

DAY ONE

The No-BS Fat Loss Starter Pack



Keith O'Beirne · nononsensefitness.ie

A step-by-step reference for starting your fat-loss journey — budget shopping, gym basics, tracking, and the mindset to actually stick with it.

01

Sort Your Shopping First

You can't out-train a bad trolley. Start here, not at the gym.

- Aldi or Lidl for the basics — same quality, a fraction of the price
- Buy: chicken breast, eggs, oats, rice, frozen veg, tinned beans, Greek yoghurt, mince
- Frozen veg is not a downgrade — same nutrients, no waste, cheaper
- Own-brand protein, own-brand everything — the branded version isn't doing anything extra
- Shop with a rough list, not on autopilot — impulse aisle is where the budget dies

Want vetted picks instead of guessing on brands?

Suppliers I actually use and recommend, nutrition included.

See trusted partners & tools →

nononsensefitness.ie/partners

02

Get Something That Tracks Your Steps

A decent tracker on your wrist beats the phone in your pocket.

- Your phone counts steps, but only when it's on you — a watch catches everything and keeps you honest
- You do NOT need a €300 smartwatch — a €40–60 band is just as accurate for steps
- Good budget picks: **Xiaomi Smart Band** (~€45) or **Amazfit Band** (~€50) — both on Amazon or Harvey Norman, both weeks of battery
- Already own an old Fitbit or any watch that counts steps? Use that — accuracy matters more than the badge
- The point is seeing the number every day so you can actually manage it — check it once a day, same time

03

Hit 10k Steps Without Overthinking It

This is the free lever most people ignore.

- Park at the far end of the car park, every time
- Take phone calls walking instead of sitting
- One flight of stairs instead of the lift, always
- Walk while the kettle boils, while on hold, while half-listening to a meeting
- Short on time? Two 10-minute walks count the same as one 20-minute one
- Steps are the priority on day one — once that's a habit, structured cardio is a plus for heart health, not a requirement: nononsensefitness.ie/blog/cardio-training-zones-explained

04

The Gym Part: Why It Actually Changes How You Look

Going to the gym isn't required to lose weight — walking and eating right will do that. But if you want to actually look different at the end, not just lighter, this is why the gym matters.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

*Weight loss on its own just makes a smaller version of you. Training while you're in a deficit tells your body to hold onto muscle while it burns fat — that's called **recomposition**. The scale might barely move some weeks and you'll still look completely different.*

- You don't need a complicated programme — a simple, structured split beats a random one
- Consistency with a basic plan beats intensity with no plan every time

TODAY'S ACTION

Grab the free 4-Day Gym Split PDF at nononsensefitness.ie/free-tools — upper/lower, beginner-friendly, no guesswork. Download it before your next session.

05

What To Actually Do In The Gym As A Total Beginner

Everyone who looks confident in there started exactly where you are.

- Nobody is watching you — everyone's too busy worrying about their own set
- Pick machines over free weights for your first few weeks — form is more forgiving
- Watch one short form video per exercise before you try it, not five
- Small weight increases each week, not big jumps that wreck your form
- You need zero fitness to walk in on day one — that's the whole point of day one

06

Get A Training Partner If You Can

Two people chasing the same goal is a genuine cheat code.

- Someone to text "you going today?" beats relying on willpower alone
- You show up on the days you'd otherwise talk yourself out of it
- Doesn't need to be a gym buddy — a mate doing their own version of this works too
- Compare notes, not bodies — you're both just trying to be consistent

07

How Many Calories? A Starting Point

A deficit just means eating a bit less than you burn. That's the entire mechanism.

- Step one: find your maintenance calories — use the free calculator at **nononsensefitness.ie/macro-calculator**. It does the maths properly in 30 seconds — no guessing, no made-up formulas
- Then eat 300–500 calories under that number — that's the whole deficit
- Want to see what that looks like as actual food? Section 19 has a full week done for you — 2100 calories (typical for many men) and a 1200-calorie version (typical for many women)
- Losing roughly 0.5kg a week on average? The number's right
- Nothing moving after two full weeks? Add 2,000 daily steps first — if it is still stuck a week later, then drop 200 calories
- Never crash it — a small deficit you hold beats a big one you abandon by Friday

08

Track Your Food With Our Free Tracker

You can't manage what you can't see.

