serve with corn or plantain chips for dipping.

NUTRITION FACTS

(per serving)

175 calories

6 g fat

18 g carbs

7 g protein

7.5 g fiber

7 g sugar

DINNER RECIPES

Cara's Tex-Mex Quinoa Burgers

Prep time: 35 minutes

Total time: 2 hours 10 minutes

Makes 8 burgers

Cooking spray

1/3 cup rolled oats

1 cup baked sweet potato
chunks

1 (15-ounce) can black beans,
drained, rinsed, and
patted mostly dry

1/2 cup fresh or thawed
frozen sweet corn
(drained, if thawed)

1/2 cup finely chopped red
onion

1/2 cup cooked quinoa

1 (4-ounce) can green chiles,
drained

2 tablespoons natural
almond butter, no-sugar-
added

1 1/2 tablespoons taco
seasoning (homemade
or low-sodium store-
bought with no additives,
preservatives, or MSG)

Sea salt and black pepper

Quinoa (see page 145) is one of my go-to foods, and I especially like it for veggie burgers. Store-bought and restaurant veggie burgers can be questionable, because who knows what the heck is in them? Even with a label to read, you may not recognize some of those ingredients. That's why homemade veggie burgers are where it's at. With just the right ingredients, you can hide the "super-est" of superfoods. You won't even taste them because you'll be too distracted by the lusciousness of these Tex-Mex-style burgers. The whole family will enjoy them, and they have plenty of protein to keep your body functioning properly and burning fat. Make plenty of extra—the leftovers are awesome on your lunchtime salad.

Note: If making sweet potato chunks from scratch, you'll need 1 medium sweet potato to get a cup after baking, and you may have some left over.

Helpful hint: It's easy to make a batch of quinoa in your Instant Pot or slow cooker and store it in the fridge to have on hand for recipes like this. Don't forget to rinse it in a fine-mesh sieve before cooking!

1. Put the oats in a food processor and pulse them into oat flour. Add the sweet potatoes and half the black beans to the food processor and pulse just enough to form a coarse, chunky mixture.

2 eggs, whisked, or
2 tablespoons ground flax
mixed with 2 tablespoons
water (for a vegan
version)

Toasted whole-grain
hamburger buns or pita
pockets, for serving

Spinach, for serving

Toppings: bean sprouts,
sliced tomato, sliced
avocado, red onion slices,
mustard, ketchup, cheese
slices, or your favorite
burger toppings

NUTRITION FACTS

(per serving)

124 calories

4 g fat

16 g carbs

5 g protein

3 g fiber

2 g sugar

2. Transfer the mixture to a large bowl, add the remaining beans, the corn, onion, quinoa, chiles, almond butter, and taco seasoning, and stir it all up or mix it with your hands. Taste and season with salt and pepper. Add the eggs (or flax mixture) and work them in until everything is evenly mixed. Cover the dough and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to a few days.

3. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper and spray the parchment with cooking spray.

4. Spray a ⅓-cup measuring cup with cooking spray and scoop 8 roughly equal portions of the dough onto the prepared baking sheet. Coat your hands with oil and form the dough into patties. Bake for 20 minutes, then flip the burgers so they cook evenly and bake for 15 minutes more, or until they're just firm and easy to handle. If you're using cheese, add a slice to each burger during the last 5 minutes of cooking.

5. To serve, put a toasted bun or pita pocket on each plate. Put spinach on the bottom, top it with the burger, then add whatever toppings you want. Add the top bun and enjoy!

Cara's Slow Cooker Butternut Squash Chili

Prep time: 35 minutes

Total time: 35 minutes plus
4 to 8 hours

Serves 8

- 1 (28-ounce) can tomato sauce
- 1 (28-ounce) can diced tomatoes
- 1 small butternut squash, peeled, seeded, and chopped
- 1 Vidalia or other sweet onion, diced
- 1 green bell pepper, diced
- 1 cup low-sodium vegetable broth
- 1 jalapeño, seeded, membrane scraped out with a spoon, and finely diced
- 3 garlic cloves, sliced
- 2 tablespoons chili powder
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- Sea salt and black pepper
- 1 (15-ounce) can light red kidney beans, drained and rinsed

Butternut squash adds a sweet-savory, nutrient-rich special something to this chili. If you have extra time on your hands, peel and cube the butternut squash, roast it, then blend it to lend this chili a creamy texture—nice, although not required. Either way, this chili has added depth because of the squash. If you find yourself with leftovers, another fun idea is to stuff some roasted bell peppers with this chili for a whole different dinner. Don't be afraid to include the cinnamon, which is subtle but adds a Mediterranean flair, and also helps your metabolism burn faster (win-win).

