

The
K*I*S*S*



**Weight Training
Program**

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Disclaimer

The author is not a physician. The information presented in this book is intended to be educational in nature and is not intended as medical advice. It is designed to help you make informed decisions related to your physical fitness and should not be used as a substitute for any treatment that may have been prescribed by your doctor. If you suspect that you have a medical problem, you should seek assistance from a qualified health practitioner.

The K*I*S*S* Weight Training Program
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DEDICATION



To my two older sons, Peter and Fred --- who are now grown-up middle-aged men. We have been through a lot together --- good times and bad, happy times and sad. On the balance, I think all this has brought us closer together. Life goes on and I can see that the coming years as father, sons, brothers, and friends will be positive ones. Let's look forward to that...

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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PREFACE

Weight training first appeared on the scene in the late nineteenth century. It was popularized by a number of “strongmen” at that time who struggled to lift as much weight as they could at contests, circus acts, and exhibitions. Arthur Saxon established a record in the “bent press” with a (one arm!) overhead lift of 371 pounds, a record that I believe still stands today. Eugene Sandow became famous as a body builder in addition to being a strongman. Films of him posing are still available and, even by today’s standards, his physique is remarkable.

As the years rolled by, weight lifting became an Olympic sport and a number of annual physique contests appeared. A few names stand out. John Grimek, who initially was an Olympic lifter, went on to become an undefeated Mr. America, Mr. Universe, and Mr. USA in the 1940’s. When I began to train with weights in the late 1950’s, he was a legend and, at around 50 years of age, was still in superb condition. This time period during the 1950’s and 1960’s is sometimes referred to as the “classic” era of bodybuilding. Many fine physiques appeared then. Two come to mind, both of whom became movie stars: Steve Reeves and Reg Park.

It was probably not until the 1980’s that weight training began to become mainstream. This happened, at least in part, due to the release of movies starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, a recent Mr. Universe title winner at the time. Now, of course, everyone knows about weight training. You’re no longer told that you will become “muscle bound” if you exercise with weights. Old, young, male, female, everyone, --- yes, everyone --- is encouraged to “pump iron.” There are hundreds (thousands?) of weight training courses out there and an army of personal trainers standing by to take a person by the hand if he/she would like help along the way.

So, you might ask, given this situation, why in the world am I writing still another weight training book? Aren’t there enough of them already? Good question...

The reason is that I feel I can put all this together in a different way than others have in the past, in a very **simple** way --- the **K*I*S*S*** way. **K*I*S*S*** stands for “**Keep It Simple Stupid!**” I hope this doesn’t sound too strong. However, with respect to weight training, and in many other things in life, people often complicate an issue too much, so much so that a listener, a reader, or an audience becomes confused and misses the important **basic concepts**. It’s a case of “not being able to see the forest because of the trees.” The reason I included the preceding historical overview of weight training is to emphasize that, over a hundred years ago, men were developing remarkable physiques and becoming amazingly strong. **Their training methods were extremely simple.** They just tried to lift as much weight as they could --- usually overhead. No rocket science at all. Generally speaking, that’s the approach I’ll take in this book.

My background is in engineering. We engineers design stuff and are good at making procedures clear and simple. I taught engineering for many years and always used this

approach when I presented the course material. The concepts were still there; they were important and couldn't be watered down. However, since these concepts were so important, there was no need to add unnecessary peripheral material to what I taught in order to fill the class hour. The same is true with weight training. There are some simple but very important concepts that should be behind any course you can come up with. There's no need to obscure these concepts with fluff. **The main purpose of this book is to nail these concepts down.** Once a person understands them, he can cancel his subscription to his favorite body-building magazine, fire his personal trainer, and **design his own weight training course!**

Amazingly, I believe that I discovered the concepts behind *The K*I*S*S* Weight Training Program* over 50 years ago! When I bought my first barbell set in 1958, a number of courses came with it. I tried them all and learned a great deal from them. In addition, I obtained and reviewed courses from other sources, always trying to learn a little more. I also became an avid reader of *Strength and Health* and *Iron Man*, two popular magazines that were devoted to weight lifting and body building at that time. However, something always bothered me in my research. Weight training courses were **too complicated!** So, I simplified things and gradually zeroed in on the approach I describe in this book. Perhaps my engineering way of thinking enabled me to do this --- to see through the unnecessary stuff to the basic concepts that are involved in weight training and **to formalize a procedure that utilizes them in the most effective way possible.** This approach has served me well. As a young man, with no coaching to assist me and only a basement gym at my disposal, I progressed such that I was probably the strongest man in my college at that time. For all practical purposes, I continued to use this approach all my adult life and, when I stuck with it, I always made excellent progress.

This book is divided into three parts:

- Concepts
- Courses
- Advice

The first part, "Concepts," begins by describing **five exercise movements** (like pushing or pulling something) that **must** be included in a well-balanced weight training course. It then arranges these movements into a "**basic course template.**" This template requires four exercise sessions per week and includes **only three exercises** per session. Next, I show how you can add "**extra credit exercises**" to this template to create an "**advanced course template**" which leads to more challenging workouts that will speed progress toward your goals, whatever they might be. I emphasize that these exercises truly are "extra credit;" you do **not** have to do them in order to benefit from this program. After we have the templates nailed down, I explain in detail how all the exercises used in the course templates are performed. Photographs add to the explanations. Very important, I add comments concerning the finer points of performing each exercise, the value of the exercises compared to similar ones, and much more. Finally, I describe a "**super exercise**" that's so effective it can be used to replace **two** of the five exercise movements in the course templates. The Concepts part of the book ends with discussions of

the number of times the exercises should be performed and when you should increase exercise weights.

The second part of the book, "Courses," utilizes the information in the previous part to create a number of "sample" **weight training courses**. All of the courses are based on the "course templates." Some use the basic template; others use the advanced template with "extra credit exercises;" and, a few make use of the "super exercise." Each course includes a complete listing of exercises and the number of times each exercise should be performed. Perhaps most important, I add comments describing a course's strong and weak points. You will easily be able to find a course among these "samples" that's a fit to your needs and desires. Ultimately, these sample courses will assist you as **you** create additional well-balanced weight training courses to use in the future.

In the third and final part of the book, "Advice," I offer tips on a wide variety of subjects. They not only apply to this weight training program, many will help you in any fitness-related endeavor you might become involved with. This information is based on **over 50 years of experience and research** (and trial and error!) with exercise and diet, not to mention serious participation in a number of sports. Some of the items I cover in this part of the book are when to change weight training courses to avoid staleness or boredom, what type of equipment you will need in support of your weight training program, what you should eat, the need for "cardio" exercise, and a lot more.

A quick apology to my female readers... In this book, I'll generally use masculine pronouns. I do this to avoid cumbersome expressions like he/she, etc. However, men and women have the **same** muscles and they have to be exercised in the **same** manner. Men will usually hope for increased strength and/or muscularity. Sometimes women are looking for this too, especially those involved in serious athletics. However, perhaps more frequently, women might simply be looking for a more shapely body. Of course, **muscles are what create this shape**. So, in a word, **this program is just as useful for women as for men**.

I'm happy to have you with me on this very exciting and rewarding life-long quest for strength and health.

Steve Winter
2014

Part 1

CONCEPTS

Almost everyone wishes they were in better physical condition. Men want to be stronger and more muscular. Women want to improve their figure. Believe it or not, it's actually relatively **easy** to solve these problems. Half of the solution depends on **exercise**. That's what this book is all about. The other half of the solution depends on **food** --- what you eat. I'll offer some insights on that later in the book and point you in the direction to go for more information.

Getting back to exercise, it's common knowledge nowadays that **the most efficient way to add strength and muscularity to your body is by means of weight training**. Athletes in almost every sport lift weights to improve their performance. The student or working man might have a barbell set in his basement that he uses to get a bit stronger or to look a little better. Many women have a few dumbbells in the corner of their living room that they mess around with in their search for more shapely bodies. Everyone is doing it. Some are doing it right; many are doing it wrong. If you randomly do an exercise that you heard might be good for this or that reason, you're probably doing it wrong. On the other hand, if you choose exercises wisely, **based on sound exercise concepts**, there's a good chance you're doing it right. This chapter is all about these concepts...

Five Movements

In order to put together well-balanced weight training courses, you have to understand which muscles are exercised when you move your body in different ways. It turns out that it only takes **five movements** to exercise just about every major muscle in your body. Here they are:

1. You can push something
2. You can pull something
3. You can stand up from a squat position
4. You can straighten up from a bent over position
5. You can sit up from lying down position

Let's take a look at the muscles that are exercised when you do each of these movements:

1. When you push something, you exercise your chest, the back of your upper arm (triceps), and the front of your shoulders.
2. When you pull something, you exercise your upper back, the front of your upper arm (biceps), and the back of your shoulders.
3. When you stand up from a squat position, you exercise your thighs and buttocks.
4. When you straighten up from a bent over position, you exercise your lower back.
5. When you sit up from a lying down position, you exercise your stomach.

When you think about it, the only parts of your body that aren't exercised by these movements are your calves and forearms. However, the muscles in your forearms are exercised whenever you lift something as they are used for gripping it. If a person feels that his calves deserve special attention, it's easy to take care of that and we'll talk more about that later.

A **well-balanced** weight training course **must** include at least one exercise from each of these five categories.

For many years I lived in the islands of Micronesia. The young men there were, of course, aware of weight training. However, they didn't know very much about exercise concepts. Most of them only did **two** exercises: bench presses and biceps curls. A bench press is a good pushing exercise and is done by lying on a bench and "pressing" a barbell from your chest to arms length in front of you. To do a biceps curl, you hold a barbell letting it hang down at arms' length in front of you. Then, without moving your elbows and using the strength of your biceps alone, you "curl" the bar upwards to your shoulders.

Well, these guys had barrel chests and good triceps and shoulders from doing the bench presses and, of course, fantastic biceps from doing all those curls. In fact, at first glance, they looked pretty formidable; they had developed all the muscles you notice most when you're facing a person! However, one day, a number of these guys came to my home gym (the best gym on the island!) to train with me. I suggested that they try some overhead presses instead of bench presses. To make a long story short, they couldn't even pull a fairly light barbell from the floor to their shoulders. They had no pulling power and no power in their lower backs or legs. You **don't** want this to happen to you. Develop **all** the muscles in your body. You can only do this with a **well-balanced** weight training program, one that includes **all** of the five movements we have been talking about.