- Free, no signup, no ads, no premium tier:
nononsensefitness.ie/tracker — barcode scanner, does the maths for you
- Week one: log your normal day without changing anything — just see it
- Protein first when you log a meal, everything else fits around it
- As a simple starting point, aim for roughly 1.6g of protein per kg of your bodyweight per day, or about 30g per meal
- The weekly average matters more than any single day

09

Weigh Your Food — The Scale Is Your Best Friend

Your eyes lie about portions. Everyone's do. Never eyeball it.

- People underestimate what they eat by 30 to 50% when they're just eyeballing it, that's the whole gap between "I'm barely losing anything" and the maths actually working
- A kitchen scale costs about a tenner. Weigh oil, rice, cereal, pasta, cheese: anything dense or easy to overpour
- Weigh it raw before cooking, same as the pack label does the maths on
- Don't graduate to eyeballing — portions creep back up the moment you stop measuring, and that creep is exactly how progress quietly stalls. Ten seconds on the scale keeps you honest

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How To Read A Food Label

Ignore 90% of the label. Focus on this:

- **High protein = 10g protein per 100 calories** — that is your benchmark. Not per 100g, per 100 calories
- **Calories per serving** — check the serving size isn't tiny to make the number look good
- **Sugar** — the closer to the top of the ingredients list, the more it's actually in there
- Ignore "low fat," "natural," and marketing badges on the front — the back tells the truth

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The Macro Shopping List

Screenshot this page. A list beats willpower in the impulse aisle.

- **Protein:** chicken breast, eggs, Greek yoghurt, tinned tuna, mince, cottage cheese — all own-brand, all in Aldi, Lidl and Tesco
- **Carbs:** oats, rice, potatoes, wholemeal bread, tinned beans — the cheap aisle is the right aisle
- **Fats:** olive oil, real butter in small amounts, nuts, tinned mackerel or sardines — fat isn't the enemy, the quantity is
- **Veg:** frozen mixed veg, broccoli, spinach — bulk with zero effort
- The whole list costs less per week than the trolley you're pushing now
- My staple breakfast — not oats: **Aldi's high-protein bagel thins** with **Philadelphia Protein from Tesco**. Quick, filling, and most of your protein is sorted before lunch. Boring works.

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Eat More For Less: Volume & Smart Swaps

Same fullness, fewer calories. This is the free lever most people never use.

- **Heavy hitters:** potatoes, chicken, turkey, white fish, eggs, prawns, Greek yoghurt — high volume, low calorie, keeps you full
- **Plate fillers:** vegetables, salads, soups, berries — bulk a meal out for almost nothing
- 400 calories of chicken, spuds and veg is a full dinner you can't finish. 400 calories of a takeaway is a starter
- Strawberries beat biscuits: same hand-to-mouth habit, a fraction of the calories

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Food Doesn't Have To Be Boring: The Swaps

You don't need new meals. Keep the dinners you like and swap the expensive-calorie parts for cheaper ones:

INSTEAD OF	TRY	YOU SAVE
Regular mince (20% fat)	Lean mince (5%)	~120 kcal / portion
Poured cooking oil	Spray oil	~100 kcal / meal
Sugary drinks	Diet versions	~140 kcal / can
Regular cheese on everything	Half the cheese, stronger cheddar	~100 kcal / meal
White bread rolls	Sliced wholemeal	~90 kcal / lunch
Crisps with lunch	Popcorn	~80 kcal / bag
Regular rashers	Nude bacon (Aldi) — nitrite-free	89 kcal / 2 slices
Creamy sauces	Tomato-based sauces	~150 kcal / dinner
Stuffed-crust pizza	Thin base, same toppings	~300 kcal / half pizza

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No-Time Meals That Still Count

Busy day, empty tank, zero interest in cooking — these still hit your numbers.

- 5-minute plates: eggs on toast · Greek yoghurt + oats + frozen berries · tinned tuna + microwave rice · rotisserie chicken + bag salad
- The assembly rule: one protein + one carb + one veg from your list = a meal. No recipe required
- Batch once, eat three times — a tray of chicken and rice on Sunday covers the mad days
- Caught out entirely? **NutriQuick** do healthy Irish ready meals with the macros right on the pack — our free AI meal planner at **nononsensefitness.ie/nutrition-guide** already includes them, macros done for you
- A boring meal you actually eat beats a perfect meal you never make

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How To Know It's Working (It's Not Just The Scale)

The scale is one signal, and it lies day to day. Use more than one.