In a slow cooker, combine the tomato sauce, diced tomatoes, squash, onion, bell pepper, broth, jalapeño, garlic, chili powder, cumin, and cinnamon. Season with a dash each of salt and black pepper. Cover and cook on Low for 7 to 8 hours or on High for 4 to 5 hours. Fifteen to 30 minutes before serving, stir in the beans. Taste and season with salt and black pepper. When the chili is done and you're ready for dinner, scoop it into bowls and garnish with your favorite chili toppings, like crushed baked tortilla chips, avocado cubes, plain yogurt, salsa, etc.

1 (15-ounce) can black beans,
drained and rinsed
1 (15-ounce) can pinto beans,
drained and rinsed
Your favorite chili toppings

what mike likes This recipe would work with the addition of 1 to 2 pounds lean ground bison or turkey. Cook the meat in a skillet before adding it to the slow cooker with the vegetables and seasonings.

NUTRITION FACTS

(per serving)

201 calories

1 g fat

29 g carbs

10 g protein

12 g fiber

9 g sugar



Creamy Cashew Alfredo

Prep time: 30 minutes

Cook time: 30 minutes plus
time to cook the pasta

Serves 4

2 cups raw cashews
1¼ cups water or low-
sodium vegetable broth
¼ cup coconut milk, full- or
low-fat
¼ cup nutritional yeast
2 teaspoons minced garlic
¼ cup fresh lemon juice
1 teaspoon dried thyme
1 teaspoon paprika
Sea salt and black pepper
12 ounces legume pasta or
whole wheat pasta (or
go light and use 4 cups
of zoodles, which are
zucchini cut into long
noodle shapes with a
spiralizer or vegetable
peeler)

Pasta Alfredo doesn't have to be full of butter and cream. This version uses cashew cream and coconut milk to make a luscious, creamy, savory sauce. I would round this out with some steamed broccoli or cauliflower (or a mixture) on the side. This makes a lot of sauce, so you might have leftovers. If you do, store them in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

Note: Toasting nuts and seeds is often optional, but it really enhances the flavor in this recipe.

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. Spread the cashews over a baking sheet and toast them in the oven for 10 minutes, or until they turn golden. Remove from the oven and let cool.
3. In a food processor or blender, combine the cashews, broth, coconut milk, nutritional yeast, garlic, lemon juice, thyme, and paprika. Blend until smooth and creamy, 3 to 4 minutes. If you'd like a creamier consistency, you can add more broth or water, a tablespoon or two at a time, and blend again. Pour the mixture into a

NUTRITION FACTS*(per serving)***207 calories****15 g fat****13 g carbs****8 g protein****2 g fiber****3.5 g sugar**

large saucepan and heat it over low heat, stirring occasionally, until warmed through, about 10 minutes. Do not let it boil. Taste and season with salt and pepper.

4. Meanwhile, cook the pasta according to the package directions (if you use zoodles, you don't need to cook them), then add the pasta to the sauce. Stir to coat the pasta, then serve immediately.

what mike likes Make this a chicken Alfredo with the addition of 1 pound sliced cooked chicken breast.

Lentil Sloppy Joe Sliders

Prep time: 35 minutes

Total time: 1 hour

Serves 6 (2 sliders per serving)

4 or 5 large sweet potatoes,
peeled and sliced into 12
1-inch-thick rounds
1 tablespoon coconut oil,
melted
Sea salt and black pepper
for seasoning
2 tablespoons avocado oil
1/2 onion, diced
2 garlic cloves, minced
3 cups cooked lentils,
drained
1 (6-ounce) can tomato paste
1 (4-ounce) can diced green
chiles
2 tablespoons
Worcestershire sauce
2 teaspoons paprika
1 teaspoon ground cumin

A recent food trend is to replace bread and buns with sliced sweet potatoes. Here is my version of lentil sloppy joe sliders, using toasty sweet potato rounds as the buns. Serve these open-faced. Of course, you could also serve these sloppy joes on regular whole-grain slider buns instead. I like serving these sliders with a salad on the side.

Note that you will have a lot of leftover sweet potato after making this recipe. You can typically get 12 decent-sized rounds out of the center of about 4 large sweet potatoes, which leaves you with a lot of scraps. Luckily, you can make these into mashed sweet potatoes or use them in any other recipe. Just sprinkle the leftovers with a little lemon juice and store them in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to a day or two.