Natural Movements

I call these the five "**natural movements.**" They are the movements that your body is designed to make. In my mind, it's hard to improve on what is natural. From that point of view, it seems to me that, if we base an exercise program on them, we can't go wrong. This is what we'll do in this book.

If you think about this a little, I believe you will agree that this is the most logical way to train with weights. After all, we lift weights so that any physical activity we might be called upon to do in normal life will be easy for us. Suppose that you have to carry another person or a heavy load. Suppose that you have to climb a tree. If you're strong, these activities will be easy for you. If you aren't, you might be in trouble. Well, how do you get the type of strength required to excel at these natural movements? The answer is simple: you do them with added resistance --- and usually weights are the most convenient form of resistance. Again, that's what this book is all about. Of course, if a weight training program happens to make you look like a Mr. (or Miss.) America, that would be a nifty side effect.

Compound Exercises and Isolation Exercises

A “compound” exercise is an exercise that hits **more than one muscle at the same time**. If you recall the muscles that are exercised when we do our five natural movements, it’s clear that at least the pushing, pulling, and squatting movements are compound exercises. It turns out that “straightening up from a bent over position” is also a compound exercise; it doesn’t only exercise your lower back. If you hold something in your hands when you do this movement, you’re lifting the object from the floor. When you lift something, the common recommendation is to “lift with your legs.” This is good advice and means that you should squat down and bend forward at the waist with your back straight till you can grasp the object. Then you lift it by straightening your legs and straightening up at your waist --- opposite to the way you went down. So, it’s easy to see that this movement not only exercises your lower back, it also exercises your thighs and buttocks, just like a squatting motion; it’s a compound exercise. Power lifters call this movement or exercise a “dead lift” and I’m going to use that term from now on. So, **four out of five of our natural movements are compound exercises**.

By the way, to complete the picture, from now on, when I refer to the squatting motion, I’ll be assuming a person has added resistance by somehow carrying an additional weight --- usually a barbell on his shoulders. This goes along with the pushing and pulling motions where I assumed we were acting against a resistance of some kind.

OK, compound exercises hit more than one muscle. On the other hand, “isolation” exercises hit **only one muscle at a time**. The best example might be the biceps curls that the young men in Micronesia were doing. However, if I climb a tree and pull down on a limb or if I pull the oars toward me when rowing a boat, I’ll be doing a pulling motion that will not only exercise my biceps, it will also exercise a number of other very important muscles as well. **You get more “bang for the buck” when you do compound exercises**.

There are many many isolation exercises. The important thing to remember is that they should **not** be the foundation of a weight training program; the five natural movements are. Occasionally, it might be appropriate to add an isolation exercise or two to a workout --- even for vanity purposes like trying to get bulging biceps. However, never add them at the expense of more important exercises. Isolation exercises should be “extra credit;” they should not be the meat of your weight training course.

Course Templates

Most people who train with weights soon discover that it’s impossible to do all the exercises they feel are important in a single exercise session. So, they split their workout into two or more parts. This is usually referred to as a “**split routine**.” This is a sensible idea and we will do it too as we develop templates for the weight training courses we’ll produce from this program. Specifically, we’ll split our workout into two parts and do each part twice per week. So, we’ll have a total of four workouts per week.

OK, we have five natural movements that will be the basis for weight training courses we create in this program. Here's how we arrange the movements into a "**basic course template**:"

Chart #1. Basic Course Template

Monday and Thursday (Pushing)

Sit-ups
Squats
Pushing exercise

Tuesday and Friday (Pulling)

Sit-ups
Dead lifts
Pulling exercise

So, each of the first four natural movements is done twice per week and sit-ups, the fifth natural movement, is done four times per week. I'll explain the rationale for this approach in a little while.

This template covers the **minimum requirements for a well-balanced weight training course**. As simple as it seems, a person can do **extremely well** with a course based on this template --- only two days per week of dead lifts, squats, a pulling exercise (like chin-ups or a rowing motion, and a pushing exercise (like overheads presses or bench presses). Oh, yes, sit-ups too; don't forget them. It's the ultimate application of the K*I*S*S* philosophy. Anything else that we add is really unnecessary. That is why, when we **do** start adding additional exercises to this template, we will call them "extra credit."

OK, let's add this "icing on the cake," some extra credit exercises. First, we will add another **pushing** exercise to the Monday/Thursday routine and another **pulling** exercise to the Tuesday/Friday routine. Next, we will add an isolation exercise to the Monday/Thursday routine that involves a **pushing muscle** (like triceps extensions) and one to the Tuesday/Friday routine that involves a **pulling muscle** (like biceps curls). So, Monday and Thursday will be our **pushing days** and Tuesday and Friday will be our **pulling days**. The first pushing or pulling exercise on any given day will be given priority over the second; it would be difficult to devote equal effort to two consecutive exercises that hit nearly the same muscles.

All this leads to what I call our "**advanced course template**." Here's what it looks like:

Chart #2. Advanced Course Template**Monday and Thursday (Pushing)**

Sit-ups
 Squats
 Pushing exercise #1 (main exercise)
 Pushing exercise #2 *
 Isolation exercise*

Tuesday and Friday (Pulling)

Sit-ups
 Dead lifts
 Pulling exercise #1 (main exercise)
 Pulling exercise #2*
 Isolation exercise*

A star means an exercise is “extra credit.”

Notice that by having a pushing day and a pulling day, you’re giving your muscles a few days to **recuperate** after each workout. It’s not a good idea to exercise the same muscles day after day without a break. However, on the pushing day, you work the pushing muscles very hard. The same goes for pulling muscles on the pulling day.

There’s some important psychology to the **order** of exercises in this workout. Everyone gets a little bit lazy now and then and is tempted to skip an exercise or two. Typically, a person does sit-ups at the **end** of his workout and, needless to say, it’s the first exercise to get chopped if, for some reason, he decides to cut his workout short. So, we’ll do them **first!** Sit-ups are also a great warm-up as we’ll be doing relatively high repetitions of them. Next, a person tends to skip squats or dead lifts. These are very demanding exercises and many people don’t particularly like them for that reason. So, we’ll do them **second!** Most people do the pushing or pulling exercises first. The reason is simply that, for most of us, they are more fun to do! That is why **we’ll do them last;** we’ll save the best till last! That way we are most likely to complete our workouts!

Another possibility with this template is to do **only one** of the extra credit exercises rather than both of them. You might do the second pushing or pulling exercise but **not** the optional isolation exercise. On the other hand, you might do the optional isolation exercise but **not** the second pulling or pushing exercise. Both of these approaches are fine. As long as you leave the three exercises from the basic course template in place, you will get a well-balanced workout.

Workouts based on the course templates will take in the neighborhood of **an hour** to complete. If you use the basic course template, it might take less; if you use the advanced template, it might take more. I feel that courses based on the advanced template will be somewhat challenging. Lately, I use this template with **only one** extra credit exercise. However, I’m a senior citizen! So, this is obviously an individual thing and you will have to decide for yourself what feels right for you. Once again, either template is fine. Both lead to well-balanced workouts.

Of course, we aren't finished yet. Obviously missing from our templates is a discussion of how many repetitions of each exercise you should perform. But, we'll get to that. One thing at a time. Remember, we are trying to nail down concepts.

More on Pushing and Pulling

Let's go a little deeper into the pushing and pulling movements. When you push something, you can push it up, away from you, or down. Likewise, when you pull something, you can pull it up, toward you, or down. Here's a summary of our five natural movements with this information added:

- pushing: pushing-up, pushing-away, pushing-down
- pulling: pulling-up, pulling-toward, pulling-down
- squat
- dead lift
- sit-up

So, we now have **three** exercise options for both the pushing and pulling movements. I think you can see that this opens up the possibility for a lot of **variety** in our workouts. Organizing exercises based on this list of exercise movements enables us to "build" weight training courses in a very simple logical way such that the end result is always a well-balanced workout.

You have probably noticed that I've used some exercise names ("squat" and "dead lift") even though I haven't really explained how to do the exercises yet. However, I think we have said enough about them already so that you will have a good idea as to how they are done.

Basic Compound Exercises

In this section I'm going to explain how to do the exercises that correspond to each of the natural movements. If we break down the pushing and pulling movements into the three directions we just discussed, there are actually a total of **nine** exercises that we'll be concerned with: three pushing, three pulling, squats, dead lifts, and sit-ups. I'll also make some important comments on each of the exercises as well as discuss common variations. Finally, the photos of each exercise as it is being performed should provide additional clarification.

Note: Strictly speaking, sit-ups aren't really a compound exercise. However, I include them here to emphasize their importance as one of our natural movements.

I'm going to assume that you're doing the exercises with a barbell rather than with dumbbells. My opinion is that barbells are more convenient and you can easily do all the basic exercises with them. However, there are some good reasons for occasionally using dumbbells and I'll talk about them in Part 3 of the book.

Here are the nine exercises that correspond to the natural movements:

Pushing up. Overhead press. Hold a barbell at your shoulders. Push (press) it to arms length overhead and lower it.



Comments: This exercise used to be an official Olympic lift. It was removed from the Olympic agenda many years ago because lifters began to do it with an excessive amount of back bend and it became hard to judge. However, without all the backbend, an "Olympic" press involves holding the bar at shoulder width and looking at the bar as you lift it. This automatically forces you to bend your back a little bit. I actually think this slight back bend is good as it strengthens the torso. Another way to do the lift is called a "military press." In this variation you hold the bar wider and look straight ahead as you lift it --- at attention! You can lift more using the Olympic style. The military style will hit the sides of your shoulders more. It's also possible to do an overhead press from behind the neck. This is more difficult and will hit the sides of your shoulders even more than the military press. In all of these versions of the overhead press you can "clean" the barbell to your shoulders (instructions follow on how to do a clean) or you can take the barbell from a squat rack.

The most difficult version of the overhead press is to do it seated from behind your neck. This style of the lift makes it impossible to bend your back or heave your body at all. In one house I lived in many years ago, the basement ceiling wasn't high enough for me to lift a barbell overhead and I was forced to use this method. It turned out to be a blessing in disguise as the exercise hit my shoulders from a whole new angle.

Pushing away. Bench press. Lie on a flat bench and take the barbell from a rack. Starting with the bar at arms' length in front of you, slowly lower it till it just touches your chest and raise it to arms' length again.



