



The 30-Day Habit, Not the Highlight Reel

A no-hype daily training & eating system — home or gym — built from ACSM and WHO guidance. No before/after fantasy. Just the routine that actually sticks.

WHAT'S INSIDE

The whole honest system, in pointers

This mini gives you the anti-hype map of a beginner's first month: what training and eating actually change, the home and gym plans, and the day-by-day calendar that builds the habit. Read it once and run it starting tomorrow.

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THE ONE IDEA TO HOLD THE WHOLE WAY

The real 30-day win isn't a number on the scale — it's a training habit that survives past Day 30. Adherence beats perfection, and missing one day never resets you.

What 30 days can honestly do

- **Set the contract honestly:** 30 days won't give you a supplement-ad body. It will give you something more useful — a start that actually lasts.
- **Fat loss is bounded by biology:** a safe, muscle-sparing rate is 0.5–1% of body weight per week — a slow, honest ceiling, not a target to beat.
- **Newbie muscle gains are real but modest:** roughly 0.5–1 kg a month for a male beginner, about half that for women, due to hormones.
- **Recomposition is genuinely possible:** losing fat and adding a little muscle at once — which is exactly why the scale is a poor judge of a beginner's progress.

THE ANTI-HYPE PROMISE

This system uses the popular 30-day window because it's a clean commitment period — but fills it with realistic targets and an evidence citation on every claim. Honesty is the whole product.

Why the scale — and the photos — lie

- **The Week-1 illusion:** every gram of stored glycogen holds 3–4 grams of water. Eating and moving better releases it — so Week 1 often shows a "loss" that's mostly water, not fat.
- **The whoosh:** the scale can stall for days, then suddenly drop as retained water releases. A flat Week 2–3 is not failure.
- **Why transformation photos mislead:** before/after marketing routinely uses dehydration, lighting, posing and tan. Real visible change usually needs 3–6+ weeks to even begin.
- **Only about a third** of people even finish a 30-day challenge — the photos you envy are a highlight reel, not a timeline.

THE REAL 30-DAY WIN

A new behaviour takes on average 66 days to become automatic (Lally et al., 2010, UCL) — with a range of 18–254 days. So 30 days won't finish the habit; it gets you roughly halfway, and installs the runway. Missing a single day did not break the habit curve in that study — adherence beats perfection.

The science, simply

Five ideas do almost all the work. Understand these and you'll never need a fad again.

- **Energy balance:** fat loss requires eating fewer calories than you burn. Estimate your daily burn (TDEE), then subtract a modest amount — not a punishing one.
- **A safe deficit:** 300–500 kcal/day (≈ 0.5 kg/week); 500–750 kcal gives ≈ 0.5 – 0.9 kg/week. Never eat below your BMR — it risks muscle loss and rebound hunger.
- **Protein target:** 1.6–2.2 g/kg/day. A meta-analysis of 49 studies found muscle benefit plateaus around 1.62 g/kg, extending to ~ 2.2 (Morton et al., 2018).
- **Progressive overload:** train each major muscle group 2+ days/week, 2–3 sets, stopping 1–3 reps short of failure — and add load when it gets easy. ACSM finds no advantage for any one equipment type.

ESTIMATE YOUR TDEE

Mifflin-St Jeor BMR: Men = $(10 \times \text{kg}) + (6.25 \times \text{cm}) - (5 \times \text{age}) + 5$; Women = same, but -161 . Multiply by activity: 1.2 sedentary · 1.375 light · 1.55 moderate · 1.725 very active.

CHAPTER 02 · CONTINUED

Cardio, sleep & the free burn

- **Cardio alone underdelivers:** exercise without dietary change produces less weight loss than predicted — the body compensates by lowering resting metabolism and unconscious movement.
- **Sleep is a fat-loss tool:** a 2010 study kept diet identical but varied sleep (5.5 vs 8.5 hrs). Short sleep cut the fat share of weight lost by 55% and increased muscle loss by 60%. Target 7–9 hours.
- **NEAT — the free burn:** non-exercise movement (walking, chores, fidgeting) varies by up to ~800 kcal/day between people. Build toward 7,000–10,000 steps/day.

300–500

kcal/day safe deficit range

1.6–2.2

g/kg protein target daily

7–9

hours of sleep, the quiet lever

PUT IT TOGETHER

Deficit drives fat loss · protein protects muscle · overload builds strength · sleep keeps loss as fat · steps widen the deficit. Everything else in the system is just pulling these five levers consistently.

Before you start

- **Run a readiness check first:** a simplified PAR-Q — heart conditions, chest pain, dizziness, joint problems, BP medication. Any "yes" means see a doctor before Day 1.
- **Extra flags:** blood pressure over ~144/94, age over 69 and inactive, pregnancy, uncontrolled diabetes, or recent surgery — get cleared first.
- **Track more than the scale:** waist (weekly, same time), photos (weekly, same light), scale (2–3×/week, averaged), resting heart rate.
- **The waist is the best single metric:** South-Asian action levels ≥ 90 cm men / ≥ 80 cm women, with an earlier risk flag at 78 cm / 72 cm (Misra et al.).

DAY-ZERO SETUP

Run the PAR-Q · take your baseline (waist, morning weight, resting HR, photos) · estimate calories & protein · pick Home or Gym. Both work — consistency decides the result, not the venue.

The home plan

No gym, no gear, no excuses. Bodyweight plus a backpack or bands builds real strength for a beginner — as long as you progress.