Note: If cooking lentils from scratch, use 1 cup dried lentils and cook according to package instructions.

1. Preheat the oven to 450°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Space the sweet potato rounds evenly on the prepared baking sheet, then brush them with the melted coconut oil and season with salt. Bake for 12 minutes, then flip and bake until fork-tender, 10 to 15 minutes more. Set aside at room temperature. If you can, rewarm them in the oven for a few minutes just before serving.

NUTRITION FACTS*(per serving)***279 calories****7.5 g fat****34 g carbs****10 g protein****10 g fiber****9.5 g sugar**

3. While the sweet potatoes are roasting, in a large skillet, heat the avocado oil over medium heat until it starts to shimmer, then add the onion and garlic and cook for 4 to 5 minutes, stirring often, until onion is tender and lightly browned.

4. Stir in the lentils, tomato paste, chiles, Worcestershire, paprika, and cumin. Reduce the heat to medium-low and cook until completely warmed through, about 5 minutes more. Taste and season with salt and pepper.

5. Put two sweet potato rounds on each plate and spoon $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the lentil mixture (per serving) over them.

DESSERT RECIPES

Cara's Dark Chocolate Nicecream

Prep time: 10 minutes

Total time: 10 minutes,
and up to 8 to 12 hours

Serves: 2

2 frozen bananas

1/4 cup coconut cream (or
just scoop the solid part
off the top of a can of
coconut milk)

2 tablespoons cacao powder

1 tablespoon maple syrup

1 teaspoon vanilla

NUTRITION FACTS

(per serving)

275 calories

7.5 g fat

42 g carbs

5 g protein

10 g fiber

27 g sugar

Hello, midsummer-night's dream! If you have a high-powered blender and some time to chill, then step away from the hot fudge sundae and enjoy this delicious and light treat instead. If you want some extra protein, feel free to add a scoop of pea-based protein powder, or sprinkle your Nicecream with hemp seeds.

Add all the ingredients to the bowl of a food processor or high-power blender. Blend on high until smooth and creamy, tamping down if it's too thick. Eat immediately for a softer texture, or put the mixture in an airtight container and freeze for 30 to 60 minutes, stirring every 10 to 15 minutes. The longer you freeze it, the firmer it will be.

Strawberry Shortcake

Prep time: 1 hour

Total time: 1 hour 35 minutes

Serves 10

Cooking spray
2½ cups whole wheat
pastry flour
¼ cup plus 1 tablespoon
coconut sugar or palm
sugar
1 tablespoon baking powder
½ teaspoon baking soda
¼ teaspoon sea salt
6 tablespoons butter, Earth
Balance buttery spread,
or coconut oil, cut into
small pieces and chilled,
plus 1 tablespoon melted
1¼ cups buttermilk
1 tablespoon lemon zest
4 cups sliced fresh
strawberries
1 tablespoon fresh lemon
juice
Whipped cream or whipped
coconut cream, for
serving (optional)

This recipe may be more involved than something that Carrie would typically want to make, but I promise you, it really isn't all that complicated! In early summer, when strawberries are at their peak, you can't beat this for a special seasonal dessert. It's not for every day, but it sure is pretty, it tastes great, and it's much healthier than standard strawberry shortcake. You may notice it doesn't contain much sweetener—the strawberries get to take most of the credit for this dessert's natural sweetness.

Note: You can substitute coconut or almond flour for the pastry flour, although 1 teaspoon xanthan gum can help hold this together if you do—look for it in the baking section of your health food store or your grocery store's gluten-free cooking aisle.

To make buttermilk, stir together 1¼ cups milk (or plant milk), and 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice or distilled white vinegar, and let it sit for 10 minutes or so until thickened.

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F. Coat a 9-inch round cake pan or baking sheet with cooking spray.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together 2 cups of the flour, ¼ cup of the sugar, the baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Cut in the chilled butter with a pastry blender or two knives until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs.

continues



NUTRITION FACTS*(per serving)***255 calories****13 g fat****30 g carbs****5 g protein****3 g fiber****15 g sugar**

3. In a small bowl, combine the buttermilk and lemon zest. Add the buttermilk mixture to the flour mixture and toss gently with a fork to combine. (The dough should be wet and about the texture of cottage cheese.)

4. Sprinkle the remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ cup flour in a shallow dish. Scoop 10 equal portions of the dough (about 3 tablespoons or a scant $\frac{1}{4}$ cup each) into the dish. Gently shape each portion into a round, tossing it in the flour to help shape it.