Comments: You can vary the width of your grip. A wide grip will hit your chest more. A narrow grip will hit your triceps more.

There is always debate as to which exercise is best, the overhead press or the bench press. I feel it's pretty much a tie. An overhead press is, of course, the lift that has the most history behind it. Lifting something overhead was the traditional way for someone to demonstrate how strong he was. The overhead press has another advantage in that you have to get the barbell to your shoulders in order to do the lift. 'Cleaning' a barbell to your shoulders is an excellent exercise by itself as we'll discuss in a later section. The overhead press is unpopular nowadays and, for all practical purposes, has been replaced by the bench press.

*Of course, the bench press **is** a great exercise too. Since it's **away from the front of you**, midway between up and down, one could argue that it's the most valuable of the three pushing movements. I would do **both** exercises. For one training cycle, make the overhead press your main pushing exercise; for the next, do bench presses (more about training cycles and changing courses later).*

In order to do bench presses safely, you will need to have someone spot you or else you will need a rack with provision for taking the barbell in case you can't lift it from your chest.

The bench press is one of the three lifts done in power lifting competition.

Pushing down. Chair dips or parallel bar dips. For chair dips, place your feet on the seat of a chair. Place your hands on a flat bench and support yourself by your arms so that your legs bridge the distance from the chair to the bench. Your body should be at right angles to the bench. Your torso should be vertical and your legs should be horizontal. Your arms should be straight. To do the exercise, lower yourself by bending your arms and straighten them again. If the exercise gets too easy, ask a friend to place a barbell plate on your thighs. Pushing down can also be done using a dip stand or parallel bars. If that gets too easy, barbell plates can be suspended from your waist.



Comments: This exercise hits your triceps very hard, although it's still a decent chest exercise. I wouldn't use dips as my "main" pushing exercise. Rather, I would use it as an extra credit exercise to follow overhead presses or bench presses. I would almost consider it to be a triceps isolation exercise. Some people don't do them at all. However, I'm sure that a gymnast specializing on the parallel bars would swear by them...

Pulling up. Upright rowing. Hold a barbell with a fairly narrow grip and let it hang down to arms length in front of you. Pull it straight up till your hands reach the top of your rib cage. Then, lower the barbell again.



Comments: Although this is a pulling exercise, it exercises almost the same muscles as the overhead press --- minus the triceps action. But, it's a very "natural" pulling movement; so, I love it. I wouldn't use it as a main pulling exercise. Use it as extra credit. I rarely do this exercise as there is a much better "super exercise" that hits the same muscles and many more at the same time. However, if you like this exercise, by all means use it; it certainly isn't bad for you. It will mostly hit your shoulders and traps (slang for the trapezius muscle located at your upper back. That's the muscle used when you shrug.).

Pulling toward. Bent over rowing. Bend over at the waist with your legs slightly bent till your upper body is roughly parallel to the floor. Let a barbell hang at arms' length. Raise the barbell till it touches your chest and lower it again. Be careful to keep your back straight or even slightly arched; don't slump.



Comments: I feel that this is the best pulling exercise. It should frequently be your main pulling exercise. It's the most effective exercise for developing your lats (slang for the large muscle in your back that gives you the "V" shape, your latissimus dorsi). Whereas the bench press involves pushing away from your body, bent over rowing involves pulling toward your body; they are opposite movements. You could say that they are a perfect "pair" of exercises. You can do this exercise using many different hand spacings. I usually do them narrow. Within reason, I don't think that how you space your hands matters too much.

Pulling down. Chin-ups or pull-ups (or lat machine work). Grasp an overhead bar with either your palms facing you (chin-up) or facing away from you (pull-up) and with your arms fully extended. Pull yourself up till you can place your chin over the bar and then lower yourself till your arms are fully extended again. If the exercise is too easy, you can suspend some barbell plates from your waist. If it's too hard, you will need to use a low pull-up bar so that you can do the exercise from a sitting position.



*Comments: The terminology on this exercise might be confusing. You pull yourself **up** to the bar (a pull-up or chin-up) by pulling **down** on it! This exercise is a close second to bent over rowing relative to its effect on your lats. It can also be very good for developing your biceps. If you place your hands close together, the exercise will hit your biceps more. If you place them far apart, it will emphasize your lats. Be sure to make **both** pull-ups and bent over rowing part of your workout routines.*

*Pulling down can also be done on a "lat machine." This is a piece of equipment which, by means of pulleys attached to a stack of weights, enables you to pull **down** to lift a weight **up**. A lat machine is an excellent addition to a home gym as, like a barbell, the resistance can be adjusted from very light to very heavy. You are not limited to lifting your own body weight as you are in a conventional pull-up or chin-up. It's a worthwhile long term investment for the person who is serious about developing his muscularity and/or strength.*

Squat. Place a barbell on your shoulders from a rack. With feet flat on the floor at shoulder width and with toes pointed slightly outward, slowly squat downward till your thighs are roughly parallel to the floor. Rise to the upright position and replace the barbell on the rack. Be careful to keep your back straight or even slightly arched during the exercise; don't slump. Always look forward while doing the exercise; it helps keep your back straight.



Comments: This exercise can be varied by changing how far down you go. The farther down you go, the harder the exercise will be. Some common "markers" for different depths of squats are:

Full squat (go down as far as possible --- to rock bottom)

Parallel squat (go down till your thighs are parallel to the floor)

Squat to a chair (go down till your buttocks just touch the seat of a chair)

Half squat (go down to somewhat above parallel)

Quarter squat (only go a little way down)

You may hear the warning that you shouldn't go all the way down when you squat. Ignore it! Olympic lifters regularly go to rock bottom. Your body was designed to go that far down, so make use of the design! Generally speaking, when doing this exercise, you should at least go down to parallel. Once in a while, to learn how it feels to carry a very heavy weight, you might want to do quarter squats.

Squats can be dangerous! You don't want to get stuck at the bottom of the lift with a heavy weight on your shoulders! Always have someone spot you if you're using a heavy weight or else use a rack that has provision for spotting.

The squat is one of the three lifts in power lifting competition.

Dead Lift. With your back straight or slightly arched, squat downward and simultaneously bend at your waist to grasp a barbell. Rise up in the opposite manner to the way you went down. Keep your back straight or slightly arched as you lift the barbell. Like with the squat, always look forward; it helps keep your back straight.



Comments: The dead lift is a great exercise. It's the third of the three lifts in power lifting competition. You will find that it's possible to lift the heaviest weights in this exercise. When you start lifting heavy weights, you might find that it's hard to hold the bar; it will want to roll out of your hands. A solution to this problem is to use a "switch grip," with one hand having the palm down and the other with the palm up (as shown in the photos). The best way to vary this exercise is to periodically replace it with the "super exercise" I'll describe in a future section.

Sit-up. Sit on the floor with your hands clasped behind your neck or with your arms crossed in front of your chest. I prefer to cross them in front of my chest as this stops me from slumping. Your legs should be slightly bent. Lower your torso till your back just touches the floor and immediately return to the sitting position.



Comments: Some people have to put their feet under a heavy object to keep them on the floor. That's perfectly OK. If the exercise gets too easy, you can hold a barbell plate against your chest to increase the difficulty. There are many other ways to make the exercise more challenging. One is to use an inclined bench. Another, my favorite, is to bend over the top of a flat bench at right angles to it. You will have to anchor your feet when you do this (you can put your toes under a heavy barbell). If you hold a barbell plate against your chest when you do this variation of the sit-up, you will get a fantastic stretch. On the other hand, if a normal sit up is too hard for you to do, you can have a partner take your hand and help you each time you rise. Another approach is to fasten a rope to something solid near your feet. Then, each time you do a repetition, pull on the rope to help yourself up. With either of these aids, you will gradually build up your abdominal strength such that you won't need them anymore.

Popular nowadays are "crunches." I have done them and some people claim that they are more effective than sit-ups for strengthening your abdominal muscles. The way I look at it, sit-ups have been around since the first day human beings had to sit up in the morning after a long night's rest. They are a natural movement and can't be replaced. For that reason alone, they get my vote.

These are the exercises that correspond to the five **natural movements**. They are really **all you need to know** in order to exercise every major muscle in your body and to obtain and maintain a strong muscular physique. However, there are many more exercises --- hundreds of them if you include isolation exercises (we'll discuss a few of them in the next section). If you would like to have a reference on your bookshelf that describes just about every exercise known to man, I suggest that you get a copy of *Bill Pearl's Keys to the Inner Universe*. Bill is a former Mr. Universe. Along with descriptions of each exercise, he offers valuable insights and advice on weight training and health.

Basic Isolation Exercises

Again, there are hundreds of isolation exercises. I'm only going to discuss four of them:

- One for forearms and one for calves because those two muscle groups aren't specifically worked in our five natural movements.
- One for biceps and one for triceps because men are typically interested in obtaining large muscular upper arms!

Here they are:

Forearms. Wrist curl. Hold a barbell palms up, hands at shoulder width. Sit down on a flat bench and place your forearms on your thighs such that your wrists extend out past your knees. Let your hands move downward bending at the wrist due to the weight of the barbell and then lift them up using the muscles of your forearms. This is one repetition of the exercise. Wrist curls can also be done with your palms facing down. You will not be able to handle as much weight that way.



Calves. Calf Raise. Place a fairly heavy barbell on your shoulders using a squat rack. Step up onto a short length of 2 inch by 4 inch lumber (maybe slightly thicker) so that only your toes and the balls of your feet are on it. Rise up on your toes as far as you can go and then let your heels return to the floor. This is one repetition of the exercise. You can vary this exercise by pointing your toes outward or inward slightly. This will work your calves from slightly different angles. You can also do the exercise seated with the barbell on your thighs. You will need to put a board across your thighs where the barbell will be placed (unless the barbell is very light). Someone will have to place the barbell on the board and then remove it when you're finished with the exercise.



Biceps. Barbell curl. Hold a barbell palms up with your hands at shoulder width letting the barbell hang at arms' length in front of you. Then, without moving your elbows, curl the weight upward till it's at your shoulders. You can vary the exercise by doing it palms down. That's called a reverse curl and is significantly harder.



Triceps. Triceps Extension. Using a narrow grip with palms down, lift a light barbell overhead. Without letting your elbows move, lower the barbell till it approaches the back of your neck. Then raise it. This exercise can also be done seated or lying down.



