

LOSING TO WIN

How To Finally Start Shedding The Pounds Using
The Right Tools So You Can Gain Your Life Back



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LOSING TO WIN

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	6
Shocking Facts & Statistics	7
Enter: The Fitness Industry.....	9
What is a Weight Loss Tool?	11
Chapter 1: The Agony of Finding Diet Tools That Work.....	13
Beware: Cash Grabs and Scams	14
Everyone is Different	15
Finances	16
Chapter 2: Weight Loss Apps and Gadgets – Powerful Technologies You Can Use	18
Running With Apps and Trackers	19
Counting Calories	20
More Monitoring.....	22
Old Fashioned Monitoring.....	23
Chapter 3: Why Weight Loss Pills Might Harm Your Results	24
How Weight Loss Pills Work.....	25
The Good Type of Fat Burner	26
Chapter 4: Weight Loss Shakes, Cleanses and Diets	30

Weight Loss Shakes and Meal Replacements31

Other Types of Shake and Meal Replacement.....32

The Convenience of Meal Replacement Without the Downsides.....34

Juices and Smoothies.....35

Chapter 5: Juice Diets, Cleanses and Detoxes.....37

 Should You Detox?.....38

 Are All Diets Bad?.....39

Chapter 6: More Supplements for Controlling Weight.....41

Chapter 7: Is Weight Loss Surgery a Viable Option?45

 Pros and Cons of Liposuction.....46

 Gastric Band48

Chapter 8: Could a Personal Trainer Help You Shed Pounds.....49

 What Can a Personal Trainer do for You?.....50

 Do You Really NEED a Personal Trainer?52

 Other Ways to Get Motivation and Encouragement53

Chapter 9: Gyms and Exercise Equipment55

 A List of Home Workout Equipment.....56

Conclusion59

Introduction



Being overweight is no-one's idea of a good time. While it's not 'the end of the world' to be carrying a little extra puppy fat, even small amounts of extra weight can be enough to hurt your self-esteem, to leave you feeling lifeless and to have a number of damaging effects on your health.

Moreover though, even a small amount of extra weight is likely to lead to *more* extra weight over time. Most people do not just gain a few pounds and then stay there; normally those 'few extra pounds' are a sign of things to come and the beginning of a slippery slope.

And once you have gained serious weight, that's when you really find yourself struggling to get by. Not only is obesity a serious health risk that can leave you prone to such conditions as heart disease, diabetes and cholesterol but it also means carrying around a large amount of extra weight everywhere you go. This leaves you feeling out of breath at the

slightest exertion, it takes away the pride you might have had in your body and it leads to all kinds of joint aches, headaches and sleepless nights.

The key is to stop any weight gain in its tracks, which is of course much easier than it sounds. If it were that easy to lose weight then of course no one would have this problem!



Shocking Facts & Statistics

In reality though, the statistics surrounding weight gain and obesity are rather shocking.

For instance:

- 2 out of 3 adults are considered overweight
- 1 out of 3 adults are considered obese
- 1 out of 20 are considered 'extremely obese'
- One third of children and adolescents are overweight
- 1 in 5 deaths in the USA are linked to being overweight or obese

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- The number of individuals considered obese is only going *up* all the time

As you can see then, this is a real problem and it's made so much worse by our lifestyles. These days, most people work in some kind of stationary office-job and spend their evenings relaxing on the sofa. Most of what we eat is processed and filled with sugar and low nutritional value and we're generally just too stressed to make any serious changes to our lifestyle.

When you spend all day answering phones and being shouted at, when your finances are as stretched as your free time, when the house is a mess and when it's cold and wet outside... how are you *supposed* to get into shape?



Enter: The Fitness Industry

This is where the fitness industry comes in: an industry that is growing exponentially all the time.

The central concept behind the books, supplements, gadgets and apps that we're being offered is simple: instead of letting technology erode our health, why not leverage it to improve our fitness and wellbeing severalfold? Thus we see all kinds of devices and pieces of software that promise to help us shed the pounds and get into the best shape of our lives. These are 'weight loss tools' that can act as companions in our weight loss journey.

But of course not all these weight loss tools are made equally. Some weight loss tools are genuinely helpful and innovative solutions to problems that might have been impacting on your health. There are tools out there that can help you to feel more energetic, that can provide you with easy and convenient exercises to do at home and that can track your calories and distance run.

All this is great and it really *can* help you to lose weight by making it that much easier to do so when you're feeling low on motivation. But at the same time, the weight loss industry has also been very much taken advantage of by a large number of companies that are just looking to make a quick buck. Many wheelers and dealers see the weight-loss crowd as an easy target and are looking to turn their desperation into cash – sometimes at the expense of their health. The key is knowing the difference.

