



# The 7 Habits for Building a Fit Dad Bod

Most of us dads speed through life, racing from one thing to another, making decision after decision. We're focused on everything and everyone—work, money, kids, clients, boss—except ourselves. We're exhausted by day's end if we even last that long. And when exhausted, we set the cruise control and make less-than-ideal decisions.

We grab what's convenient on the way to our kids' soccer practices, dance classes, and piano lessons. We skip the gym on our way home from work. And when we finally arrive home, we bury our faces in a bag of chips or bowl of cereal because we're tired, busy, and rushed.

After some time, we no longer like how we look and feel. Because we're overworked and overcommitted, we think there's no time . . . or at least now is not the time. We feel helpless—or even worse—hopeless.

If you can relate to any of what I've just said, it's okay. I've been there. We've ALL been there.

Our weight is tied to how we look, but it's also connected to how we feel and think about ourselves. Why is this important? Because men who are happy with their appearance are more satisfied in other areas of their lives—everywhere from the boardroom to the bedroom.

Are you happy with how you look and, ultimately, feel? How would life be different if you were to build a dad bod you'd finally be proud of?

## **Imagine a life where you:**

- Look and feel better in your suit—business or birthday.
- Run around with your kids without feeling hurt, winded, tired, or stupid . . . and do it again the next day.
- Excitedly book a beach vacation without wondering how you'll look and feel with your shirt off.
- Kick your buddies' butts on the slopes, course, or court.
- Confidently speak in front of people without worrying about what they think (because they are thinking something).
- Look in the mirror without wondering, "Who is that guy, and how'd he get like that?"
- Have a healthy relationship with food, and never diet again.
- View exercise as a celebration of movement, not punishment.

Begin your journey toward this life with *The 7 Habits for Building a Fit Dad Bod*. These are the same habits I've used with dozens of men to help them drop hundreds of pounds of unwanted fat and build much-wanted muscle.

## HABIT #1: EAT SLOWLY TO 80% FULL

It seems so simple—too simple—but it works! Regardless of what you eat, where you eat, when you eat, or with whom you eat, you can lose fat if you apply this habit. Ultimately, this habit develops awareness. And awareness proceeds change . . . but only 100% of the time.

Perhaps it's because of poor communication skills (sadly, I know a thing or two about that), but it takes at least 20 minutes for your stomach to let your brain know it's full. Eating slowly allows you to measure fullness better, helping you to eat less.

Keep it simple. At your next meal:

- Allow more time (5-10 additional minutes) to eat.
- Sit down to eat.
- Use smaller utensils.
- Put down your utensil between bites.
- Chew your food, enjoying the tastes and textures.
- Take a drink of water between bites.
- Breathe.
- Eat without distractions, i.e., smartphone, TV, or newspaper.

Once you've begun eating slowly and your brain knows it's nearing fullness, you can eat to 80% full more successfully. Note: Eating to 80% full is more of a concept than an absolute ("Am I at 74% full or 86%?"). Because of this, it takes some practice.

To give you an idea of what 80% full feels like, you know what stuffed is, right? How about ravenous? Shoot for somewhere in the middle. Think of it not as being full but rather no longer hungry. Could you eat more? Sure. But do you need to? Prolly not.

At your next meal, stop eating sooner than usual. Serve yourself a smaller portion than is typical. Order a smaller size (politely say, "No thank you, I'd like NOT to supersize that.")

Please don't discount this habit. It is the single best habit to develop. You can ALWAYS call upon this habit even when faced with the most adverse eating situations.

# HABIT #2:

## ***Eat a Lean Protein with Every Meal***

Most diets, “good” or “bad,” share this: they emphasize protein. The fact is, protein is the dietary superstar.

Do you want to lose weight? Eat protein! Do you want to build muscle? Eat protein! Rev your metabolism? Protein! Feel fuller longer? Protein! Recover from training? Protein, protein, and more protein! There’s seemingly nothing it can’t do.