A Super Exercise

By a “super exercise,” I mean a single exercise that includes **more than one** of the five natural movements. The super exercises that I’m aware of are borrowed from the sport of Olympic lifting. Olympic lifting, of course, is an offshoot of the strongman competitions of a century or so ago and involves lifting a barbell overhead. However, before you can do that, you have to first get the weight to your shoulders. This is done by means of a movement called a “**clean.**” To do a clean, in one motion, you bring the barbell from the floor to your shoulders. And, you have to do it quickly or it won’t work! This is very different from exercises associated with power lifting (bench press, squat, and dead lift) that can all done slowly.

A clean is a complex movement. I’m going to break it down into five steps. You should learn this exercise using an empty bar (or even a broom handle!); learn the technique before trying to lift a real weight. The following photos illustrate the steps. There is also a video demonstration of the exercise on my website:

www.kissfitnessprogram.com/perfect-exercises/

Here are the five steps:

1. Grasp a barbell on the floor as though you were going to do a dead lift (but don’t use a switch grip).



2. Again, like doing a dead lift, start to straighten your legs and pivot your back at your waist till it approaches vertical while simultaneously pulling the bar upward past your knees. Don't slump. Look forward. However, don't stop there.



3. Continue to pull the bar upward as far as you can, finishing the pull by rising up on your toes. Depending on how heavy the barbell is, you may be able to pull it all the way to your shoulders or maybe only as far as your nipples. If you can't get it that far, it's too heavy.



4. If the bar didn't come to your shoulders, quickly squat down so that you can "catch" it. You catch the barbell by quickly turning your wrists, the result being that the bar is safely "racked" at shoulder level (as shown in the photograph).



5. If you had to squat to catch the bar, straighten your legs so that you are standing erect holding the bar at shoulder level.



Why is this a “super” exercise? The answer is simple. **You have combined a dead lift with a pulling motion.** In addition, like when doing normal dead lifts, you have also done a partial squat! So, we will use this exercise --- cleans --- on a pulling day as a substitute for **both** a dead lift and the main pulling exercise in our course templates! If you want to get even more technical, a clean actually replaces **two** pulling motions: bent over rowing plus upright rowing. You start the exercise pulling toward you while you are slightly bent over and finish it by pulling up. Wow! What an exercise! No wonder Olympic lifters who only do a limited number of exercises look so good and get so strong!

When you do multiple repetitions of this exercise, they are usually done “**from the hang,**” without resting the bar on the floor between repetitions. Be warned, this is an extremely demanding exercise. But, it’s well worth the effort!

There’s another very similar super exercise to a clean called a “high pull.” It’s performed identically to a clean except that you don’t catch the bar; you simply pull it as high as you can and then lower it to the start position. This exercise is usually done from the hang also. It has the same benefits as a clean.

Course Templates for Super Exercises

As I've indicated, a super exercise can be used to replace both the dead lift and a pulling exercise. Let's take a look at what the course templates look like with this change:

Chart #3. Basic Course Template with Super Exercise

Monday and Thursday (Pushing)

Sit-ups
Squats
Pushing exercise

Tuesday and Friday (Pulling)

Sit-ups
Super exercise

Chart #4. Advanced Course Template with Super Exercise

Monday and Thursday (Pushing)

Sit-ups
Squats
Pushing exercise #1 (main exercise)
Pushing exercise #2 *
Isolation exercise*

Tuesday and Friday (Pulling)

Sit-ups
Super exercise (main exercise)
Pulling exercise #2*
Isolation exercise*

A star means the exercise is "extra credit."

In Chart #3, it may look as though the pulling workout is too short; there is only **one exercise** plus sit-ups. However, if you work hard on cleans or high pulls, it might take you over 20 minutes to do them. Adding sit-ups to this, the workout will come to around a half hour. Yes, the workout will still be short; but, it won't necessarily be easy. A better alternative, of course, is to use the advanced course template of Chart #4. After doing cleans or high pulls, do one or two extra credit exercises. That will be a very substantial workout!

Sets and Reps --- for Most Exercises

There's one more thing we need to know before we can put all this together into usable courses; we have to know about "**sets**" and "**reps**." It's easy. For example, when you lift a barbell overhead, you're doing one repetition, or rep, of the exercise. When you do five of these lifts right after one another, you're doing a set of five reps. In order to work a muscle group adequately, a person will generally do more than one set of an exercise.

In addition, it's common sense that you wouldn't attempt to lift a maximum weight (or perform at your maximum in any sport!) without first **warming up**. So, when doing almost any exercise with weights, a person will begin his session with a number of lighter sets. Typically, these sets will be done for higher reps than the number of reps you are shooting for when you will do the exercise at the maximum weight you plan to use.

Over the years I have developed a series of sets and reps, a "**formula**," that provides both a satisfactory warm-up as well as a good workout for the muscles targeted by the exercise you're doing. With the exception of sit-ups, this formula should be applied to all exercises in the basic course template. It devotes three sets to warm-up and three sets to the main part of your workout for the exercise. Here it is:

Chart #5. Sets and Reps for Exercises in the Basic Course Template

Set #	Reps	Difficulty
1	12	Easy (can do 18 to 20 reps)
2	10	Medium (can do 12 to 14 reps)
3	8	Difficult (can do 9 or 10 reps)
4	6	Heavy (can do 6 reps)
5	Same	
6	Same	

In the three warm-up sets, you won't work up to your capacity; you will be able to do more reps than are required. This is what a warm-up is all about. You want to "lubricate" your joints and get blood to your muscles before you go all out. You will choose the warm-up weights such that you feel you are able to complete the number of reps given in parentheses in the chart --- although you will not **do** that many reps.

The three warm up sets call for doing 12, 10, and then 8 reps. I've rated these sets as easy, medium, and difficult to perform. The meanings of "easy" and "medium" are probably clear. By "difficult" I mean that you can comfortably do the required number of reps and probably one or two more in addition. The **additional** reps would be hard to do. For the three "heavy" sets of the exercise, it would be hard to do the **required** reps.

We handle sets and reps for the extra credit exercises in the advanced course template a little bit differently. In this case, only two sets are devoted to warm-up but four sets are devoted to the main part of the workout for the exercise. You will be warmed up already from the previous exercises you have done. Less warm-up will also be necessary as you will not try to go

as close to your limits as for the previous exercises. Here's the formula for sets and reps for extra credit exercises:

Chart #6. Sets and Reps for Extra Credit Exercises in the Advanced Course Template

Set #	Reps	Difficulty
1	12	Easy (can do 18 to 20 reps)
2	10	Medium (can do 12 to 14 reps)
3	8	Difficult (can do 9 or 10 reps)
4	Same	
5	Same	
6	Same	

This chart is essentially the same as the previous one except that the main part of the workout begins with the **third** set rather than the fourth. This causes a few other things to happen:

- You will be doing higher reps in the main sets of the exercise (eight instead of six)
- You will be exerting less effort (the exercise will be "difficult" rather than "heavy.")

Remember, the intent of the extra credit exercises is to give the muscles you're targeting some extra work. However, since this will be the second (or third) pushing or pulling exercise you're doing, there's no need to lift maximum poundages; you did that with the previous exercise(s). This is the reason for cutting back on the weight and increasing the reps. The higher reps will tend to "pump up" the muscles more and will assist in improving your muscularity.

Occasionally, a person whose object is increasing his strength as much as possible might want to do his main pushing or pulling exercise (or squats or dead lifts) at lower reps and with higher poundages than the chart of sets and reps for the basic course template suggests. In this case, instead of doing sets #5 and #6 at the same weight as set #4, he should increase the weight for these sets and do 4 reps for set #5 and 2 reps for set #6. The sets and reps of Chart #5 would be revised to give the following:

Chart #7. Sets and Reps for Exercises in the Basic Course Template using Maximum Poundages

Set #	Reps	Difficulty
1	12	Easy (can do 18 to 20 reps)
2	10	Medium (can do 12 to 14 reps)
3	8	Difficult (can do 9 or 10 reps)
4	6	Heavy
5	4	Heavy
6	2	Heavy

In this workout, the last three sets would be done as heavy as possible. The reps that are given in the chart for these sets are a guide only. For example, you may find that for set #4 you can do the suggested six reps at the weight you have selected. However, you may also find that, for set #5, you can only do three reps at the weight you selected and that, in set #6, you can only do one. Of course, many other possibilities exist. The important thing is that you are trying to max out for all three sets.

This will be a demanding workout and you may have to rest five minutes or so between the last few sets. It will be demanding mentally as well as physically as you will have to “psych” yourself up prior to each of the heavy sets. This type of workout is best done with a training partner who is roughly the same strength as you are. In this situation, the companionship and even friendly competition will help a great deal in making your workouts a success.

Sets and reps --- for Sit-Ups

Sit-ups are a special animal with respect to sets and reps. There are many opinions on this. I think mine makes sense. However, there are lots of guys in the world with excellent abs. So, other approaches are probably just as valid.

First of all, as I’ve already indicated, you should do your sit-ups at the beginning of the workout (rather than as an add-on at the end like so many people do). If you do them at the beginning, they will add to your warm-up and, most important, you will **do** them; they won’t be the exercise that gets scrapped if, for some reason, you decide to cut your workout short.

I recommend doing only **one set** of sit ups but aiming at a high number of reps --- at least 50, but not more than 100. If 100 gets too easy, you should add resistance by holding a barbell plate against your chest. That’s it. As discussed in the description of the exercise earlier, there are many harder types of sit-ups that you might want to consider doing. They will add variety to your workout and might also work your abs from a slightly different angle.

Even though we only do one set of sit-ups, there are a number of factors that compensate for this. First, the reps are very high. Second, we do them at every exercise session. These two factors more than make up for the fact that we only do one set.

Sets and Reps --- for Forearms and Calves

Forearms and calves are another special animal. Here again, I recommend a **single set** of higher reps than for other exercises you do. Also, I recommend you do the forearm or calf work at the **end** of your workout; it's low priority. In general, I would aim for a single set of 20 reps. As an option, in the case of forearms, you might first do a set of 20 reps with palms facing up and then decrease the weight and immediately do another set of 20 reps with palms facing down. Likewise, in the case of calves, you might do a set of 20 reps with toes pointing out, wait a bit, and then do a second set of 20 with toes facing in.