This book in itself is a 'weight loss tool' that you can use. Unlike other books of its kind though, the purpose here is to help you navigate and understand the other tools available to you. This way, you can identify the very best tools that you can utilize in order to start losing weight that much more easily and quickly. With this book as your guide, you can avoid those cash-grabs that look to exploit you and risk your health and hone in on the handful of truly game-changing tools that will transform your weight loss efforts. What's more though, we'll look at how to *use* those tools effectively to get slimmer, stronger, faster and healthier through technology. Are you excited yet?



What is a Weight Loss Tool?

While we'll be giving a little *extra* focus to technological solutions and supplementation, a weight loss 'tool' can be many things. A tool is really any application of a technology (be that modern or old) that acts as a 'force multiplier'. In other words, a tool should help you to get more benefit from the same amount of effort and to thereby accelerate your progress.

To this end, you can consider many things to be tools, including:

- Books and eBooks
- Gadgets and devices
- Apps and software
- Expert consultation
- Clothes and gear
- Supplements and diet
- Diet plans and training programs
- Exercise machines

- Combinations of the above

We'll also see how we can combine several of these tools to create a training plan that's truly a technological marvel.

Chapter 1: The Agony of Finding Diet Tools That Work



If you've been struggling to lose weight for a while now, then there's a high chance that you will already have tried using one or several of the many weight loss tools out there in order to shed pounds. If you're reading this book though, then it's probably safe to assume that none of them has quite worked just yet...

The bottom line is that finding tools out there that work is *hard* and before you go any further, it may be useful to look at just why this is and how you can identify the time-wasters before they damage your efforts and your motivation.

Beware: Cash Grabs and Scams

The first thing to be on the look-out for when assessing whether a tool is worth your time and money is whether it's just a cash-grab or a scam. You need to be very vigilant here as the unfortunate reality is that there are a *lot* of these scams out there – especially online.

These scams include everything from fad diets that don't work and that may well actually make you seriously ill, to eBooks that don't provide any real value.

How do you spot a scam versus a genuinely beneficial product?

One particularly tell-tale sign to look out for is 'over promising'. In other words, you need to assess whether the promises associated with the product you are looking at are realistic or if they are overhyped. For instance, a diet that promises you'll lose several pounds a day is something to be *extremely* skeptical of as it's likely either a huge exaggeration or very dangerous! Likewise, pills that promise to help you gain height or increase testosterone are generally just snake oil. Many fat burners are too!

Likewise, eBooks that make a lot of bold claims without providing any concrete examples of what you will learn should also be avoided. Ask yourself what this text offers that others don't. What's the USP? And how are they justifying the price tag?

More importantly, try looking at reviews online to see what others are saying. If there's a genuinely groundbreaking product out there then you

should be able to find reviews from other users that will be raving about it and recommending it. If you *can't* find such things, then reconsider your purchase.

You should also look at the science behind the product you are looking at. Is there any research to suggest the claims are accurate? Does the described mechanism of action make sense from an objective, logical standpoint? Be wary of made up statistics and sponsored studies too.

If you *are* going to buy a weight loss supplement or anything else that could potentially cause you harm, then it's always best to go with a trusted brand and to buy from a store. When you order supplements online there is no way to be certain what's gone into them and this has led to some high profile cases of buyers becoming seriously, even critically ill.

Everyone is Different

But even if a product isn't a 'scam', that still doesn't mean it's going to work for you. The key thing to recognize here is that everyone is different.

Biologically any two people are going to react differently to some nutrients than others, are going to have different metabolisms, different types of twitch muscle fibers and different levels of hormones. There are countless ways that people vary in terms of weight gain that we know about – and likely many, *many* more that we don't.

This is something that the very best personal trainers now take on board. It unfortunately means that there is no 'cookie cutter' solution to weight gain

problems and that you may have to try a number of different options before happening upon what will really work for you. Which brings us to the next point...

Finances

One unfortunate reality of weight loss is that it can be *expensive*. Losing weight costs you money in all kinds of little ways. Here are just a few examples:

- Gym membership
- Supplements
- Gear (running clothes etc.)
- Apps
- Books
- Personal training
- More expensive meals

Note that many of these expenses are directly related to the tools that you'll be using.

Now take into consideration the fact that many of these tools won't work to start with when you first start employing them. As we've seen, different strategies work better for different people so you may want to try multiple things before settling on a program or solution that really works for you.

This means that some of your expenses are likely to essentially be money wasted – so you don't want to pay too much for each one.

Another consideration is that when you happen on something that *does* work, it then has to be sustainable. In other words, it's not enough to use said supplement for 10 days and give up. If this is going to be your long term solution then you'll need to keep it up forever. Suddenly that \$10 bottle of l-carnitine becomes \$120 a year and \$9,600 over the course of your lifetime.

Consider this when making your program. Is it sustainable? If not, then can you use the tool to give your weight loss a head-start and then subsequently taper off of it?

These are just some of the challenges involved when it comes to weight loss tools. Fortunately, we'll be look in much more detail at each of them in the coming chapters.

