

SIMPLE

STRENGTH



How I Got Lean, Strong, and Athletic Again...
Without Living In The Gym

MARK WEBB

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The Simple Strength System

In this playbook, I'm going to break down the simple system I use to build a strong, lean, athletic body... without living in the gym.

This is the same approach I've used to get back into shape pushing 40... and the one that's helped hundreds of other regular dudes do the same.

But more importantly than the results it produces...

Is *how* it produces them.

I refuse to:

- Spend hours in the gym every day
- Follow complicated, hard-to-stick-to programs
- Beat my body into the ground with junk volume and cardio
- Structure my entire life around workouts and eating

Because that doesn't work long term.

This system rejects all of that.

And instead focuses on:

- Short, focused workouts that actually drive progress
- Getting stronger on movements that matter
- Training in a way that fits into real life
- Keeping things simple so you can stay consistent
- Building a body that looks good, feels good, and actually works

All with around 90 minutes working out per week.

Ready to get started?

Let's get into it.

Chapter 1: This Used To Be Easy

Getting older is weird.

When you're young, you can eat whatever you want and stay in decent shape. Do pretty much anything in the gym and build muscle. Run on two hours of sleep and somehow still function.

It just... works.

In my 20s and early 30s, fitness was my thing.

I built a solid physique. I lifted heavy. I ate clean. My life pretty much revolved around the gym.

Then life happened.

We had my daughter, and everything changed.

Sleep went out the window. Stress went up. And providing for my family became the priority.

But the gym?

That went on the backburner.

I kept telling myself I'd get back into it.

And I would... for a few weeks here and there.

But it never stuck.

A few weeks off turned into months... months turned into years... and before I knew it...

I had the dreaded dadbod.

And it wasn't just how I looked...

Low energy. Constant little aches and pains. Tweaking my back doing something simple. Knees bothering me just from running around with my kid.

Hell, I needed time to "warm up" just to get out of bed.

I hated it.

Because I knew better.

I didn't want to end up being the guy who used to be in shape. I had this picture in my head of being a strong, capable, jacked grandpa one day...

And I was nowhere near that path.

So I decided to fix it.

Not by going back to what I used to do... Because that didn't fit my life anymore.

I needed something different.

Something simple.

Something that actually worked with my schedule instead of taking it over.

So I took everything I'd learned over 20+ years of training...

And built a system around a few non-negotiables.

- Train no more than three days a week.
- Workouts needed to be around 30 minutes.
- I wanted to be able to workout in my backyard.

And, most importantly, it had to work.

That was it.

So I stripped everything down to what actually mattered.

- Getting stronger
- Training with intent.
- Progressing over time.

And I cut the rest.

No fluff. No wasted time. No b.s.

Everything was built to fit into my life—not the other way around.

And what do you know...

It worked.

I was finally able to stay on track. My strength came back. My energy improved. My joints felt better. And yeah... my gut started shrinking too.

But more than anything...

I feel like myself again.

I can run around with my kid without thinking about my knees. I can throw my wife over my shoulder without wondering if my back is gonna hold up.

I can move, lift, do normal things without that constant background worry of tweaking something.

I feel ready again.

The truth is...

You don't need more workouts. You don't need more time in the gym. And you definitely don't need more complexity.

You just need a simple system you can actually stick to...

And progress over time.

That's what this is.

A system built around one idea:

Build your fitness around your life... not the other way around.

Inside this guide, I'm going to walk you through exactly how it works.

- How to train in about 30 minutes, three times a week.
- The key movements that rebuild your strength and structure.
- And how to stay consistent without overthinking everything.

No fluff. No wasted time.

Just a system that works.

And more importantly... One you'll actually use.

Chapter 2: The Truth About Training

The fitness industry is a wild place.

Even after 20+ years in it... I still catch myself thinking:

“Wait... is this actually useful... or just noise?”

Because everywhere you look, there’s:

- A new program
- A new method
- A new “secret”

And most of it just makes things more confusing.

The reality is..

Getting in shape isn’t complicated.

It’s not easy... but it *is* simple.

Everything your body does—every bit of muscle you build, every bit of fat you lose—comes down to one basic cycle:

Stimulate → Recover → Adapt → Repeat

That’s it.

That’s the whole game.

If you understand this... everything else starts to make sense.

Let’s break it down.

1. Stimulus = Training

This is where you give your body a reason to change.

You’re basically telling it:

“Hey... I need more from you.”