Sets and Reps --- an Exception for Lower Body Exercises

The lower body exercises are the most demanding. They are squats, dead lifts, and cleans (or high pulls). We use Charts #5 or #7 for determining the sets and reps for these exercises. This system works great and is suitable for most people. However, I'll confess that I sometimes deviate from it by only doing **six reps** of the warm up sets (the first three sets) for one or more of these exercises. I, personally, find doing the high rep warm-ups to be uncomfortable for these exercises. Not hard, just uncomfortable. This is a personal preference and I feel that, even though I'm cutting back on the reps, I still get an adequate warm up. In Chart #8 I lay out this system of sets and reps; it's a revision of Chart #5. Note that the level of difficulty for the first three sets is unchanged; you just do less of them.

Chart #8. Optional Sets and Reps for Lower Body Exercises in the Basic Course Template

Set #	Reps	Difficulty
1	6	Easy (can do 18 to 20 reps)
2	Same	Medium (can do 12 to 14 reps)
3	Same	Difficult (can do 9 or 10 reps)
4	Same	Heavy (can do 6 reps)
5	Same	
6	Same	

Finally, if you choose to use this type of warm-up and go for maximum poundages, you would use the following chart of sets and reps. It's a combination of Charts #7 and #8.

Chart #9. Optional Sets and Reps for Lower Body Exercises in the Basic Course Template Using Maximum Poundages

Set #	Reps	Difficulty
1	6	Easy (can do 18 to 20 reps)
2	Same	Medium (can do 12 to 14 reps)
3	Same	Difficult (can do 9 or 10 reps)
4	Same	Heavy
5	4	Heavy
6	2	Heavy

When to Increase Workout Weights

The last detail we have to cover is when to increase your workout weights. After all, the main purpose of lifting weights is to get stronger, right? And the only way we can get stronger is by increasing the weight we lift. OK, how do we do it?

The answer is simple. When you can do **all** the reps and sets at your max weight (either four sets of eight reps or three sets of six reps), you should increase the weight. After increasing, you might find that you can do some of the new max weight sets the desired number of reps but not the others. Stick with the weight till you can do the required number of reps for **all** sets. When you can, increase again. That's all there is to it. An important point is that it's better to make a **small increase** in weight that you are almost positive you can handle rather than a large one that will probably give you difficulty. It's nice to succeed! Don't set yourself up for failure. Slow and steady wins the race...

If you are doing low reps and maximum poundages for some of your main exercises (Charts #7 or #9), you should likewise increase when you can do the required reps **in good form**. If, for example, you have to struggle to make a 200 lb bench press for two reps, it would probably not be a good idea to increase. Wait till you can do the lift more easily. When you "own" it, increase it.

Part 2

COURSES

We are now in a position to map out some sample exercise courses, courses that will be ready for you to use right now. All the courses will be well-balanced, exercising every major muscle group in your body and are based on the course templates we developed earlier (Charts #1 through #4). Each of them uses exercises from our lists of compound, isolation, and super exercises and indicates precisely how many sets and reps of each exercise you should do (based on Charts #5 through #9). I've tried to present a wide variety of courses so that you will get a feel for the many possibilities that exist. I also make comments on each of the courses, offering insights that might not be apparent when simply looking at a list of exercises. So, on one hand, we are using a "cook book" approach in generating exercise courses from the charts and lists of exercises we developed earlier. On the other, we recognize that cook books can be dangerous as they often eliminate your brain from what you're cooking; it **does** take experience to be a good cook. My hope is that the comments I make will give you the experience it takes to wisely use the concepts presented in this book to design effective well-balanced weight training courses.

Course #1 (based on Chart #1)

Mon/Th (Pushing)	Tu/Fri (Pulling)
Sit-up	Sit-up
Full squat	Dead lift
Bench press	Bent over rowing

Comments: You might call this the "foundation" weight training course. I recommend that newcomers to weight training start here. You can build great strength and/or muscularity with this simple course. It would be especially useful to people who are thinking of becoming involved with the sport of power lifting as all the power lifts are included. This course uses the "central" pushing and pulling motions that oppose one another (a push **away** from your body which is bench press and a pull **toward** it which is bent over rowing). My feeling is that this is the most effective combination of the pushing and pulling motions. This course uses a "full" squat, that is, you would go down to below parallel.

Here's what the workout would look like on your pulling day:

Set of some type of sit ups, 50 to 100 reps, with added weight if necessary.

Set of light dead lifts, 12 reps

Set of medium dead lifts, 10 reps
 Set of difficult dead lifts, 8 reps
 Three sets of heavy dead lifts, 6 reps

Set of light bent over rowing, 12 reps
 Set of medium bent over rowing, 10 reps
 Set of difficult bent over rowing, 8 reps
 Three sets of heavy bent over rowing, 6 reps

Course #2 (based on Chart #2)

Mon/Th (Pushing)	Tu/Fri (Pulling)
Sit-up	Sit-up
Full squat	Dead lift
Bench press	Bent over rowing
Triceps extension*	Barbell curl*

A star means the exercise is "extra credit."

Comments: This course is the same as Course #1 except that we have added an isolation exercise to each of the workouts. The isolation exercise is an "extra credit" exercise and would be done no less than 8 reps in each set.

Here's what the pulling workout would look like:

Set of some type of sit ups, 50 to 100 reps, with added weight if necessary.

Set of light dead lifts, 12 reps
 Set of medium dead lifts, 10 reps
 Set of difficult dead lifts, 8 reps
 Three sets of heavy dead lifts, 6 reps

Set of light bent over rowing, 12 reps
 Set of medium bent over rowing, 10 reps
 Set of difficult bent over rowing, 8 reps
 Three sets of heavy bent over rowing, 6 reps

Set of light barbell curls, 12 reps
 Set of medium barbell curls, 10 reps
 Four sets of difficult barbell curls, 8 reps

Course #3 (based on Chart #2)

Mon/Th (Pushing)

Sit-up

Squat

Bench press (main)

Overhead press*

Tu/Fri (Pulling)

Sit-up

Dead lift

Bent over rowing (main)

Lat machine work or pull-ups or chin-ups*

A star means the exercise is "extra credit."

Comments: This course is the same as Course #1 except that we have added second pushing and pulling movements. The first of each of these I call the "main" exercise and you will go down to 6 reps. The second pulling or pushing exercise is an "extra credit" exercise and you will go down to no lower than 8 reps. Instead of lat machine work, a person could do chin-ups or pull-ups. In that case, instead of increasing the weight as you warm up, you would increase the reps. For example, you might do warm up sets of 2 and 5 reps and then four sets of 8 reps, for a total of six sets. People who have trouble doing a regulation chin-up or pull-up can do the exercise seated, which is considerably easier.

Here's what the pulling workout would look like:

Set of some type of sit ups, 50 to 100 reps, with added weight if necessary.

Set of light dead lifts, 12 reps

Set of medium dead lifts, 10 reps

Set of difficult dead lifts, 8 reps

Three sets of heavy dead lifts, 6 reps

Set of light bent over rowing, 12 reps

Set of medium bent over rowing, 10 reps

Set of difficult bent over rowing, 8 reps

Three sets of heavy bent over rowing, 6 reps

Set of light work on lat machine, 12 reps

Set of medium work on lat machine, 10 reps

Four sets of difficult work on lat machine, 8 reps

Instead of lat machine work, a workout doing pull-ups might look like this. The reps given are an example and would depend completely on the individual.

Set of 2 pull-ups

Set of 5 pull-ups

Four sets of 8 pull-ups (these last four sets should be difficult)

Course #4 (based on Chart #2)

Mon/Th (Pushing)

Sit-up

Squat

Bench press (main)

Overhead press*

Triceps extensions*

Tu/Fri (Pulling)

Sit-up

Dead lift

Bent over rowing (main)

Lat machine work or pull-ups or chin-ups*

Barbell curl*

A star means the exercise is "extra credit."

Comments: This workout combines all of the three preceding workouts and contains two "extra credit" exercises, one a pushing or pulling exercise and the other an isolation exercise. It could be quite demanding depending on how hard the exerciser exerts himself and could easily take more than an hour to complete.

Here's what the pulling workout would look like:

Set of some type of sit ups, 50 to 100 reps, with added weight if necessary.

Set of light dead lifts, 12 reps

Set of medium dead lifts, 10 reps

Set of difficult dead lifts, 8 reps

Three sets of heavy dead lifts, 6 reps

Set of light bent over rowing, 12 reps

Set of medium bent over rowing, 10 reps

Set of difficult bent over rowing, 8 reps

Three sets of heavy bent over rowing, 6 reps

Set of light work on lat machine, 12 reps

Set of medium work on lat machine, 10 reps

Four sets of difficult work on lat machine, 8 reps

Set of light barbell curls, 12 reps

Set of medium barbell curls, 10 reps

Four sets of difficult barbell curls, 8 reps

Course #5 (based on Chart #3)

Mon/Th (Pushing)	Tu/Fri (Pulling)
Sit-up	Sit-up
Half squat	Clean
Overhead press	

Comments: This is the type of course that a person interested in Olympic lifting (or overhead lifting for strongman feats) might like to do. It includes all the essential movements for developing the strength required to do this. Note that this workout includes the “clean.” This is the super exercise that we use to replace both dead lifts and a pulling motion. As I indicated when I described this exercise, it can be very demanding. I recommend taking as much as 3 to 5 minutes rest between your last heavy sets of the clean.

Here’s what the course would look like on the pulling day:

Set of some type of sit ups, 50 to 100 reps, with added weight if necessary.

Set of light cleans, 12 reps

Set of medium cleans, 10 reps

Set of difficult cleans, 8 reps

Three sets of heavy cleans, 6 reps

Course #6 (based on Chart #4)

Mon/Th (Pushing)	Tu/Fri (Pulling)
Sit-up	Sit-up
Half squat	Clean (main)
Overhead press (main)	
Dips*	Lat machine or pull-ups or chin-ups*

A star means the exercise is “extra credit.”

Comments: This is the same as Course #5 except that we have added second pushing and pulling movements. Whenever you do another pulling movement with cleans, the second movement should be treated like an “extra credit” exercise; the clean is always the “main” exercise.

*This course uses half squats rather than full squats. It will be possible to handle a much greater weight in this exercise than in full squats. This will help strengthen your torso and develop your ability to support a heavy load. It's good to do fractional squats from time to time for this reason. However, you should not neglect full squats. This course also uses dips. The number of dips shown is for example purposes only. The actual number done would depend on the strength of the exerciser. If you're doing two pushing exercises like in this course, I do **not** recommend that you use dips as the main exercise.*

Here's what the course would look like on the **pulling** day:

Set of some type of sit ups, 50 to 100 reps, with added weight if necessary.