5. Arrange the rounds of dough in the prepared pan or on the prepared baking sheet (if using a baking sheet, place them about 2 inches apart). Brush the dough with the melted butter and sprinkle evenly with the remaining 1 tablespoon sugar. Bake for 22 minutes, or until the shortcakes are lightly browned. Let cool in the pan on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Use a paring knife to cut the shortcakes apart (if you baked them in a cake pan) and remove them from the pan one at a time, transferring them to the wire rack to cool. They can still be slightly warm when you serve them.

6. In a medium bowl, toss the strawberries with the lemon juice. Let stand for 15 minutes.

7. Split each shortcake in half and put it on a small plate; spoon about $\frac{1}{3}$ cup of the strawberries over each cake. If desired, serve topped with whipped cream or whipped coconut cream (sweetened or not, according to your preference).

Almond Butter Brownies

Prep time: 25 minutes

Total time: 50 minutes

Serves 12

Cooking spray
2 large eggs
1/3 cup real maple syrup
2 tablespoons coconut sugar
2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
1 cup creamy natural almond butter, no-sugar-added
6 tablespoons unsweetened raw cacao powder or cocoa powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/8 teaspoon sea salt
1/3 cup dark chocolate chips or chocolate chunks (or cacao nibs; see page 143)

NUTRITION FACTS

(per serving)

227 calories

15 g fat

16 g carbs

6 g protein

3 g fiber

15 g sugar

I would take these brownies over birthday cake any day. There's no flour necessary, which means we're squeezing in more nutritional value. The nut butter in this recipe is not only loaded with all three macronutrients, but contains many minerals, vitamins, and antioxidants. Some nuts are high in omega-3 fat, which helps to reduce your risk of heart disease, among other health risks. Coconut sugar is an alternative to regular sugar and contains many more nutrients than white sugar. However, even though it's a better choice, it's still best used in moderation. Note that you should bake these until they're just set in the middle when you gently shake the pan. If you wait until a toothpick inserted into the middle comes out clean, they can be too dry.

1. Preheat the oven to 325°F. Line an 8-inch square baking dish with parchment paper and spray the parchment with cooking spray.
2. In a large bowl, using a handheld mixer, combine the eggs, maple syrup, sugar, and vanilla and beat on high speed for 3 minutes. Beat in the almond butter until well combined and smooth. Sift in the cacao powder. Add the baking soda and salt and stir to combine. Fold in the chocolate chips. The batter will be very thick.
3. Spread the brownie mixture evenly into the prepared pan. Bake for 25 minutes, or until the center is just set.
4. Let cool completely in the pan on a wire rack before cutting into 12 squares.

Dark Chocolate Sea Salt Freezer Fudge

Prep time: 5 minutes

Total time: 2 hours or overnight

Serves 10

1 cup natural almond butter,
no-sugar-added
1/3 cup coconut oil
3 tablespoons raw honey
1 teaspoon pure vanilla
extract
1/2 cup unsweetened raw
cacao powder or cocoa
powder
1/4 teaspoon coarsely
ground pink Himalayan
salt, for dusting

NUTRITION FACTS

(per serving)

209 calories

13 g fat

16 g carbs

6 g protein

4 g fiber

12.5 g sugar

Sometimes you need just a bite of something chocolatey, and sometimes you need a whole batch! You're better off going for something that uses cacao over cocoa powder (see the box on page 143) and that is a lot lower in sugar—you won't even miss sugar in this seemingly decadent fudge.

Note: Try different gourmet flavor varieties of sea salt for a fun twist.

1. Line a small loaf pan with parchment paper or waxed paper, leaving a few inches overhanging all four sides.
2. Combine the almond butter, coconut oil, honey, and vanilla in a microwave-safe bowl. Microwave for about 30 seconds to warm the mixture, then stir until smooth. Sift in the cacao powder and whisk to incorporate.
3. Pour the mixture into the prepared pan and spread it out evenly with a spatula. Dust it with the salt. Freeze it for at least 2 hours, or until it is firm and set.
4. Use the overhanging parchment to carefully lift the block of fudge out of the pan. Place it on a cutting board and cut it into 1-inch squares (there should be 10 to 12 squares). Serve immediately, or within 15 to 20 minutes. Store any remaining fudge in an airtight container in the freezer . . . for chocolate emergencies! It should keep for at least two months.