You do that by:

- Challenging your muscles
- Training with intent (not just going through the motions)
- And pushing to get a little bit better each workout

2. Recovery = Rest + Nutrition

This is where most guys mess it up.

Because the results don't happen in the gym...

They happen *after*.

This is where your body:

- Repairs
- Rebuilds
- And comes back stronger

If you skip this part...

You don't grow. You don't progress And can end up hurt.

3. Adaptation = Getting Better

This is the payoff.

You come back:

- Stronger
- More capable
- More resilient

This is your body saying:

"Got it. I'll be more prepared next time."

But that only happens if you give it the right stimulus... *and* enough recovery.

4. Repeat = Where Results Are Built

This is the part nobody wants to hear.

Because it's not sexy.

You just... keep going. Again. And again. And again.

That's where the magic happens.

It's not one perfect workout... It's not one perfect week... It's stacking these cycles over time.

Now here's the problem...

Most people break this cycle without realizing it.

- They train too much... and can't recover.
- They train randomly... so there's no real stimulus.
- They don't track anything... so there's no clear progress
- They quit too early... before anything has time to work

So they stay stuck.

Working hard... but going nowhere.

Simple Strength fixes that.

Everything you're about to learn is built around making this cycle work *for you*.

- Your training is short, focused, and effective (no wasted time)
- Recovery is built in (so your body actually improves)
- Progression is simple (so you keep getting better)
- And it's easy to stick to (so results compound)

That's the shift.

Stop chasing: More workouts. More volume. More complexity

And start focusing on: Better training. Better recovery. And actually sticking with it.

That's it.

Chapter 3: Strength Drives Everything

If you take one thing from this entire playbook... it's this:

Strength is the driver of everything.

Not more exercises.

Not more volume.

Not more time in the gym.

Strength.

This is the shift most guys need to make.

Because most workouts look like this:

- A bunch of random exercises
- Lots of sets
- Little rest

Leaving tired... but not better

It *feels* productive.

But it doesn't force your body to change.

What Actually Builds Your Body

Your body only adapts when you give it a clear reason to.

That reason is:

High effort + progressive demand.

That's it.

And when you do that right...

You don't need much.

Step 1: Train With Real Intensity

This is where most people fall short.

They *think* they're training hard...

But they stop way too early.

What I do is simple.

I treat almost every working set like this:

AMRAP (As Many Reps As Possible)

That means:

- You keep going until reps slow down
- It starts to burn
- And you have to *push* for those last few reps

That's the signal.

That's what tells your body:

"We need to get stronger."

What This Should Feel Like

A proper set should feel like:

- The last 2–3 reps are hard
- Your rep speed slows down
- You're not sure you'll get the next rep... but you try anyway

That's the sweet spot.

How Many Sets?

You don't need much.

- **1–2 hard sets per exercise is enough**

If you do it right...

Your muscles will be *done*.

Step 2: Progress Every Workout

Now here's where most people completely stall out.

They train hard...

But they don't **progress**.

So their body has no reason to keep adapting.

The Rule Is Simple:

Every workout... you push to beat your last performance.

Even if it's small.

- One more rep.
- A little more weight.
- Slightly better control.

That's how results compound.

Step 3: Use Dual Progression (Simple + Effective)

This doesn't have to be complicated.

Here's what I use.

It's simple. And it works.

How It Works

1. Pick a rep range

- Anywhere from **5–20 reps works**
- I prefer **8–10 reps** for most movements

2. Stay in that range

Work your way to the top of the range

3. Once you hit the top... make it harder

You can:

- Add weight
- Slow the tempo
- Make the movement more challenging

And then you repeat the process.

Example (Pull-Ups)

Let's say your range is **8–10 reps**:

- Workout 1 → 8 reps
- Workout 2 → 9 reps
- Workout 3 → 10 reps

Now you increase the demand:

- Workout 4 → 8 reps (2.5 lbs added)
- Workout 5 → 9 reps
- Workout 6 → 10 reps

Then repeat.

That's How Progress Happens

Not big jumps.

Small wins.

Stacked over time.

Step 4: Lock In Your Execution First

Before you chase weight...

Make sure your reps are clean.

Level 1 Progression

- Improve your form
- Control the movement
- Eliminate sloppy reps

Level 2 Progression

- Add small amounts of weight
- 2.5–5 lbs at a time is plenty

That's how you build strength without beating yourself up.

Step 5: Track Everything (Non-Negotiable)

This is where it clicks.

Because now...

You're not guessing.

You know exactly what you did last time and you know exactly what you need to beat.