Set of light cleans, 12 reps

Set of medium cleans, 10 reps

Set of difficult cleans, 8 reps

Three sets of heavy cleans, 6 reps

Set of light work on lat machine, 12 reps

Set of medium work on lat machine, 10 reps

Four sets of difficult work on lat machine, 8 reps

Here's what Course #6 would look like on the **pushing** day:

Set of some type of sit ups, 50 to 100 reps, with added weight if necessary.

Set of light half squats, 12 reps

Set of medium half squats, 10 reps

Set of difficult half squats, 8 reps

Three sets of heavy half squats, 6 reps

Set of light overhead press, 12 reps

Set of medium overhead press, 10 reps

Set of difficult overhead press, 8 reps

Three sets of heavy overhead presses, 6 reps

Set of 2 dips

Set of 5 dips

Four sets of 8 dips (these sets should be difficult)

Course #7 (based on Chart #1)

Mon/Th (Pushing)	Tu/Fri (Pulling)
Sit-up	Sit-up
Full squat	Dead lift
Bench press	Bent over rowing
Wrist curls*	

A star means the exercise is “extra credit.”

Comments: In this course I added wrist curls to illustrate how this exercise (or calf raises) might be handled in our course templates. I simply recommend adding them to the end of your workout on either a pushing or pulling day. They will not take long to do. Here I’ve added them to the pushing day.

Here’s what the course would look like on that day:

Set of some type of sit ups, 50 to 100 reps, with added weight if necessary.

Set of light full squats, 12 reps
 Set of medium squats, 10 reps
 Set of difficult squats, 8 reps
 Three sets of heavy squats, 6 reps

Set of light bench presses, 12 reps
 Set of medium bench presses, 10 reps
 Set of difficult bench presses, 8 reps
 Three sets of heavy bench presses, 6 reps

Set of wrist curls, palms up, 20 reps
 Set of wrist curls, palms down, 20 reps

Course #8 (based on Chart #1)

Mon/Th (Pushing)	Tu/Fri (Pulling)
Sit-up	Sit-up
Full squat	Dead lift
Bench press	Bent over rowing

Comments: This time let's assume that you are trying to lift maximum poundages in the bench press and that you are aiming for the reps given in Chart #7. In sets #4 through #6, you would try to lift the weight as many times as possible. You would select weights for these sets such that you expect to lift them the required number of times but with some difficulty. Let's also assume that you prefer to do only six reps for squat in your warm-up sets as given in Chart #8.

Here's what the pushing workout would look like in this course:

Set of some type of sit ups, 50 to 100 reps, with added weight if necessary.

Set of light full squats, 6 reps

Set of medium squats, 6 reps

Set of difficult squats, 6 reps

Three sets of heavy squats, 6 reps

Set of light bench presses, 12 reps

Set of medium bench presses, 10 reps

Set of difficult bench presses, 8 reps

Set of heavy bench presses, 6 reps

Set of heavy bench presses, 4 reps

Set of heavy bench presses, 2 reps

Part 3

ADVICE

In any sport --- as in many other areas of life --- there's much that has to be learned by **experience**; you can only learn so much from a course or from a book. If you're fortunate enough when it comes to weight training, you will get to know someone who has "been there -- - done that." He will have answers to the infinity of questions that come up as you get involved with what might be a new physical activity for you. Likewise, if you're taking your present involvement with weight training to a higher level, he will be able to help you out in a similar way.

This is why brick layers, machinists, and many other craftsmen spend a number of years as apprentices before they go out on their own. Similarly, this is also why a physician spends a few years as an intern before he can be licensed to practice independently. Nothing beats one-on-one give and take with a person who is more experienced than you are when you are learning something new.

I certainly have a lot of experience with weight training. Some of the things I've done were very successful. Other things I would do differently if I had the opportunity to do them again. This happens to all of us, again, in many areas of life. So, in this part of the book I'm going to play the role of a **mentor** and pass along to you some tidbits of advice based on my successes and, yes, failures with weight training that are somewhat outside the organized scope of the previous two parts of this book. I hope this advice answers some of the questions you would like to ask a friend or mentor as you move ahead with your weight training program.

Record Keeping

You should **keep an accurate record** of the weights you lift and the number of sets and reps you do for **every** exercise in **every** workout. In addition, you should add comments in your record like: hard, easy, tired, felt great, low energy, etc. Finally, you should make a note of any weights you would like to increase during your next workout. The object is that there will be **no guesswork** then; you will have decided upon exactly how much you will lift during your previous workout.

This is the minimum you should do. I strongly recommend keeping a "**health journal.**" In it, in addition to information on your workouts, you would make notes on changes in your diet and how you feel they influence your lifting performance, the way you feel, and your overall health. You would also keep an accurate record of any health problems you experience and try, wherever possible, to relate them to some aspect of your lifestyle so that you can change it and, hopefully, not experience the same problems again.

Certainly, your journal should include a record of certain **data** related to your overall physical condition. At the minimum, you would record your bodyweight at, say, monthly intervals. I would also record resting pulse rate and blood pressure, being careful to always take these measurements at the same time of day and under the same conditions. You will probably also want to keep a record of certain key body measurements. I recommend chest, waist, neck, thighs, and upper arms (measure both; they might be different!). Finally, I would take photos of myself, date them, and paste them in your journal.

For this type of record keeping, I would use one those old-fashioned black-with-white-speckles notebooks that have been around for a thousand years and will probably be around for a thousand more. Don't keep records on a computer as, even if you print out a hard copy now and then, you are still apt to lose your records; it will just be a stack of papers. It will be much harder to lose a file of numbered notebooks --- that will become more and more precious to you as the years go by.

I've had an extremely adventuresome life, having visited and/or worked on countless Pacific islands --- sometimes located hundreds of miles from "civilization." I now regret greatly that I didn't keep a journal of my experiences from this period of my life. It would certainly be the material for a best seller now!

Warming Up and Stretching

When you're young, warming up and stretching out before getting down to serious exercise almost seems almost silly. That's how resilient your muscles and joints are when you're a teenager or even in your 20's or 30's. However, somewhere in middle age, you will realize that it feels good to loosen up your joints and get the blood flowing to your muscles before you work them hard. Well, **at any age**, you should take care to warm up adequately. There's the danger that, if you don't, you could cause some damage, especially to your joints.

Warming up is simple. Just do a few sets of the exercise with light weights. Our course templates take care of this for us. However, I want to repeat it here to emphasize its importance. It's also important to stretch the muscles you are going to exercise beforehand. Stretching is simple too. Just move the joints that are involved to their limiting positions a number of times. For example, if you intend to do squats, do a bunch of them with no weight to rock bottom position. I would also do some toe touches in order to stretch the back side of your thighs (your hamstrings) too (the squats stretch the front).

Finally, pay attention to any **pain** that you might experience during or after a workout. If it doesn't go away after a reasonable time, do something about it. Probably all that will be required is the application of a good liniment and/or massage by someone who knows what he is doing.

For many years I experienced pain in my right shoulder. It might have been the result of a lousy landing "playing" judo in my 30's. Whatever the case, I continued to train with weights, always

doing my best to choose exercises that bothered my shoulder the least --- but never really solving the problem. Two or three years ago I was surprised to find that I had **lost half my right bicep** when I looked in the mirror one morning. I guess that what happened was the tendon that attached the one half of the biceps to the shoulder became so weakened and worn from the constant irritation that it simply broke. Maybe I could have avoided this if I had been less of a hero and taken better care of myself years before. Fortunately, my arm still works amazingly well with only half a biceps muscle!

Breathing

When we lift a heavy weight, we tend to breathe correctly automatically. However, I will mention it briefly here as I vividly recall it being a subject of much debate amongst my friends and workout partners when I first started to train with weights. Most of them had breathing all wrong! It's very simple. Prior to lifting a heavy weight, you take a full deep breath. For example, with a bench press, this would be as you lower the weight to your chest or, with a squat, as you go into the squat position. The important thing is that, when you start the lift, your lungs are full of air. Then, as you lift the weight, you slowly let out some of the air. You will not want to let it all out as you want to keep your torso tight until the end of the lift; that requires that your lungs be full or nearly full of air. When you complete the lift, or right before that when you no longer have to exert significant effort, let the air out of your lungs and start the cycle over. That's it.

Lifting Belts

Lifting belts are related to breathing. When we take a deep breath before lifting a heavy weight, we automatically tense our abdominal muscles; we unconsciously try to make our entire torso as rigid as possible. It's obvious that this is extremely important as the muscles of your torso are what stabilizes your body whenever you're supporting a weight and are standing on your own two feet (this is an objection to exercise machines that are popular in health clubs and gyms nowadays; most exercises with them are done sitting down and don't require much torso strength).

A lifting belt simply adds to the rigidity of your torso. It's commonly thought that it protects your back; in actuality, the rigidity it adds to your abdomen might be more important. Old time strongmen of the early 1900's didn't use lifting belts and, perhaps as a result, had unbelievably well-developed torsos. They might even be considered to be thick-in-the-waist by today's standards. I don't recommend the use of a lifting belt except, possibly, when you are attempting a very heavy lift. It is better to develop a strong torso --- a natural lifting belt --- that will be with you 24/7 rather than rely on a crutch in order to perform a moderate lift. Many lifters even use them for bench presses where the torso is **not** required in transmitting the weight of the barbell to the ground. I don't see the logic of this.

Length of Training Cycles and When to Change Courses

One thing you don't want to happen to your training is for it to get boring; you would like to keep it as exciting as possible so that you look forward to workouts rather than dread them. To me, this implies that I had better change my workout once in a while. It's also good to change your workout so that you exercise muscles from a different angle. This will greatly improve your overall athletic ability; you don't want to develop strength within certain relatively narrow limits --- like the Micronesian guys I mentioned in the first part of the book.

I strongly recommend that you **change your weight training course every eight weeks** --- or every two months. In Part 2 of this book, we learned that it's an easy matter to develop a great number of different but well-balanced courses using the course templates. So, pick one of the courses from this book or make up your own --- and change your workout every eight weeks!

However, it may happen that you're making fantastic gains with a certain exercise and you don't want to interrupt the great progress you're making. OK, stay with that exercise for another eight weeks. But, change one or more of the other exercises you are doing.

