

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

10 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

11 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.

12 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

13 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

14 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

15 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

16 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"

17 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

18 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

19 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 (≈ 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 ↔ turkey, skyr ↔ Greek yogurt, salmon ↔ any fish, rice ↔ pasta ↔ 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](https://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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