And that changes the game. Because now you walk into your workout with a target. Instead of just "seeing how you feel."

And over time...

You can see the proof of your progress.

What I Do

I log every workout.

You can use:

- An app
- A notebook
- Or the templates in this guide

Why This System Works

This is how I keep workouts:

- Short
- Focused
- Effective

Because instead of doing more...

You're doing **what matters**.

- High effort
- Clear progression
- Consistent execution

What Happens If You Follow This

If you apply this correctly:

- Your strength will go up
- Your muscle will come back
- Your body will change

Without adding more time.

What Happens Next

Now that you understand *how* your body actually changes...

We can build your system the right way.

In the next chapter, I'm going to show you:

- The **6 foundational movements** that rebuild your body
- How to train your entire body without wasting time
- And why most workouts fail before they even start

Chapter 4: The Strong Six

If you only trained these 6 movements for the next year...

Your entire body would change.

No fancy programs.

No endless exercise lists.

Just the right movements... done well... over time.

Most people get this backwards.

The bounce between random exercises. Switch programs every few weeks. Try to “hit everything”

And they end up progressing... nothing.

Here's the shift...

Instead of doing more...

You focus on **movement patterns**.

Because your body doesn't care about exercises.

It understands:

- Pushing
- Pulling
- Squatting
- Hinging

Master those...

And everything improves.

The Strong Six

These are the only movement patterns you need to build a strong, athletic body.

Everything in your training will come back to these.

1. Horizontal Push

Examples:

- Push-ups
- Dips

What It Builds:

- Chest
- Shoulders
- Triceps

This is your pressing strength.

It's what gives your upper body that **thick, solid look**.

2. Horizontal Pull

Examples:

- Rows (any variation)

What It Builds:

- Upper back
- Biceps
- Grip

If your back is weak, everything feels off.

Fix that, and everything starts to feel better.

3. Vertical Push

Examples:

- Pike push-ups
- Handstand push-ups

What It Builds:

- Shoulders
- Triceps
- Upper chest

This builds that **broad, athletic shoulder look**.

And it carries over to real-world strength.

4. Vertical Pull

Examples:

- Pull-ups
- Chin-ups

What It Builds:

- Lats
- Upper back
- Biceps
- Grip

This is one of the most important movements you can master.

Strong pull ups = strong upper body.

5. Squat

Examples:

- Squats
- Split squats
- Pistol squats

What It Builds:

- Quads
- Glutes
- Hamstrings
- Balance

This is your foundation.

Weak legs = unstable everything

Strong legs = everything feels solid

6. Hinge

Examples:

- Nordic curls
- Jefferson curls

What It Builds:

- Hamstrings
- Glutes
- Lower back

This is your **posterior chain**.

And what keeps you strong, athletic, and explosive.

Why This Works

These 6 movements cover almost everything your body needs.

So instead of spreading your effort across 20 exercises...

You focus on:

- Getting stronger in these
- Improving your execution
- Progressing over time

That's where results come from.

What About Everything Else?

Once your foundation is covered...

You *can* add extra work if you want.

Good Add-Ons:

- Abs
- Calves
- Neck
- Grip

But, these are add-ons.

The Strong Six is the foundation.

If You Just Do This...

If you train these movements...

Push them hard...

And keep progressing...

You will:

- Build muscle
- Get stronger
- Move better
- Feel more athletic

Without wasting time.

What Happens Next

At this point, you've got everything you need:

- You understand how your body adapts
- You know how to train and progress
- And now you know the movements to focus on

Now it's time to put it all together.

Chapter 5: The Training Blueprint

Now you know:

- What drives results
- How to train and progress
- The movements that matter

Now we put it all together.

The Goal

Keep this simple.

You're not trying to live in the gym.

You're trying to:

- Get strong
- Build muscle
- Stay consistent

So here's the structure:

- 3 workouts per week.
- Around 30 minutes each.

That's it.

Use an A/B Workout Split

Instead of overthinking your workouts...

You'll rotate between two sessions:

- **Workout A**
- **Workout B**

Workout A

- Horizontal Pull
- Horizontal Push
- Squat
- Hinge
- Optional: 1–2 accessories

Workout B

- Vertical Pull
- Vertical Push
- Squat
- Hinge
- Optional: 1–2 accessories

Why This Works

This setup:

- Hits your entire body
- Keeps workouts short
- Lets you recover properly
- And is easy to repeat

How To Schedule It

Train on non-consecutive days.

And just alternate A and B.