For example, suppose you're doing the following exercises: bench press, bent over rowing, squats, dead lifts, and isolation exercises, and you don't want to interrupt the progress you're making on the bench press. A possibility would be for you to change your workout (course) to something like this: bench press, cleans, half squats, and isolation exercises.

Of course there are plenty of other possibilities that would be equally good. The point is that you should stir things up every few months to keep your workouts exciting and to develop your all around athletic ability as much as possible. I'll bet that after you do bench presses for another two months, you will be ready for a change. If you **still** want to continue them, you had better add a second pushing exercise to your next training cycle (and possibly forget about the isolation exercises). You **must** work the pushing and pulling muscles from different angles or you will wind up in the same boat as my friends from Micronesia.

When beginning to do a different exercise, you should start out using poundages that are a little bit easy for you to handle. This applies not only to the three warm up sets but also to the three or four difficult or heavy sets in your workout. Remember, you have eight weeks to increase your workout weights. It's better to start at a point where you **know** you will be able to do the exercises in good form rather than set yourself up for the possibility of failure --- or even injury --- on the very first workout of a new course. Remember that success increases your enthusiasm. We need all of that we can get in a demanding activity like weight training. This philosophy is somewhat like the expression of "taking one step back but two steps forward." The result is still progress, steady progress. That's what you should be looking for.

Taking a Break

Related to changing courses is taking a break from training. The time to take a break is **between** training cycles when you change courses. Every eight weeks, I recommend taking **two days off**, either a Monday/Tuesday pair of workouts or a Thursday/Friday pair. This short break will enable you to “come up for air” and muster up enthusiasm for the next eight week cycle that you’re about to begin. Every 16 weeks, I recommend taking a **full week** off. This would again be at the end of a training cycle. Don’t try to **never** take a break. A few days off every two months or a full week off every four months won’t slow down your progress. It will be a welcome physical and mental rest from the routine of training four times per week and will enable you to start your new course with a high level of enthusiasm. And, if you train consistently using this procedure for a year, you should probably take a **longer** break. Take a vacation from weight training for two weeks or so. Similar to other breaks, this will keep your enthusiasm high and prevent staleness. If you have been training hard, it will also prevent overtraining and the possibility that you will encounter “sticking points” (long periods where it’s impossible to increase a workout weight) that will be hard to work your way through.

Consistency

Consistency might be the most important key to success in a weight training program --- and to many other projects that you will undertake in your lifetime. In order to be successful at your weight training program, you must be true to it.

There are many features that have been built into the program that will help you achieve this objective. In general, it’s not an overly ambitious program. For example, it doesn’t require you to train for six days per week for two hours per day. We only exercise for an hour or so at a time and for only four days per week. That’s a total of **only four hours per week**.

Next, we have built layoffs into the program. You **must** take a break for a few days or a week every two months or so. Plan your breaks. Don’t take one because you’re sick of training; take a break **before** you get sick of it --- and keep your enthusiasm high.

Somehow you must adopt the mindset that exercise --- in this case, weight training --- is a part of your lifestyle that can’t be neglected. You must make it as important as everything else that is essential to your survival --- as important as eating well or getting a good night’s sleep. Physical activity --- exercise --- **is** that important. Only when you realize this will you continue your exercise program for the long term --- **for the rest of your life!**

But, there will come times when you **must** miss a workout. Unexpected travel, a tragedy; there are many possibilities. All you can do in those situations is to get back to your training as soon as possible. Never stop because you have missed a few workouts or even a few weeks of training. If you can manage to think in the long term, you will realize that a short break in your training is nothing compared to a life time of it.

In college I once decided that I wouldn't train a semester and, instead, that I would devote myself fully to my academic work. This was a **terrible mistake**. Of course, my physical condition deteriorated. However, in addition, my school work didn't improve at all. What I realized afterward was that the physical activity not only increased my mental clarity, it also served as a break from "deskwork." **Balance is extremely important**. Don't trick yourself into thinking that your training isn't important or that there's something that's more important.

Training Partners

There were two times in my life when I excelled at a particular sport. In college I did very well training with weights. Around 10 years later, on Guam, I did very well as a distance runner. I believe that part of the reason for these successes was that, in both cases, I had training partners. In college, I was fortunate to have a partner who was just about the same strength as I was. Our friendly competitions most definitely helped me to achieve some of the lifts I did at that time. On Guam, I ran with the two best runners on the island. Almost every morning before sunrise we would run around the perimeter of a Navy golf course for an hour or more. What a great way to begin a day --- assuming there were no golf balls flying by.

A training partner will not only encourage you to do better **during** your exercise session, he will also help you **to do it** on days when you might be tempted to **skip** the workout for one reason or another. In addition, he will be a great help in making you **finish** a workout on days when you feel lazy and want to cut your exercise session short. A training partner can be anyone of just about any ability. I've talked about partners with roughly the same ability as me. However, I've also trained under a person --- a mentor --- who was a great source of inspiration to me. On the other hand, I've trained with many people while playing the role of **their** teacher. In all cases the important result is that the partnership **gets you to the gym**. You have an unwritten contract to be there with someone --- a promise. It's not nice to break a promise...

Ways to Shorten your Workout

I don't want to encourage you to shorten your workout. However, if, for some reason, you **do** shorten it, you should **do it right!** You should do it in such a way that the meat of the course will remain and you will still get a well-balanced workout. In the first part of the book I pointed out that the order of the exercises in our templates is important. We do the most important exercises first and leave the extra credit exercises till last. The logic is that, if you cut your workout short, the extra credit stuff is what will go.

However, suppose you get **really** lazy and you want to cut your workout even more. This isn't a particularly wise thing to do. However, people **do** get lazy and, if you fall into this trap now and then, it's important that you still do a sensible workout.

You will recall that in the basic course template (Chart #5), there are three warm up sets and three heavy sets. If you **must** decrease the number of sets, do four of them. Be sure to do **at least do one heavy set**. This will still work your muscles to their limit but will not work them as

long. The result of this abbreviated approach will be that a minimum workout will consist of sit-ups (don't skip them; they only take a few minutes!), four sets of a pushing or pulling exercise, and four sets of squats or dead lifts. That's it. Since most of the sets will be warm-up sets, the workout will go very quickly. You will be able to get it done in half an hour. This is a minimal workout. You can actually make gains with it. However, don't let it become a habit. You need more sets if you would like to make serious improvement.

Anything is Better than Nothing!

I have a framed motto on my office wall that reads:

When it comes to exercise,
Most people do **NOTHING**.
Do **ANYTHING**!
ANYTHING is better than **NOTHING**!

The most common excuse people make for not exercising is that they don't have time. Some of these folks are plain lazy and, even if they had nothing else to do, they still wouldn't exercise. However, there are many people who sincerely believe they don't have the time to exercise. Perhaps their schedules are already full with obligations of one sort or another. My answer to these people is to **do anything**. Even a walk around the block with your pet dog is **better than nothing**. Touch your toes a few times and do a few sit-ups. You **must** learn to realize that exercise is of the utmost importance and that you **must** do something regularly --- even if it only takes a minute or two. If you can do this, you will have made exercise a part of your **lifestyle**. There's a good chance that these small beginnings will lead to something very significant --- perhaps a program as life-changing as the one we talk about in this book.

Why All This?

I've spent a lot of time talking about how short you can get away with making your workout. I've even talked about how doing only a few minutes of exercise can be very significant. You might be thinking that this is out of place in a book dealing with weight training. Unfortunately, it's the sad voice of experience speaking. I've seen countless people begin an exercise program only to stop a few weeks or months later. You probably know some of these people yourself.

You may know one or more ex-athletes. So many people were star athletes in high school or college. How about ex-marines or former members of a branch of the military, guys who were really tough and fit when they were in the service? I'll bet that 95% of these once-fit people are no longer in shape. Why is this the case? Well, all these people had a coach or drill sergeant forcing them to perform. When you remove this element from the picture, these people stop training because **exercise didn't become a part of their lifestyle**. They only did it because, in a way, they had to. Of course, they chose their sport and they chose their military career. However, they never appreciated the value of the level of fitness they obtained enough for them to want to maintain it on their own.

I don't want you to become one of the countless people who have abandoned their training programs. That's the reason I have given all these examples of abbreviated workouts that a person can do. If you do something, anything, **exercise is still a part of your lifestyle.** There is then a much better chance that you will come back to it again full speed than if you stopped training all together.

Health

Weight training and exercise are parts of a much bigger picture --- your **health.** I regard the pursuit of health as an **environmental problem.** You have to put your body in the best possible environment in order for it be healthy. What is this environment? In a word, anything that you come in contact with or that has an effect on you. Of course, this includes exercise. Other parts of the picture are diet, fresh air, clean water, adequate rest, and even your mental state. I've prepared a report that elaborates a lot more about this environmental idea. You can download it free from my website at:

<http://www.kissfitnessprogram.com/kiss-blueprint-for-fitness.html>

Diet

At the beginning of the book I indicated that diet and exercise are the two most important factors you have to control in order to improve your physical condition (of course they are part of the bigger environmental picture I just described in the previous section). This book describes a weight training program which will certainly improve your strength and muscularity. But, what about diet? What should you eat in order to maximize your health and get your bodyweight where it should be? Just as the solution to the exercise program is simple if you use the program in this book, the solution to the food problem is likewise simple.

There are many diets out there that claim to be the best for one reason or another. However, just as we zeroed in on the five **natural** movements that our exercise program is based on, we can also zero in on the **natural** food for mankind. My assumption is that **what is natural is usually what is best for you.** Of course, we have to make adjustments because we are civilized people now; we can't live like our hunter-gatherer ancestors did. Well, what did they eat? Simple answer: fresh fruit, nuts, vegetable matter, fish, and lean meat (meat didn't get fatty until we invented feedlots!). This eating plan is becoming more and more popular and is now referred to as the Paleo Diet (in honor of our Paleolithic ancestors who invented it!). Not only will this diet make you very healthy, **it will also get your weight where it should be;** it's just about impossible to get overweight using this eating plan. And, please don't think this is some sort of hideous diet that you will hate with every bite. I've followed it for many years and plan to follow it till I leave this planet. It really isn't a "diet," it's a lifestyle. Recipe books have been written for it that contain truly mouth-watering meals. However, this is only a very brief introduction. Please go to my website for further information at:

<http://www.kissfitnessprogram.com/food.html>

Food Supplements

People that train with weights frequently take food supplements to enhance their diet. Top on the list is usually a protein supplement. I agree with this and, to this day, eat a scoop of protein powder with my breakfast. Unfortunately, the makeup of most protein powders has become extremely complex. However, if you look around, you can find a few that are composed completely of egg protein or a mixture of egg and milk protein. I strongly recommend this type of protein rather than one that is so complicated you don't understand what 90% of the ingredients are.

