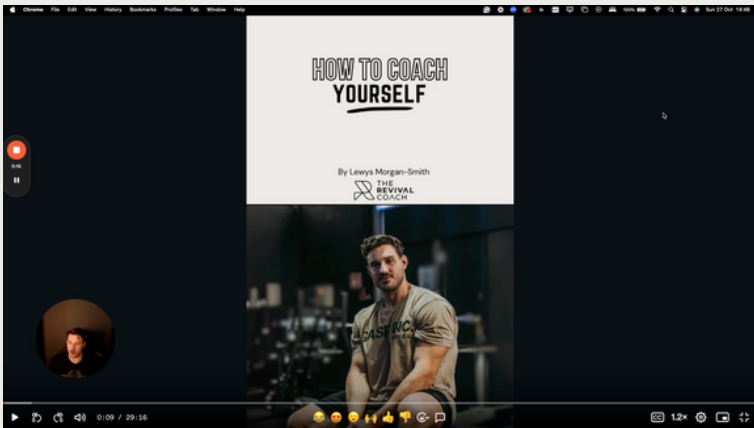


HOW TO COACH YOURSELF

By Lewys Morgan-Smith



How To Coach Yourself Tutorial Video



Click for loom video



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INTRODUCTION

A bit about me

I've been in this industry for a long time. I first started training in year nine of High School (when I was 14 years old). Since I have competed in many bodybuilding competitions, I have coached myself for many of them. I would say roughly half the time I have taken bodybuilding seriously, I have had a coach, and the other half, I have coached myself.

I believe coaches can provide incredible value to your fitness journey, but I also understand the time has to be right for you, so I wanted to put this E-Book/Presentation together.

I understand that coaching yourself today can be challenging. There is an overload of information, which can be very conflicting. I want to give people the tools to achieve their dream physique without fluff. It's just a simple approach that gets results.

The principles and methods in this E-Book are the same ones I use to stay in shape and achieve my goals.

Creating a new lifestyle, improving your relationship with food, and adopting a more mindful outlook are essential elements for building a sustainable physique.

Please get in touch with me if you have any questions.



PART ONE

Planning

Planning your journey is often overlooked and is why people don't progress.

First, you have to know what you want to achieve; if you don't, how can you plan for it and make progress?

If you can't decide whether you want to go into the growing phase first or a cutting phase, then looking at your current body composition and deciding based on a logical method might be the best way to go about it.

The time of year might impact your decision too, as typically, people like to grow throughout the winter and cut in the summer.

Make sure you work it around your holidays, social gatherings, and other special events, too, as enjoying life during the process is still important. It can be done, and it will help you, as developing a more mindful approach is good practice.

As a rough rule of thumb, I would cut first if you're 16% body fat or above (females 20% + body fat)

If your body fat is below 16% (below 20% for females), you will begin a growing phase.

Coaches often refer to this as a coaching roadmap as you're mapping out the plan for the year.

Obviously, nothing is set in stone, as life can throw curve balls, and circumstances can change, but doing this will allow you to have a clearer vision so that the end goal doesn't seem so big.



CHAPTER ONE

Coaching Roadmap Example



PRIMING PHASE /
MAINTENANCE FOOD



CUTTING PHASE /
DEFICIT CALORIES

8-24 WEEKS



GROWING PHASE /
REVERSE DIET

16-30 WEEKS



GRADUALLY
DECREASE FOOD

INCREASE
EXPENDITURE

KEEP STRENGTH
HIGH

MANAGE FATIGUE

SLOWLY INCREASE
CALORIES

NO MORE THAN 0.5KG
INCREASE PER WEEK

INCREASE CARBS FOR
PERFORMANCE

EXPENDITURE AT OR
JUST ABOVE BASELINE
FOR HEALTH

INCREASE TRAINING
VOLUME AS YOU
PROGRESS

REPEAT!



HOLDING PHASE

4-6 WEEKS

REPEAT OR MAINTAIN



Diet Phase

Understanding the basics:

To coach yourself, you need to have a rough idea of the value of different foods—the total calories and macros. If you're new to this or want to level up, I suggest you download and start using MyFitnessPal.

This allows you to track how much food you consume daily or weekly. It also teaches you the value of food, which will inevitably help you in the long term.