Harvest Apple Crisp

Prep time: 25 minutes

Total time: 1 hour 10 minutes

Serves 6

FOR THE FILLING:

- 1 teaspoon coconut oil, for greasing the pan
- 3 tart medium apples, cored and chopped
- 3 tablespoons real maple syrup
- 3 tablespoons unsweetened almond milk
- 2 tablespoons almond flour
- 1½ teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
- ½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 scoop protein powder (optional, vanilla or plain, preferably unsweetened)

FOR THE TOPPING:

- ¾ cup chopped raw pecans or walnuts
- ½ cup unsweetened coconut flakes
- ¼ cup almond flour
- ¼ teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
- 2 tablespoons real maple syrup

Sugar? Who needs sugar? Reducing or removing sugar in a fruit dessert is fine because fruit is God's candy! Apples are a delicious, guilt-free way to enjoy the sweeter things in life, and they make this seasonal dessert perfect. I recommend Braeburn apples for this recipe, but if you can't find them, use any tart apple, like Granny Smith. Almond flour is a great alternative to regular white flour, as it will firm up and bind your baked goods without adding unnecessary empty carbohydrate calories. Add walnuts and coconut flakes for healthy fat, and I'd say this dessert is balanced enough to call a meal! (Why not have it for breakfast?) Serve this at a party with organic ice cream or vegan ice cream for a real treat!

1. Make the filling: Preheat the oven to 375°F. Grease an 8-inch square baking pan or glass pie dish with the coconut oil.
2. In a large bowl, combine the apples, maple syrup, almond milk, almond flour, pumpkin pie spice, vanilla, and protein powder (if using) and stir until the apples are fully coated. Pour the filling into the prepared pan. Smooth it into an even layer.
3. Make the topping: In a medium bowl, combine the pecans, coconut flakes, almond flour, and pumpkin pie spice and stir to combine. Gently fold in the maple syrup until crumbles form.

NUTRITION FACTS*(per serving)***203 calories****13.5 g fat****18.5 g carbs****2.5 g protein****3 g fiber****16 g sugar**

4. Spoon the topping evenly over the apples, making sure to keep the crumbles intact. Cover tightly with aluminum foil and bake for 30 minutes. Uncover and bake for 10 to 15 minutes more, until the top is golden brown. Let cool for at least 15 minutes before enjoying.

appendix 1

MY JOURNAL ACCOUNTABILITY TEMPLATE FOR TRACKING

This is the general setup I use for tracking my food and exercise in my journal every night. You can put this into your own journal or tweak it to work for your own needs.

As you can see, every day I record my steps and calories burned from both the apps I use. I write down everything I ate and the calories and macronutrients as calculated by the MyFitnessPal app. I write down which Fit52 exercises I did for each set and each suit, and any other exercise I did that day, such as walking, running, a different workout (like the leg workout or some other workout my trainer might give me while I'm on the road), or any "extracurricular fitness" I did that day, along with how much time I spent on Fit52 exercises and how much total exercise time I got that day.

Finally, that last section, Thoughts/Notes/Feelings, is for anything I want to remember about that day, like if I was on the road or at home, if I was feeling good or not so great, or anything unusual happening in my life that day that could account for any irregularities in my eating or exercise.

This may or may not work for you, so make yours any version you want in your journal. Or make copies of this template to use on your own every day. You can tuck them into your journal or three-hole-punch them and put them in a binder. Whatever works for you.

DATE:					
Steps:		Fitbit calories burned:		MyFitnessPal calories burned:	
FOOD I ATE TODAY:					
Breakfast:	Snack:	Lunch:	Snack:	Dinner:	Evening:
NUTRITION:					
Calories:	Fat:	Carbs:	Protein:	Fiber:	Sugar:
Water (ounces):					
FIT52 WORKOUT					
SET #1 Diamonds: Hearts: Clubs: Spades:					
SET #2 Diamonds: Hearts: Clubs: Spades:					
Fit52 time (minutes):					
Other exercise:					
Total time all exercise (minutes):					
Thoughts/Notes/Feelings:					

appendix 2

MODIFICATIONS FOR THE FIT52 WORKOUT

MODIFY UP OR MODIFY DOWN

The exercises in the Fit52 Workout are designed for those who have a moderate fitness level, but that does not cover everybody. If you find any of the exercises to be too difficult, you can always decrease the weight or reps, or look here for a “Modify Down” version. If you find any of the exercises too easy, you can always increase the weight or reps, or look here for a “Modify Up” version. These are all simple modifications that can help you customize the Fit52 Workout to you and your current fitness level.