I also recommend the following three additional food supplements:

- **A multi vitamin - mineral formula.** The purpose of this is to fill the “**nutritional holes**” in your diet. No matter how hard you try, I believe it's difficult --- or even impossible --- to obtain all the nutrients you require from the food you eat. So, a multi is a form of “**health insurance.**” There are tons of them around. Look for one that is made from **natural food sources** rather than synthesized in the laboratory. Pay special attention to the minerals in it. Remember, plants take minerals from the ground. Then, we eat the plants or animals that have eaten the plants. You can't get your minerals from the “ground” --- from inorganic sources. You can't get your iron by eating iron filings or your calcium by eating ground-up coral rock. Note that this implies you shouldn't add salt to your food...
- **A green drink.** There are a number of good ones around. Look for one that appears to cover the nutritional bases and is made from plants harvested from good clean sources. Like a multi, it also provides a form of health insurance by filling nutritional holes in your diet. It's in a more natural form than a multi too. Some of them taste terrible; some are great. I blend two of them together to hopefully get the benefits of both.
- **Cod liver oil.** It supplies vitamins A and D and, if you don't get outdoors too much (this happens to a lot of us in the winter), the D will be a great help to you. The fat in cod liver oil is **good** for your heart and it also has a number of other beneficial effects. Finally, it's cheap!

Cardio Work

There are three types of exercise: strength, cardio (or endurance exercise), and flexibility. Weight training is a great way to increase your strength; I think it's the best way. If you're careful to stretch out before you do every exercise, you can develop a surprising amount of flexibility by lifting weights too. However, there are obviously sports (gymnastics and athletic types of dancing, for example) that develop your flexibility to the max. Whereas strength and flexibility are primarily aimed at your skeletal muscles, cardio is primarily aimed at what's going

on inside of you. As the name implies, the intent is to strengthen and improve the health of your cardio-vascular system. You do this by performing an exercise with one or more of the larger muscles of your body for an extended period of time. Usually, this is your legs; sometimes your back is involved. Cardio exercises should be performed for at least twenty minutes (I recommend a half hour) to achieve the full cardio-vascular benefit.

The most convenient cardio exercises are walking and running. The only equipment you need is a pair of good running shoes (don't skimp here; you want your feet to be **very** comfortable). Walking and running are also convenient because you can gradually change from walking to running as your condition improves. Ultimately, you can increase the distance you run and/or how fast you run. In my book, the ***K*IS*S* Fitness Program***, I describe a very neat way of doing all this. You can find out more about the book on my website at:

<http://www.kissfitnessprogram.com/kiss-fitness-program.html>

There are other excellent cardio exercises. The two most popular ones are bicycling and swimming. However, bicycling requires a bike to ride and swimming requires a pool or lake to do it in. Swimming has the advantage of exercising more muscles than both running and bicycling. Perhaps the best cardio exercise is rowing a boat that has a sliding seat. It exercises every major muscle group except the pushing muscles. If a person did some rowing followed by a few sets of push-ups, he would be getting a very well-balanced workout that would include cardio work as well.

It's important to realize that exercises performed for an extended period of time to achieve cardio vascular benefit do not contribute greatly to a person's strength. They will certainly tone a person's body and will help him to reduce weight (have you ever seen an overweight runner?). However, they won't enable a person to increase his strength to anywhere near the level that weight training will. The other side of the coin is that weight training will not appreciably improve your cardio vascular fitness. Years ago I had a rude awakening when a roommate in graduate school suggested we take a run following a weight workout. I was puffing after a block! That got me started on a serious distance running program that, along with weight training, I have continued to this day. The bottom line is that you should both train with weights **and** do some cardio work.

Equipment

Here is the minimum equipment that you will need in order to start a serious weight training program:

- A set of barbells with at least 300 lbs of weight
- An overhead bar for doing pull-ups
- Parallel bars or a dip stand for doing dips (you can skip this for a while if you do chair dips)

- A strong bench for doing bench presses (with a rack that will spot you if you don't have a training partner)
- A rack for doing squats (that will spot you if you don't have a training partner)

To save money, you can make a lot of this stuff yourself out of lumber or metal. I have always done this. On my website I provide plans and kits for benches and some other essential pieces of equipment. Please go to:

<http://www.kissfitnessprogram.com/plans-and-kits.html>

It can be inconvenient to strip all the plates off a bar. This is necessary if you change from a heavy exercise to a light one (or vice versa). It's much more convenient to have one bar that you use for heavy exercises and another that you use for light ones. The heavy one you would keep set up with a pair of larger plates (for squats, dead lifts, etc.) and the light one you would keep set up with a pair of smaller plates (for presses, curls, etc.). I always have two or three bars set up in my basement gym with different base weights locked onto them.

I have never owned Olympic style bars with bearings that allow the weights to spin freely when doing fast lifts like cleans. They are a nice luxury but cost more. Olympic bars use plates with a large hole --- around 2" diameter. "Standard" bars use a plate with a diameter of 1-1/16." I have always bought 1" bar stock from a steel supplier and cut it to the lengths I wanted (or had him cut it) and used the plates with the smaller diameter holes. Plates with the small hole are probably cheaper. I suspect that, if you look around, you can find people who are almost giving them away. In college, I had a crazy assortment of weights and bars that I got from all over the place --- probably 600 or 700 lbs of weights by the time I graduated.

It's also convenient to have 50 to 100 lbs of plates lying around that you can use to load up a rope or strap that you can put around your waist when doing weighted chins or dips.

On my website I also make a number of very specific recommendations for commercially available weight training equipment that could be what you're looking for when outfitting your home gym. Here's the link:

<http://www.kissfitnessprogram.com/kiss-weight-training-program.html>

Dumbbells

Almost any exercise that you can do with a barbell, you can also do with dumbbells. However, certain exercises are impractical to do with them. Squats and dead lifts are two of them. Bench presses are also difficult as, for all practical purposes, you need to lift two dumbbells simultaneously. So, you may as well use a barbell for that exercise. In my opinion, dumbbells are best suited for overhead lifts, rowing motions, and arm work (biceps curls and triceps extensions). Some people will argue that dumbbells are better because there is no restriction on the position of your hands (palms can be sideways, front, back, etc.). Some will also argue

that, since a workout will take longer because you have to do each “side” of you separately, dumbbells will therefore be more beneficial. There are still other reasons why advocates of dumbbells claim they are superior. The fact remains, however, that people become very strong using either barbells or dumbbells. The pros and cons are details (except in the cases of the exercises I mentioned initially). I use dumbbells occasionally simply to add **variety** to my workouts. For example, for one training cycle, I might do overhead presses using a barbell. Then, on the next cycle, I might use dumbbells. Variety is extremely important if you’re the type of person who gets sick of doing the same thing for an extended period of time.

CLOSURE

I hope it won't seem like I'm exaggerating when I say that weight training can **change your life**. It's wonderful to **look good** --- to be proud of what you look like when you go to the beach. You don't have to be a Mr. America to look a lot better than 95% of the people you see there. You just have to attain a reasonable physique (in the case of men) and a reasonably shapely body (in the case of women). This is **so easy** to do with a consistent weight training program. I hope you will find that this book enables you to achieve this important goal.

Of course, looking good isn't the whole picture. You also will want to **feel good**. Fortunately, the benefits of weight training are more than skin deep --- are much more than a "body beautiful." A benefit of weight training is that you will walk with a spring in your step; you will feel alive and brimming with vitality.

Finally, if you pay attention to the other aspects of your personal environment that influence your health, especially the food you eat, you will enjoy a physical condition experienced by very few other people. Surprisingly, it's easy to make this happen. Make healthy living your **lifestyle**; put your body in the most healthful environment you can think of --- and it's all yours...

In this book I've tried to reduce this business of weight training to the **simplest possible terms**. We discovered what the natural movements of the human body are and then arranged them into templates that are the basis for well-balanced exercise courses. Amazingly, there isn't much to these templates --- only a few movements performed a few times per week. Then, we discussed specific exercises that correspond to each of these movements and arranged them into a number of courses using the templates. An important objective of this was to show how easy it is for **you** to come up with similar courses that could be tailored to **your** needs and desires.

I also rambled on providing advice about a number of different subjects that relate to weight training. None of that information is essential. However, I humbly hope that at least some of the advice I offered --- based on a half century of messing around with weights, exercise, and food --- will hit home with you. It's a big help to have someone to talk to when you have a question about something that confuses you; it's wonderful to have a **mentor**. Although a book is one way conversation, I hope that I've correctly guessed some of the issues that might be troubling for you and that my comments will serve a mentoring role.

In the book, I've emphasized a simple uncomplicated approach --- the **K*I*S*S*** philosophy. I truly believe that, in everything, your chances of success are the greatest if you keep things as simple as possible. Master the concepts I've presented in this book and use them to keep your weight training as simple as possible. Chances are you will still be pumping iron when you're a senior citizen like me.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Stephen J. Winter, Ph.D. has been a fitness enthusiast since his teens. He has excelled in weight lifting and distance running and has done well at other sports including rowing, swimming, and bicycling. Now, over 70 years old, he continues to run and exercise, both with bodyweight exercises and with weights. He is a good example of the effectiveness of the type of exercise program described in this book. For many years, Dr. Winter was a certified personal trainer. He lives with his family in Norwich, NY.

An engineer by training, Dr. Winter is now retired and has embarked on a second career as a fitness instructor and writer of fitness books. This is the third book he has written, the first being the original ***K*I*S*S* Fitness Program*** and the second being a shortened version of it aimed at youth and entitled the ***K*I*S*S* Fitness Program for Kids***. The central theme of all his books is simplicity. Whether you are doing bodyweight exercises, training with weights, or using exercise machines in a gym, he believes it's of highest importance to keep your training program as simple as possible. Both in his engineering work and in his fitness endeavors, Dr. Winter has found that this approach most often leads to long term success.