Example Schedule

Week 1:

- Day 1 → Workout A
- Day 3 → Workout B
- Day 5 → Workout A

Week 2:

- Day 1 → Workout B
- Day 3 → Workout A
- Day 5 → Workout B

Then repeat.

If you can only do 2 days per week, set it up like this:

- Day 1 → Workout A
- Day 4 → Workout B

Repeat.

What The Workouts Look Like

Here's what it looks like:

Workout A

- Chin-Ups → 2 sets
- Pike Push-Ups → 2 sets
- Squats → 2 sets
- Nordic Curls → 2 sets
- Optional: 1–2 accessory movements

Workout B

- Rows → 2 sets
- Push-Ups → 2 sets
- Pistol Squats → 2 sets
- Jefferson Curls → 2 sets
- Optional: 1–2 accessory movements

How To Run Each Workout

This is important.

Don't just go through the motions.

For Every Main Movement:

- 2 hard working sets
- AMRAP (push close to failure)
- Controlled reps (no rushing)
- Track your performance

Rest Times

Enough to catch your breath and be ready to push the next set.

As a general rule:

- 3–5 minutes between Strong Six movements
- 1–2 minutes for accessories

Keep It Simple

You don't need to:

- Add more exercises
- Change things every week
- Complicate the plan

Just:

Show up → execute → improve → repeat

Do This Before You Start

Set yourself up before your first workout:

- Pick your training days (3 non-consecutive days)
- Write down Workout A and Workout B
- Choose any accessories (optional)
- Decide how you'll track your workouts

That's it.

You're ready to go.

What This Should Feel Like

Your workouts should feel:

Focused. Efficient. Challenging.

Done in around 30 minutes

Not exhausting for the sake of it.

Just effective.

If You Stick To This...

If you follow this structure:

- You'll get stronger every week
- Your body will start changing fast
- You won't burn out

And most importantly...

You'll stay consistent

That's The System

No fluff.

No wasted time.

Just a plan you can actually follow.

Chapter 6: What About Cardio?

I'm not going to tell you to go run for an hour...

Or do brutal HIIT workouts...

Or wake up at 5am for fasted cardio...

Because you don't need that. Cardio is great for your health. But it's not the main driver of fat loss or muscle. That comes from your training and nutrition.

That said...

Moving your body every day does make a difference...

A big one.

Start With This

The simplest thing you can do:

Walk more.

Aim for around 7-10 steps per day.

That's it.

It doesn't have to be perfect. It doesn't have to be all at once.

Just move throughout the day.

Walk after meals.

Park a little farther away.

Take a quick walk when you've got time.

It adds up.

If walking isn't your thing...

That's fine.

Swap it for anything that gets you moving.

- Biking
- Swimming
- Hiking

Just stay active.

The goal is simple:

Move your body every day.

The 10-Minute Walk (Simple Trick That Works)

One of the easiest habits you can build:

Take a short walk after meals.

Even just 10 minutes.

This does a few powerful things:

- Helps control blood sugar
- Pulls glucose into your muscles
- Reduces energy crashes
- Improves insulin sensitivity over time

It's simple.

But it works.

5-Minute Conditioning

If you want a little more...

Add 5 minutes of jump rope.

That's it.

It's one of the best conditioning tools out there.

There's a reason fighters use it.

It helps with:

- Coordination
- Conditioning
- Staying athletic

You can do it before your workouts. On off days. Or whenever you've got a few minutes.

Don't Forget To Sprint

Remember this?

"If you don't use it, you lose it."

When's the last time you sprinted?

Once a week...

Do a few short sprints. Nothing crazy. Just a few runs across the yard.

It'll help keep you fast. Keep you athletic. And maintain explosiveness.

(And honestly, it just feels good to haul ass sometimes.)

That's It.

No complicated cardio plan. No hours of extra work.

Just a little daily movement.

That's all you need.

Chapter 7: The Real Secret

None of this is extreme. And that's the point.

Most people fail because they do too much.

They go all in. Push hard for a few weeks. Burn out. Fall off.

Then do it all over again.

This system is different.

Because it's built around:

- Simplicity
- Efficiency
- Sustainability

You're not trying to be perfect.

You're trying to be consistent.

And that's what gets results.

The Only Rule That Matters

Do what you can stick to.

That's it.

Because the guy who trains three times a week for a year...

Will absolutely destroy the guy who goes hard for three weeks...

Then falls off again.

What This Looks Like

Keep it simple:

- 3 strength workouts each week
- Move your body every day
- Add a little conditioning if you want

That's your foundation.