All comments below on these modifications come from my trainer Eve Overland, who has customized these levels just for you and what you need to do for yourself right now. Remember to meet yourself where you are—but also challenge yourself to keep progressing!

DAY #1

SET #1:



PUSH-UPS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Do the push-ups from your knees, or on an incline (hands on bench).
- › **MODIFY UP:** Try more advanced push-up variations, such as decline, plyometric, alligator, etc.



DOUBLE SUITCASE SQUATS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Do a bodyweight squat with no weight, or a Box Squat, sitting down on the bench and standing up.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Use the heaviest weight that will still allow you to maintain good form.



REVERSE CRUNCHES WITH LEG DROP

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Shorten the lever by making less distance between you and the “weight” (your legs), reducing the resistance. Do this by bending your knees at 90 degrees while lifting and lowering them. You can also drop one leg at a time.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Keep your legs straight. Work on control and try not to use momentum. Don’t let your feet touch the ground on the leg drop. The lower you go, the more difficult this is.



STAR JUMPS OR STAR JACKS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Do Squat Jumps (omit the “star” step) or do Jumping Jacks.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Use a mini band around your ankles.

SET #2:



TRICEPS BENCH DIPS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Keep your knees at 90 degrees.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Straighten your legs or perform an Elevated Triceps Dip between two benches of the same height, with your hands on one bench and your feet on the other. Be mindful of positioning. Make sure that the exercise focuses on your triceps and doesn't put an inappropriate load on your shoulders.



STEP UPS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Do a Step Up to a box with a lower height.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Increase the load with dumbbells, kettlebells, or a barbell.



PLANK AROUND-THE-WORLDS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Use a bent-knee plank position (instead of keeping your legs straight), or do Bird Dog: This is where you get on your hands and knees into a tabletop position (like you're getting ready to crawl). You lift up your right arm and left leg at the same time, return to tabletop, then lift your left arm and right leg at the same time, keeping your hips and shoulders square and your core engaged.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Use a mini band around your ankles or over your knees.



JUMP LUNGES

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Fast Scissor Feet (front and back), or Alternating Step-Ups (as fast as possible).
- › **MODIFY UP:** Add weight with a medicine ball, sandbag, or even kettlebell or dumbbells. But when adding load to exercises where you are jumping (plyometric exercises) like this one, be mindful of choosing an appropriate weight.

DAY #2

SET #1:



LAT PULL-DOWNS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Use a lighter resistance band.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Use a heavier resistance band, or double up and use two bands. A pull-up would also be a great variation here.



ALTERNATING CURTSY LUNGES

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Assist yourself with balance using a chair or other sturdy object, and only go down as far as your mobility and flexibility will allow. Continue working on strength, stability, and mobility so you can perfect your form and achieve a greater range of motion.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Add resistance with dumbbells, a barbell, a kettlebell, or a medicine ball.



SUPER PLANKS OR PLANK UP-DOWNS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Perform the exercise on your knees (keeping a straight spine).
- › **MODIFY UP:** Focus on bracing your entire core, avoid shifting your hips from side to side. You want zero rocking and rolling. Place your hand exactly where your elbow was. You will feel the difference. If you really want to get crazy, you could add resistance with a weighted vest, or you could “plyo pop-up” from your forearms to your hands in one explosive movement. This takes serious skill . . . but hey, it’s a great party trick.



SKATERS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Take out the jump. Take large lateral steps from side to side. Because this is the cardio section, the goal is to keep the pace moving.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Go for length and height. Keep the back foot elevated.

SET #2:



BICEPS CURLS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Alternate arms, doing one curl at a time.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Go as heavy as possible with strict and deliberate form. No swinging and no momentum.



BANDED SQUAT TAP-OUTS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Omit the band.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Use a heavier band or double up and use two bands.



SIT-UPS WITH CROSS PUNCHES

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Omit the dumbbells. Anchor your feet underneath the couch or another set of dumbbells.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Increase the weight, but not too much. I rarely give clients heavier than 10-pound dumbbells for this exercise, or for any punching or shadowboxing, for that matter. If you go too heavy, it decreases the range of motion in the arms, and form goes out the window. I find that the cross punches just become little jabs. This exercise's focus is on the core, so add some resistance with the dumbbells, but not so much that it just becomes a struggle for the arms. More is not more in this case, and not worth injury.

LOG HOPS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Start in plank position and tap one leg out to the side. Return to center, then tap the other leg out to the side.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Place your hands forward on the bench, so you must hop over the bench and not behind it. Try not to double bounce.