- Weigh daily, judge weekly — the 7-day average is the signal, any single morning is noise
- Photos every 2 weeks — same spot, same light. You can't see daily change in the mirror, you can in photos
- One waist measurement, same place each time — fat loss shows up here before the scale
- Clothes don't lie — the belt notch is data
- Any two of those moving the right way means it's working, whatever the scale says today

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The Psychology Of Sticking With It

This is the part that actually determines whether any of the above works.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

*Motivation is a feeling — it comes and goes. Discipline gets you through the first few weeks. But what actually lasts is a **habit** — something you do without deciding each time, like brushing your teeth.*

- Attach new habits to ones you already have (walk after your coffee, log food before you eat)
- Track streaks, not perfection — one missed day doesn't break a streak, quitting does
- Make the first step tiny — "put on gym clothes" is easier to start than "go train"

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What To Do If You Go Off Track

This will happen. It's not a failure point.

- One bad meal, one skipped session — it changes nothing on its own
- Don't try to "make up for it" with an extreme fix the next day
- Next meal, next workout, next walk — that's the reset

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Use Free AI Chat As A Backup Coach

ChatGPT, Gemini and Claude all have solid free tiers. Use one like a thinking partner, not a doctor.

- "I have chicken, rice, broccoli and eggs, give me 3 dinners under 500 calories each" — genuinely useful when you're staring at the fridge with no plan
- "Explain progressive overload like I've never lifted before" — ask it to re-explain anything in this guide a different way if it didn't click the first time
- Stuck on a food label with no barcode? Describe the numbers and ask it to work out the macros per your portion, then double-check against your kitchen scale
- It's confidently wrong sometimes, especially on anything medical, dosage, or injury-specific — treat it as a free brainstorm, not a substitute for a doctor, physio or dietitian

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Your First Week, Done For You

Everything above, on a plate: 7 days, 3 meals a day, every item from Aldi or Lidl (one Tesco item — the Philadelphia Protein cream cheese), macros computed from the labels. This is the 2100-calorie version (suits many men, $\approx$ 400-calorie deficit). The week's food costs about €51 a head at own-brand prices.

Weights, portions and the full shopping list:

nononsensefitness.ie/7-day-meal-plan-ireland

- **Monday** — protein bagels & Philadelphia / chicken, rice & veg / spaghetti bolognese — 2083 kcal, 177g protein
- **Tuesday** — eggs on toast / tuna pasta / chicken curry & rice — 2084 kcal, 160g protein
- **Wednesday** — skyr bowl / chicken wraps / salmon, potatoes & broccoli — 2154 kcal, 150g protein
- **Thursday** — protein bagels & Philadelphia / jacket potato & tuna / beef burrito bowl — 2099 kcal, 171g protein
- **Friday** — bacon, eggs & toast / chicken pasta / chicken fajitas — 2081 kcal, 187g protein
- **Saturday** — skyr bowl / beef & rice bowl / homemade burgers & wedges — 2096 kcal, 156g protein
- **Sunday** — eggs, egg whites, beans & toast / roast chicken dinner / tuna melt toastie — 2087 kcal, 193g protein

The 1200-calorie version: same meals, smaller portions — suits many smaller or lighter women ($\approx$ 400-calorie deficit), about €32 a head for the week. Averages 1195 kcal and 105g protein a day.

- These are examples, not prescriptions — get your own number with the free calculator at nononsensefitness.ie/macro-calculator and scale the portions
- Swap like for like: chicken $\leftrightarrow$ turkey, skyr $\leftrightarrow$ Greek yogurt, salmon $\leftrightarrow$ any fish, rice $\leftrightarrow$ pasta $\leftrightarrow$ potatoes
- Cook once, eat twice: brown 400g of mince on Monday — half is Monday's bolognese, half is Thursday's burrito bowl
- Weights are raw/dry (that's how labels measure) — and always check your own pack, labels change

TODAY'S ACTION

Follow @nononsensefitness.ie on TikTok for a new fat-loss basics post every morning — one small habit at a time, not another 6-month programme to abandon.

Done with the basics? Ready for the next level?

Training progression, lean bulking, and where research compounds actually fit.

Get the Year Two Advanced Guide →

nononsensefitness.ie/free-tools

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