What Happens If You Stick With This

If you train hard...

Progress over time...

Stick to the movements...

And keep showing up...

You will get stronger.

You will build muscle.

You will lose fat.

But more importantly...

You'll feel better. Move better. And start to feel like yourself again.

Without burning out.

Final Thoughts

You don't need:

- More time
- More workouts
- More complexity

You need a system that fits your life.

And Now You Have One

This is the exact system I use.

It's simple.

It works.

And most importantly...

It's something you can actually stick to.

What To Do Next

Don't wait.

Don't overthink it.

Start your first workout this week.

Track it.

Beat it next time.

Repeat.

That's how this works.

-Mark

SIMPLE STRENGTH WORKOUT LOG

This is a blank template for structure.

Workout A

Date:

Movement	Set	Reps	Load	Notes
Vertical Pull	1			
	2			
Vertical Push	1			
	2			
Squat	1			
	2			
Hinge	1			
	2			
Accessory	1			
	2			
Accessory	1			
	2			

Execution:

- 2 hard sets
- AMRAP sets
- Controlled tempo
- Progress every session

SIMPLE STRENGTH WORKOUT LOG

Workout B

Date:

Movement	Set	Reps	Load	Notes
Horz. Pull	1			
	2			
Horz. Push	1			
	2			
Squat	1			
	2			
Hinge	1			
	2			
Accessory	1			
	2			
Accessory	1			
	2			

Execution:

- 2 hard sets
- AMRAP sets
- Controlled tempo
- Progress every session

SIMPLE STRENGTH WORKOUT LOG

This is my current workout.

Workout A

Date:

Movement	Set	Reps	Load	Notes
Chin Up	1			
	2			
Pike Pushup	1			
	2			
Squat	1			
	2			
Nordic Curl	1			
	2			
Plank	1			
	2			
Neck Flexion	1			
Neck Ext.	2			

Execution:

- 2 hard sets
- AMRAP sets
- Controlled tempo
- Progress every session

SIMPLE STRENGTH WORKOUT LOG

Workout B

Date:

Movement	Set	Reps	Load	Notes
Ring Row	1			
	2			
Push Up	1			
	2			
Pistol Squat	1			
	2			
Jefferson Curl	1			
	2			
Leg Raise	1			
	2			
Neck Lateral	1			
Neck Lateral	2			

Execution:

- 2 hard sets
- AMRAP sets
- Controlled tempo
- Progress every session

SIMPLE STRENGTH WORKOUT LOG

This is a variation of my current workout template.

Workout A

Date:

Movement	Set	Reps	Load	Notes
Pull Up	1			
	2			
Pike Pushup	1			
	2			
Squat	1			
	2			
Nordic Curl	1			
	2			
Dragon Flag	1			
	2			
Grip work	1			
	2			

Execution:

- 2 hard sets
- AMRAP sets
- Controlled tempo
- Progress every session

SIMPLE STRENGTH WORKOUT LOG

Workout B

Date:

Movement	Set	Reps	Load	Notes
Row	1			
	2			
Dips	1			
	2			
Split Squat	1			
	2			
Jefferson Curl	1			
	2			
L-Sit	1			
	2			
Calf Raises	1			
	2			

Execution:

- 1–2 hard sets
- 0–1 reps from failure
- Controlled tempo
- Progress every session

SUGGESTED EXERCISE VARIATIONS

This isn't an exhaustive list. You don't need dozens of exercises. These are the movements I use most often and that consistently deliver the best results.

Horizontal Push

- Push-ups
- Feet-elevated push-ups
- Dips

Horizontal Pull

- Ring rows
- Inverted rows
- Face pulls

Vertical Push

- Pike Push-ups
- Handstand push-ups

Vertical Pull

- Chin-ups
- Pull-ups

Squat

- Squats
- Split squats
- Pistol squats
- Hindu squats

Hinge

- Nordic curls
- Jefferson curls
- Glute bridges

EXAMPLE PROGRESSION

Stay within your rep range. When you reach the top of the range with clean form, increase the difficulty and start building again.

Chin-Up Example (Rep Range: 8–10)

Session	Load	Reps
1	Body weight	8
2	Body weight	9
3	Body weight	10
4	+5 lb	8
5	+5 lb	9
6	+5 lb	10
7	+10 lb	8
8	+10 lb	9
9	+10 lb	10

Once you hit the top of the range with clean form, add a small amount of weight or progress to a harder variation and repeat the process.

This same progression applies to all pushes, pulls, squats, and hinges.