DAY #3

SET #1:

DIVEBOMBERS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Up Dog to Down Dog (as in the warm-up).
- › **MODIFY UP:** Go back the way you came, rather than swooping down and then immediately pushing your hips back up. When you look up with your chest up, bend your elbows and go backward through the same motions in reverse order.

HAMSTRING ROLL-OUTS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Lie on your back, bend your knees, and place your feet flat on the ground, hip-width apart (like you are setting up to do a basic crunch). Drive through your heels and lift your hips up off the ground. Squeeze your glutes and hamstrings at the top, then return to the starting position. To make it a little more challenging, try Glute Bridges with your feet on the ball: Set up the same as for Hamstring Roll-Outs, with your back on the floor, feet on the ball, and knees bent at 90 degrees. Instead of rolling out, just lift and lower your hips.

- › **MODIFY UP:** Do one leg at a time on the stability ball, right then left.



BICYCLES

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Turn this into Dead Bug exercise by taking out the twist. Lie flat on the floor with your arms by your sides, or lift them straight up to the ceiling. Lift your legs and bend your knees to 90 degrees. Your knees should be right over your hips and your lower back should stay connected to the floor. Lower one leg at a time, without touching the floor. Return to the starting position and repeat with the other leg.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Do this with straight legs.



UP AND OVERS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Slow down the movement and perform lateral step-ups.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Jump high at the top and get some air. Or add a (lighter) set of dumbbells.

SET #2:



CHEST FLYS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Use a lighter band.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Use a heavier band, or double up on the bands, but don't go so heavy that your form breaks down and the motion is recruited from the shoulders and not the chest. This could result in injury.



ROMANIAN DEADLIFTS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Body Weight Good Mornings. This is similar to a Romanian Deadlift, only you place your hands behind your head with your elbows wide and “take a bow,” then return to standing.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Use a heavier weight (for advanced), or do Single-Leg Deadlifts, right and left.



MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Do these slowly and with control, or on an incline with your hands on the bench.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Do Decline Mountain Climbers, with your feet on a bench or up a wall.



REVERSE LUNGES WITH HOP

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Omit the hop and just perform reverse lunges as quickly as you can while keeping good form.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Add weight with dumbbells, a medicine ball, or a kettlebell. I would recommend not going too heavy if using dumbbells or a kettlebell.

DAY #4

SET #1:



SHOULDER PRESSES

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Press up one weight at a time, alternating arms, or use lighter dumbbells or bands.

- › **MODIFY UP:** Go as heavy as possible with good form. If you perform this seated, you can't assist yourself with your legs or do a "push press," so I would argue that this variation is harder.



SUMO SQUATS WITH UPRIGHT ROW

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Alternate single-arm upright row using a lighter weight.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Work on making this exercise as explosive as possible in one fluid motion. Don't think of it as two separate exercises—the leg drive creates the power, and the arms and shoulders just go along for the ride.



SIT-UP AND REACH

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Don't use any weights—just reach your arms overhead.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Do this with straight arms and straight legs (this is called a Get Up Sit-Up).



JUMP ROPE X10

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Jump in place and twirl a pretend rope. I know that it sounds silly, but it will get your heart rate up. If that is too much, do High Knees or run in place. The point is to bump up that cardio.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Double-Unders (two rope spins per jump). If you do Double-Unders, only do singles, not x 10 . . . unless you are super advanced! For example, if your card is a 5, only do 5 Double-Unders.

SET #2:



LATERAL RAISES

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Shorten the lever (the distance between you and the weight) by bending your elbows to 90 degrees. Or do one arm at a time.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Instead of increasing the weight, work on tempo and time under tension. If you go too heavy, you may rely on momentum, and that's not doing you any service. Perform this exercise slowly, with control. An example of tempo is lifting the weight up for a count of 2, taking a 1-count pause at the top, then 2 counts down.



THRUSTERS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Use a PVC pipe or broomstick to work on form before adding weight.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Increase the weight, and/or use a barbell.



PLANK SHOULDER TAPS X2

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Perform this on your knees with a straight spine.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Do this on a decline, with your feet on a bench, box, or BOSU.



FROG JUMPS WITH OVERHEAD REACH

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Do Air Squats (fast bodyweight squats, no weight).
- › **MODIFY UP:** Add a 180-degree turn—this is called a Snowboarder.

DAY #5

SET #1:



LOW ROWS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Use a lighter band with less resistance.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Add an alternating reverse lunge and/or double up on the resistance bands.