To eat a lean protein, you must first know what it is. Fortunately, due to industrialization, you no longer need to hunt, catch, or milk your protein sources, so getting them shouldn’t be a problem. Here are some recommendations:

- Lean meats such as ground beef, poultry, bison, and venison
- Fish such as salmon, tuna, cod, and roughy (which was initially called “slime head,” but they had a tough time moving product)
- Eggs and egg whites
- Dairies, such as cottage cheese and Greek yogurt
- Lentils, beans, tofu, and tempeh
- Protein supplements
  - milk-based: whey, casein, and milk protein blends
  - plant-based: pea, hemp, and rice

Now that you’ve identified your prey hold out your hand. Eat about two palm-sized servings. Now, take your hand and high-five yourself!

# HABIT #3

## Eat Colorful Vegetables at Each Meal

If protein's the superstar, veggies are its entourage. You won't eat one without the other. "Why?" your inner child asks.

Veggies contain vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and phytochemicals, which reduce the effects of aging and all-cause mortality. What does that mean for you? You'll be Deadpool . . . but without extraordinary swordsman and marksman skills.

Veggies also provide fiber. Fiber's good for gut health. It helps control your energy levels and appetite by making you feel fuller sooner, which pairs nicely with protein that, if you recall, makes you feel fuller *longer*. It helps decrease your likelihood of cancer and heart disease, i.e., things that'll take you from your family sooner.

That's why.

To steal the tagline of a favorite childhood candy—"taste the rainbow." Choose a variety of colorful veggies like:

- Beets
- Red, orange, yellow, and green peppers
- Tomatoes
- Carrots
- Broccoli
- Kale, spinach, and other dark leafy greens
- Green beans
- Eggplant
- Purple cabbage

Eat a fist-sized serving or two (or more) at each meal. Enjoy them raw or cooked.

Focus on addition, not subtraction. Eating more "good" stuff like veggies and lean protein will leave less room for the "bad" stuff . . . assuming you're eating slowly to 80% full.



# HABIT NO. 4:

## Make "Smart Carb" Choices



Contrary to what others in the fitness and nutrition industry say, you don't need to stop eating carbs (especially when implementing Habit #7). However, you may need to start eating smarter (and perhaps fewer) carbs. "Smart carbs," like veggies, are high in fiber and packed with vitamins and minerals.

Smart carbs are both the perfect and preferred source of energy. Without adequate carbs, your body will break down your lean muscle for energy, and your brain won't be able to perform optimally, i.e., you'll lose focus. More lean muscle, energy, and focus? Sounds like a winning trifecta to me.

Smart carbs include:

- Fresh and frozen fruit
- Potatoes, both white and sweet
- Whole, minimally processed grains such as quinoa, brown and wild rice, slow-cooking oats, and sprouted grains


A serving is equivalent to a cupped hand. Shoot for one or two.



# HABIT NUMBER FIVE

## EAT HEALTHY FAT WITH MOST MEALS

“Dietary fat . . . is not a cause of obesity . . . or any other chronic disease of civilization.”



Healthy dietary fat improves your body, health, and performance. (We're done thinking dietary fat's unhealthy, right?)

Healthy fat decreases inflammation and your risk of heart disease; helps you feel fuller sooner and longer, so you eat less; and increases your growth and sex hormones, which promotes muscle growth and fat loss.

Healthy fats include:

- Olive, coconut, flax, and fish oils
- Nuts (almonds, walnuts, cashews, and pecans) and nut butter (almond, cashew, and natural peanut)
- Seeds such as chia, flax, and sunflower
- Avocado

Drop a spoonful of natural peanut butter in your oatmeal, throw some flaxseeds into a smoothie, or top your salad with olive oil. Eat one or two thumb-sized servings of these and other healthy fats with most of your meals.

Whether it's a morning juice for breakfast, a soda at lunch, a latte as an afternoon pick-me-up, a few beers with the boys after work, or a milkshake on the weekend with the kids, it's easy for liquid calories to add up without your realizing it.

The problem is that most of those things provide a lot of empty calories and little to no nutritional value. Limit beverages that contain calories, such as:

- Coke/pop/soda (it's a regional thing)
- Juice
- Coffee and coffee drinks loaded with cream and sugar
- Alcohol
- Sugary energy drinks

Instead, drink zero-calorie beverages like:

- Water
- [Unsweet] Tea
- Black coffee

Giving up soda, juice, and sugar-laden energy drinks may be no problem for many guys. But when it comes to alcohol, asking them to give up beer? Well, I might as well ask them to give up food . . . or sex . . . or food and sex.