- **Warm up dynamically:** march/jog + mobilize (leg swings, squats, lunges) + rehearse the first exercise. Long static holds before training actually cost strength.
- **Six movements cover the whole body:** squat, push-up, lunge, glute bridge, plank, row — each with an easier regression and a harder progression.
- **Don't skip rows:** a loaded backpack or a band/towel around a door balances all the pushing and keeps posture honest.
- **The weekly split:** Mon/Wed/Fri full-body, Tue/Thu walks, Sat mobility, Sun rest — progressing sets, reps and difficulty each week.

WEEK	SETS × REPS	FOCUS
1	2 × 8–10	Easy regression, learn form
2	3 × 10–12	Add a set
3	3 × 12–15	Progress 2 movements a tier
4	3–4 × hardest	~1–3 RIR, add tempo

The gym plan

A simple full-body plan three times a week beats any complicated split for a beginner.

- **The A/B plan:** alternated across three non-consecutive days (Mon/Wed/Fri).
- **Day A:** goblet or barbell squat · bench press (or machine chest press) · seated row · plank.
- **Day B:** Romanian deadlift or deadlift · overhead press · lat pulldown · leg press or lunges.
- **Progression rule:** compounds 3×5–8 or 3×8–12, accessories 2–3×10–15, all at 1–3 reps in reserve. Hit the top of the range cleanly → add ~2.5–5 kg next time.

THE GOLDEN RULE OF FORM

If your form breaks down, the weight is too heavy. Drop it, keep the reps clean, and earn the load back. Ego is the most common gym injury.

CHAPTER 05 · CONTINUED

Form cues & the 4-day option

- **Squat:** feet shoulder-width, brace core before descending, chest up, weight over mid-foot, thighs to at least parallel.
- **Deadlift:** bar over mid-foot, neutral spine — never round the back, pull the slack out then push the floor away.
- **Bench press:** shoulder blades pulled together, controlled — don't bounce off the chest, elbows ~45°.
- **Prefer 4 sessions?** split into Upper (press + pull + accessories) and Lower (squat + hinge + calves/core), each done twice a week.

WARM UP AND COOL DOWN

Same as the home plan — dynamic before, static stretching after. Add 1–2 light ramp-up sets before your first heavy compound.

Eating for change

Not a fad, not a cleanse — a flexible template you can run on Indian food, veg or non-veg, without weighing every grain of rice.

- The plate method:** ¼ plate protein (dal, paneer, curd, eggs, chicken, fish) · ½ plate vegetables · ¼ plate carbs (roti, rice, millets) · a thumb of fat.
- Indian veg protein sources (per 100g):** soya chunks ~52g · dals ~24–26g · paneer 18–20g · almonds ~21g · Greek yogurt ~10g. Soy is the one legume with a complete amino-acid profile.
- Hydration & sugar:** drink to thirst plus with meals (~2–3 L/day). Reduce, don't ban — cut sugary drinks first, keep 80–90% whole foods.

SAMPLE MEAL	PROTEIN
2 rotis + 1 cup dal + paneer bhurji (100g) + salad	~30–35g
Soya-chunk pulao (50g dry) + curd (1 cup)	~35g
Grilled chicken (150g) + rice + sabzi	~40g

Supplements — the honest verdict

- **Protein powder:** a convenience, not a requirement — helps only when you can't hit your target from food.
- **Creatine:** well-evidenced, cheap, safe, if you choose to add one.
- **Detox teas & "fat-burners":** essentially zero quality evidence. Any weight drop is water/laxative effect that returns on rehydration. Some products have been found adulterated with real health risk.

SAY IT PLAINLY

Detox teas and fat-burners don't work and can harm you. Don't buy them. Food, protein, sleep, and training are the entire toolkit.

The 30-day calendar

Three strength days, walking on the between-days, one full rest — the same shape whether you chose Home or Gym.

- **The weekly template:** Mon strength A · Tue walk · Wed strength B · Thu walk · Fri strength A/B · Sat optional light activity · Sun full rest.
- **The 4-week overlay:** Week 1 Establish (steps 6k, learn form) · Week 2 Add (steps 7k) · Week 3 Progress (steps 8–9k) · Week 4 Push (steps 10k, retake photos & waist).
- **Five daily tick-boxes:** workout done · steps target hit · 7+ hours sleep · protein target reached · water to thirst. The visible run of ticks is the behavioural payoff.

ONE MISSED BOX IS NOT A RESET

A single unticked day is a rounding error, not a failure. Adherence across the month beats a flawless week followed by quitting.

Plateaus, soreness & myths

- **DOMS vs injury:** normal soreness is dull, widespread, eases with movement, lasts 3–5 days. Injury is sharp, immediate, localized, and persists over a week.
- **Stalls & deloads:** a 1–2 week scale stall is usually water masking fat loss. Take a lighter deload week every 4–6 weeks to recover.
- **After Day 30:** 30 days is roughly halfway to an automatic habit. Keep training into Months 2–3 — where most real change actually happens.

MYTH	THE TRUTH
Spot reduction	Can't burn one area's fat with crunches — fat leaves body-wide.
Sweat = fat	Sweat is water for cooling — returns with your next drink.
Eating after 8pm	Total daily calories drive fat, not the clock.

YOU'VE GOT THE MAP. NOW BUILD THE ROUTINE.

This was the 20-minute version.

The full system is the whole month.

You now know the honest levers behind real change. The complete **30-Day Body Transformation** guide takes every idea above and gives you the full day-by-day calendar, both tracks in detail, and a printable tracking sheet.

- **The full 8 chapters** — every concept above, expanded with diagrams.
- **Home & gym tracks in full** — every exercise, every week's progression.
- **The complete 30-day calendar** — every day mapped, training, rest and eating.
- **The FAQ & glossary** — every beginner question answered in plain language.

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