



ONLINE COACHING — BY APPLICATION



RUNNING LEAN

THE CARBON ENGINES FIELD MANUAL

10 systems I run to stay lean, year-round —
no hacks, no 30-day resets.

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WHY THIS MANUAL EXISTS

I've spent twelve years training people one-on-one, four years in the Marine Corps, and years competing in Jiu-Jitsu and Olympic weightlifting. None of that is the reason I stay lean year-round. This manual is.

There's no biohack in here, no supplement stack, no 5am cold plunge routine. It's ten things I actually do, every single week, that keep me from turning fitness into a seasonal project. If you're tired of getting in shape twice a year just to lose it again, start here.

01

I HIT MY PROTEIN NUMBER BEFORE I WORRY ABOUT ANYTHING ELSE

Most people's nutrition plan is a list of foods to avoid. Mine starts with a number I have to hit — grams of protein, non-negotiable, before I think about anything else on the plate. Protein is the one macro that protects muscle while you're losing fat, and it keeps you full enough to actually stick to a deficit. Everything else — carbs, fat, timing — is secondary. Get protein right first and half your other problems solve themselves.

02

I TRAIN LIKE LOSING MUSCLE IS THE REAL ENEMY, NOT THE SCALE

The scale doesn't know the difference between fat and muscle — it just goes down when either one disappears. I train like protecting muscle is the actual goal, because it is. Muscle is what keeps your metabolism from crashing, what keeps you strong at 50 instead of just skinny, and what makes the weight stay off once it's off. If your training isn't built around resistance work with real load, you're not just losing fat — you're losing size, and some of it's the wrong kind.

03

I DON'T TRUST THE SCALE — I TRUST THE SCAN

I stopped weighing myself daily years ago. A scale number moves for a hundred reasons that have nothing to do with progress — water, sodium, a hard training day, a bad night's sleep. What I actually track is body composition — fat mass, muscle mass — checked periodically, not obsessively. It's the difference between reacting to noise and tracking a trend. If you only own one piece of data about your body, make it something that tells you what kind of weight you're gaining or losing.

04

I NEVER LET TWO DAYS OFF TURN INTO TWO WEEKS

Missing a workout isn't the problem. Everybody misses a workout. The problem is the story you tell yourself after — that you've already blown it, so what's one more day, then one more week. I have a rule: two missed days max before I'm back, no negotiating, no waiting for Monday. Momentum is fragile in one direction and stubborn in the other. Protect it early and you never have to rebuild it from zero.

05

I BUILD MY DIET AROUND WHAT I CAN DO FOREVER, NOT SURVIVE FOR 30 DAYS

I don't do 30-day resets. Anyone can white-knuckle through a month of eating nothing but chicken and broccoli — the problem is day 31, when the discipline runs out and the old habits come right back, usually with company. I eat foods I actually like, built around a structure I can hold for years, not weeks. If a plan only works because you're miserable, it was never going to work long-term anyway.

06

I TREAT SLEEP LIKE PART OF THE PROGRAM, NOT AN AFTERTHOUGHT

For years I treated sleep as whatever was left over after everything else got done. It's the opposite — sleep is when the training actually pays off, when muscle repairs and hormones reset. Cutting sleep to fit in more work or more training is a losing trade every time. I protect it on purpose now, the same way I protect a training block. It's not soft. It's strategic.

07

I HAVE A PLAN FOR THE BAD WEEKS BEFORE THEY HAPPEN

Travel, deadlines, family stuff, a bad week — these aren't surprises, they're guaranteed. What separates people who stay lean year-round from people who yo-yo isn't that they avoid hard weeks. It's that they've already decided what “good enough” looks like before the week gets hard. I know my minimum: a protein target and some kind of movement, even if it's not a full session. A bad week on the minimum plan keeps you in the game. A bad week with no plan usually turns into a bad month.

08

I MOVE OUTSIDE THE GYM, NOT JUST INSIDE IT

An hour in the gym is nothing compared to the other twenty-three. I pay attention to how much I move the rest of the day — walking, taking the stairs, not parking as close as I could. It adds up to more than people expect, and it's the easiest lever to pull when life makes the gym harder to get to. Training hard and then sitting still all day is fighting yourself.

09

I DON'T DO THIS ALONE — NOBODY DOES IT ALONE LONG-TERM

I have people who check my work — training partners, competition, coaches of my own. Willpower is a finite resource and it runs out under stress, which is exactly when you need consistency the most. A system with somebody else watching the work outlasts motivation every time. This is the entire reason Carbon Engines exists — not because people can't train on their own, but because staying accountable to yourself alone, forever, is a hard way to live.

10

I COMPETE AGAINST THE VERSION OF ME FROM 90 DAYS AGO, NEVER ANYONE ELSE

Competing in Jiu-Jitsu and lifting taught me the same lesson twice: the scoreboard that matters is the one against your own last performance. Comparing yourself to someone else's highlight reel is a guaranteed way to feel behind, no matter how much progress you've actually made. I check in against where I was three months ago — strength, body composition, how I feel — and that's the only comparison that's ever told me anything useful.



None of this is complicated, and that's the point.
Staying lean year-round isn't about finding the
right hack — it's about running a small number of
things consistently, for years, instead of
everything intensely for a month.

If you want help building a system like this around
your own life, that's what Carbon Engines is for.

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