Two types of fat loss phases:

- a typical fat loss phase, which is around 8–24 weeks +
- “Mini cut” fat loss phase, which is usually around 4–8 weeks

Goal: Drop body fat and retain muscle tissue

- Nutrition is progressively decreased
- Training stimulus must remain high
- Cardio/NEAT will increase

Nutrition – Dieting Phase

- The first week, food should be close to a maintenance level (where you predict it to be)
- Should have adequate protein, fats and carbs. 30% Protein, 50% Carbs, 20% Fat

After your first week of dieting, you should access your tracking tools. If you have gained weight and can see it in photos, decrease your calories by 300–500 daily.

If you have **stayed the same**, this typically means you are at maintenance calories. From here, reduce your calories by 150–300. This will be enough to see good progress in next week's check-in.

If your fat loss has been too fast—1+ kg in a week—the deficit is too big. Increase your food intake by 150–300 calories.



Diet Phase

Training In a Dieting Phase

Resistance Training:

- Always train within your recovery capacity.
- Remove most, if not all, intensifier sets. Mainly single sets. This is to manage fatigue
- Continue training hard and continue trying to progress

Cardio/NEAT:

- You may want to increase cardio straight away. Ideally, manipulate one variable first (decrease food or increase cardio, then monitor response)
- Step count increased
- I would try not to let direct cardio workouts exceed the number of resistance training sessions you have per week.

Adjusting Energy Intake – General Rules:

- Make one change at a time
- Changes made should be reactive, not proactive, after the initial set-up
- Maintaining gym performance is vital

Make minor adjustments when necessary and assess/adjust accordingly.



Diet Phase

What macros to change?

Protein:

- Typically, protein intake will be increased as it increases satiety and helps retain muscle tissue
- Swap liquid shakes for solid protein sources to make it more enjoyable and satiating

Carbohydrates:

- You want to keep carbs as high as possible for as long as possible. We need them for gym performance
- Try to keep carbs around your training. Pre, Intra and post
- Utilising veggies more as they will help with hunger

Fats:

- Fats are usually the first macronutrient to be reduced.
- Fats are the highest calorie macronutrient
- for health purposes, I wouldn't decrease fats any lower than 30g per day



Diet Phase

Ending the fat loss phase

Questions to consider:

- Have you reached your goal/comp/shoot?
- Are you a healthy level of bodyfat if your goal is health & sustainability?
- Are you in a nice lean position to progress into an effective growth phase?
- Mentally, do you feel fresh and ready to exit the dieting phase?

Nutrition after a dieting phase:

- Food increased to maintenance again. You need to do this slowly and in a controlled manner.

Cardio after a dieting phase:

- Reduce cardio to maintenance level. It's still important to have some cardio in for general health benefits

Key point:

Don't do the typical thing that most people do: You can't control your hunger after coming out of a dieting phase, and you pile on the kgs and body fat at an insane rate, limiting the effectiveness of your next phase. Be disciplined and slowly reverse the diet to bring your food back up for maintenance.



Growing Phase

The main aim:

The main aim is to progressively increase muscle mass without gaining too much body fat.

Depending on body composition, a growing phase typically lasts 16–30 weeks. However, many people have to shorten their growing phases because they have accumulated too much body fat. Don't be like these people; keep it controlled and effective.

Nutrition – Growing Phase:

- The first week, food should be close to a maintenance level (where you predict it to be)
- Should have adequate protein, fats and carbs. 30% Protein, 50% Carbs, 20% Fat

You should access your tracking tools after your first week of the growing phase.

If you have **decreased** weight and see it in check-in photos, then increase calories by 300–500 per day.

If you have **stayed the same**, then this typically means you are at maintenance calories. From here, increase calories by 150–300 calories. This will be enough to see a response over the next week.

If you have **gained** a lot of weight, 0.5kg upwards, then weight gain is too fast, and the surplus is too big. Bring food down by 150–300 calories, then use your tracking tools the following week to assess.

This was me back at the start of the 2023 peak growing phase. Honestly, I think I accumulated more body fat than I needed.

I wish I had kept it a little tidier. This is definitely the limit. Exceeding this body fat level is counterproductive to progress and unhealthy for your body.



Growing Phase

Training in a growing phase:

Resistance Training:

- Always train within your recovery capacity.
- It is a good idea to start with minimal volume/basic sets and progressively increase.

Cardio/NEAT:

- For standard health benefits, you should do at least two cardio sessions per week of 20 mins moderate cardio per week

If you have a very active job and exceed 10,000 steps per day, there is an argument for reducing your cardio further, but I would always recommend some form of direct cardio for general health.