You don't need to give it up completely, but I want you to be aware—when building a strong, lean, muscular body, unlike your drinking buddies, alcohol is not your friend.

Why isn't alcohol muscle-friendly? Alcohol:

- Is rich in energy but poor in nutrition.
- Decreases your male hormones and increases your female hormones.
- Throws your body's normal metabolic process out of whack.
- Impairs protein synthesis, i.e., muscle building.
- Negatively affects workout [and other types of] performance.

Can you continue to drink alcohol in moderation? Ultimately, you can do whatever you want. After all, you're a grown-ass man. But there aren't any foolproof reasons for drinking, even in moderation.

If you are going to drink, though, limit it to one or two. And get a well-made one you can enjoy, m'kay?





# HABIT #7:

## *Perform Metabolic Resistance Training*

Nutrition is important. After all, I just invested the first 1,600+ words writing about it. But if you only address your food and don't resistance train, a.k.a. strength train, at best, you'll be a smaller, softer, weaker version of yourself.

Resistance training incinerates body fat, increases strength, preserves muscle, and improves performance. Dieting *alone* will do just the opposite, making you "skinny fat." ("Skinny fat" is a term that describes someone having a high body fat percentage and a low amount of lean muscle, despite being a relatively "normal" weight. If you're skinny fat, you're at a heightened risk of developing heart disease, diabetes and wearing a long-sleeved swim shirt at the beach.)

Because of your limited time and limit/less obligations, you need to make the most of your training sessions. I know you want to go straight to feeding your pythons (with biceps curls), which is great unless you want to get stronger and leaner.

The following five essential functional movements will train the major muscles of your body, giving you the biggest bang for your buck, the greatest return on your investment, and any other financial analogy you can think of. They are the following:

### *Squat*

Kettlebell (or Dumbbell) Goblet Squat  
Goblet Split Squat  
Single-Leg Squat

### *Hinge*

KB Deadlift  
Staggered Stance Deadlift  
Stepping Reverse Lunge

# HABIT #7 CONTINUED

## *Perform Metabolic Resistance Training*

### *Push*

Push-Up  
DB Chest Press  
½ Kneeling 1 Arm KB (or DB) Press

### *Pull*

Suspension Trainer Row  
DB Row  
Chin-Up

### *Carry*

Goblet Carry  
Farmer Carry  
Suitcase Carry

Train each movement at least twice weekly. Complete 3-5 sets of 6-12 reps per exercise. Perform supersets, tri-sets, or circuits, alternating between movements.



There you have it: *The 7 Habits for Building a Fit Dad Bod*.

How “good” do you have to be with these habits? Research shows that any effort can result in real, measurable progress, no matter how imperfect.

For more moderate goals, a target of 75-85% consistency is often the sweet spot to make continual progress while living an enjoyable and sustainable lifestyle.

For more advanced goals, a target of 90%+ consistency is often needed to push boundaries and reach more extreme levels of human physiology, i.e., get ripped.

The serving recommendations are based on consuming 3-4 meals daily. If you’re consistently practicing these habits and aren’t seeing results, remove a thumb of fat or a cupped hand of smart carbs from a few of your daily meals. (And if you still aren’t seeing results after doing this, evaluate if you’re participating in any extracurricular eating, e.g., a “harmless” handful of this or that, cleaning your kids’ plates, or nighttime snacking. If so, reevaluate.)

I want you to know that you don’t need to completely overhaul your diet, grocery budget, or schedule to begin your journey toward success. Whether eating at home with your family, dining out with your wife or business associates, or on the road for work or play, these habits work with you and your life!

## TAKE THE NEXT STEP!

You know what to do now, right? Part of me, though, has a sneaking suspicion that you already knew what to do. After all, if you do a web search for “how to lose fat,” you’ll get about 57,500,000 results in less than a second. Yet, we’re fatter and unhappier than we’ve ever been. What gives?

G.I. Joe famously said, “Knowing’s half the battle!” Simply knowing isn’t enough. Although he never gave us the other half, he probably would’ve said it’s in the doing!

If you’re ready to change your habits, body, life, and legacy but need the support and accountability to DO change, this dad is ready, willing, and able to help. (You do know how to ask for help, yeah?) Please get in touch with me!

Be strong, and do the work!

*Coach Adam*