GOBLET SQUATS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Squat down to sit on a box or bench, then stand up again. This is called a Goblet Box Squat.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Use a heavier weight or do a Barbell Front Squat.



CRAB TOE TOUCHES

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Work on the reverse table top position and lift one leg at a time. (Omit the arm-to-foot reach.) You could also do this seated on the floor and perform Alternating Seated Tucks reaching for the opposite toe. Performing the tucks with one knee at a time mimics the alternating leg action of the crab toe touch, so you still get a similar benefit.
- › **MODIFY UP:** This exercise is challenging and does not require any up modification.



BOX JUMPS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Use a lower box, alternate your Step-Ups, or do Tap Downs by starting on the bench and tapping one foot down at a time.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Use a higher box. Work on explosive power and string the jumps together without a double bounce. I am not so much in the CrossFit community anymore, but the language they use for this is “unbroken,” in case that helps.

SET #2:



SUPERMANS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Do one arm and one leg at a time, alternating opposite arm/legs (lift right leg/left arm, then left leg/right arm).
- › **MODIFY UP:** Do a Low Back Extension on a stability ball or a machine at the gym. You can also add weight by holding a plate, a medicine ball, or one dumbbell to your chest.



BULGARIAN SPLIT SQUATS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Do a stationary (static) lunge (on both sides) without putting your foot on the bench. Keep both feet on the floor.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Use a heavier weight (that's challenging but that you can control) or do this with a barbell.



RUSSIAN TWISTS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Keep your feet on the ground and don't use a weight.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Elevate your feet—challenge yourself without crossing your ankles, and hold a medicine ball, one dumbbell or two, or a kettlebell. You could also play around with keeping your arms as straight as possible to add more resistance.



BURPEES

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Step out to plank one foot at a time, don't do the push-up, and step back one foot at a time to starting position before standing. The jump is optional. You can also put your hands on an elevated surface, such as a box or bench (or dome-up side of a BOSU), when you come down to plank position. The push-up is optional here, too, but the incline will make it easier, so why not give it a try?



- › **MODIFY UP:** Try some of the many fun and challenging Burpee variations—there are a million of ’em! These are just a few:
 - › Burpees with 2 Push-Ups
 - › Burpees with Box Jump or Tuck Jump
 - › Burpee Pull-Ups
 - › Candlestick Burpees
 - › Broad Jump Burpees
 - › Lateral Jump (barbell or box) Burpees
 - › Burpees with weights, kettlebells, or dumbbells or a medicine ball
 - › Man Maker Burpees

DAY #6

SET #1:



ALTERNATING FLOOR PRESSES, NEUTRAL GRIP

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Use a lighter weight.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Use a heavier weight.



WALKING LUNGES

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Don’t use a weight or do stationary (static) lunges (stay in place, don’t move forward).
- › **MODIFY UP:** Use a heavier weight with dumbbells or a barbell, or hold the dumbbells overhead as you go—keep your arms straight for proper alignment (think of stacking bone on bone, and the dumbbells are just on top of a “shelf”).



BALL PASSES WITH STABILITY BALL

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Do Alternating Straight-Leg V-Ups by lifting your right leg and reaching for it with your left arm, then do the other side. Or just do this without the ball.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Add weight by using a medicine ball instead of a stability ball.



BROAD JUMP BACKPEDALS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Take out the jump. Take a big step forward and low steps backward, but go as fast as you can, for cardio purposes.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Hold a medicine ball at your chest during this exercise.

SET #2:



RENEGADE ROWS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Perform this on your knees, on an incline, or in an Alternating Bent-Over Row (on your feet, not in plank position).
- › **MODIFY UP:** Use a heavier weight and work on core stability. Keep your hips square (same as in Plank Up-Downs and Shoulder Taps). To make it even more challenging, perform this with two kettlebells, holding the horns.



TRIPLE CRUSHES

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Use a light medicine ball.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Use one or two heavier dumbbells or one heavy kettlebell.



SIDE PLANK HIP DROPS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Keep your knee (the one closer to the floor) on the floor for Side Plank, and/or do hip drops in a forearm plank, and just rock your hips side to side. (Right and left are 1 rep.)
- › **MODIFY UP:** Elevate your top leg a few inches.



SQUAT TO TUCK JUMPS

- › **MODIFY DOWN:** Jump to a vertical target or do Air Squats.
- › **MODIFY UP:** Double the pulse on the squat at the bottom, and tuck jump as high as possible. Focus on landing soft in a low squat.

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