If you don't have an active job, you might want to set a step goal and add direct cardio.

Adjusting Energy Intake – General Rules:

- Make one change at a time
- Changes made should be reactive, not proactive, after the initial set-up
- Maintaining gym performance is vital

Make minor adjustments when necessary and assess/adjust accordingly.



Growing Phase

What macros to change?

Protein:

- Typically, protein will stay the same, or it may be increased
- If hunger is really high, you may want to increase protein as it decreases hunger
- If you have too much protein, then this can cause GI distress

Carbohydrates:

- You want to keep carbs high as we need them for gym performance
- Try to keep carbs around your training. Pre, Intra and post
- Normally, the first macro to increase in a growing phase
- Make sure you consume a healthy amount of fruit and vegetables and a good amount of fibre daily.

Fats:

- Fats usually are the second/third macro to increase
- Easy to get in calories as they're high in calories per gram - This can lead to fast fat gain
- High fat can cause GI Distress



Growing Phase

Reasons to end a gaining phase:

- Digestion Issues?
- Training Stalling?
- Joint Problems?
- Blood pressure elevation?
- Mental Fatigue?
- Too much fat gain?

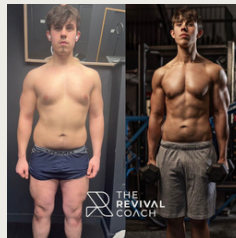
Nutrition after a growing phase:

Drop calories down for the week's de-load and then slowly decrease from there back down to maintenance.

Key Note:

It would be sensible to run a holding phase before you enter the dieting phase for 4-6 weeks after a growing phase to ensure the muscle "sticks".

Below are examples of my coaching proving that these methods work. Understand what the goal is, create a road map, design a plan and stay dedicated.

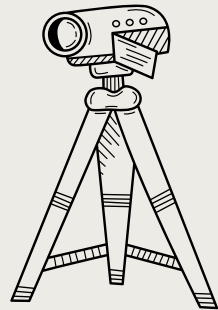
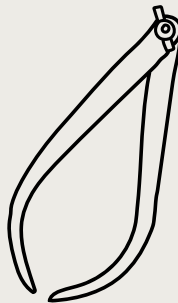
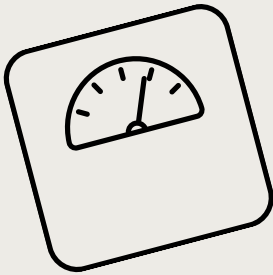


Tools for Tracking

- Weekly Check-In Photos
- Bodyweight
- Gym performance
- Bio Feedback
- Waist circumference
- 3 Largest caliper sites
- Blood glucose

Weekly check-in photos are at the top, my favourite way to monitor progress. Ultimately, you want to track as many things as possible to make accurate decisions in your check-in to get the best results.

Monitoring your progress by your weight reading each week is not effective. Countless variables can skew that reading, which is why it's best to get photos, too.



Tools for Tracking

VERY IMPORTANT NOTES:

Weighting Yourself—When you weigh yourself, ensure it is at the same time as the previous week and that you're in the same condition. For best results, weigh yourself before showering and eating breakfast in the morning. Then, do the exact same the following days/weeks.

Check-In Photos—Make sure the check-in photos are accurate. The conditions of the check-in photo must be identical to those of the previous week so you can easily compare them. The photo should have the same height, the same light, the same camera, and the same backdrop.



Knowing when to make changes

This is one of the most complex parts of coaching yourself. I needed a coach when I was deep in prep, as I would keep adding more cardio and dropping my food crazy low. I needed a coach to tell me to back off a little.

It would be best to make changes at the right time and not too soon. This is where most go wrong because they exhaust their progression tools too early.

Reap everything you can from the plan before making a change, so be reactive rather than proactive when adjusting calories, etc.

Getting second opinions from a trustworthy gym bro, friend, or even me is always good.

A second pair of eyes can go the only way, and sometimes the answer is staring right at you, but you can't see it.

Conclusion

Coaching yourself isn't easy. I wanted to put this together for those who can't afford coaching or those who want to give it a shot first.

You can learn many things from coaching yourself, such as when you get a coach.

My advice is to try both. You have nothing to lose and only progress and knowledge to gain.

Please message me if you have any questions. I am making it my mission to help people transform their lives.

LEWYS MORGAN-SMITH