Chapter 2: Weight Loss Apps and Gadgets – Powerful Technologies You Can Use



Many people reading this book will be thinking of gadgets specifically with regards to the word 'tool'. Technologies are the most classic examples of tools and as such we have come to expect our tools to be things that we can wield to get work done and to save ourselves time.

In this sense then, two of the most prominent tools out there are apps and fitness trackers. Fitness apps include the likes of MyFitnessPal and Endomondo, whereas fitness trackers include such things as the FitBit and the Microsoft Band.

There's a reason that we're looking at these types of tools first and there's a reason that we're grouping them both together.

Really, both fitness apps and fitness trackers serve to do largely the same thing: they track your progress and allow you to see your statistics, thereby getting a better idea of how successful your weight loss efforts are being.

The reason this is so important, is that it will allow you to measure many of the other tools that we'll be going over to see whether or not they're actually working for you. Rather than trying to guesstimate whether you're actually burning calories, the ability to see how much your weight has fallen in relation to what you're eating will give you actual proof of what's working and what isn't.

Likewise, tracking your fitness and your diet allows you to employ 'gamification'. In other words, it gives you a sense of satisfaction that comes from getting feedback and seeing yourself progress. When you play a computer game, you might find yourself becoming addicted as you rush through the levels and as you see your character 'level up'. This is what keeps you coming back and what gives you that nice little rush of dopamine in the brain each time you do well.

Running With Apps and Trackers

If you go for a run and don't take any kind of tracker, then you won't have any objective and you won't have any way to see if you're improving and if you're losing lots of weight. But if you use an app like Endomondo (which tracks runs and counts calories) or a device like the Microsoft Band, you'll be able to see your pace, your calories burned, your total time and distance and more. You can then view all of your statistics over time in a handy

graph and even see your different runs mapped to various locations around the world (if you've been lucky enough to run in multiple places).

If you've tried running in the past and given up because you found it tiring and unrewarding, then try again using a fitness tracker/running watch/running app. You should find that this is considerably more interesting and that it actually becomes quite addictive!

Counting Calories

At the same time, it can also be very useful to count calories using an app and fitness tracker.

While there are many different opinions on the best type of diet for losing weight, one simple truth is completely inarguable: that consuming fewer calories than you burn will lead to weight loss. If you can find out how many calories you're eating in a day and then ensure that you burn more than this then you *will* lose weight.



Unfortunately, counting calories can be a very time consuming process – which is where an app like 'MyFitnessPal' comes in. This is a very popular smartphone app that makes it easy for you to keep track of the calories

you're consuming. At first you'll have to enter this data in manually, but eventually the app will have stored most of your most common meals, thereby allowing you to just click to your usual lunch or dinner choices to add them to your daily intake. This makes calorie tracking *far* less time consuming and fiddly meaning you're much more likely to actually keep it up.

And here's a top tip: try to be as consistent with your diet as possible. Sticking to a selection of meals for breakfast, lunch and dinner will make it much easier to track your intake and will also make it easier for you to stick to a healthy regime.

Meanwhile, if you have a fitness tracker with a pedometer, or perhaps a phone with one built in, you can then look at how many calories you're burning throughout the day. You can combine this with trackers that monitor workouts and with some data regarding your age, height and weight.

While this isn't perfect, what you'll be left with is a total picture of the calories coming in and out on a regular basis. From here you can then try to maintain a deficit which will allow you to almost guarantee steady weight loss. It's also just highly illuminating seeing where the majority of your calories are coming from and how you're best burning them. What you might find is that a particular pizza you've been eating regularly is adding 700 calories to your diet and is probably not worth it. Likewise, you may realize that you barely make any steps on a typical Sunday. These are things you can change for immediate results.

More Monitoring

Finally, using a tracker will allow you to see how the other tools you employ are really working. If you start a new training regime that's meant to make it easier to stay active, then you can use a fitness tracker to see whether that's actually happening. If you're trying a new diet that allegedly helps you to consume fewer calories then you can *test* that theory as well. Likewise, if you're consuming a new meal replacement then you might want to compare the new caloric intake with your old one to ensure it's worth all the effort!

You can also use this kind of tracking to monitor other aspects of your daily regime that may impact directly or indirectly on your weight loss. A good example of this is your sleep. If you use a supplement to try and sleep better, this can give you more energy and increase your fat burning during the night. Using a fitness tracker that monitors sleep, you can ensure that this is actually working by looking at how it affects your ratio of deep to light sleep.

For the very best fitness monitoring you should really look for a tracker that has a heartrate monitor for continuous heartrate tracking. Good examples include the new Jawbone UP3, the Fitbit Surge and the Microsoft Band.

Old Fashioned Monitoring

Oh and one more crucial weight loss tool: a set of scales! Ultimately, losing weight is the objective here so if you only measure one thing, it should be that. Weight alone is not a bulletproof measure of your fitness because it doesn't differentiate between fat and muscle. Thus you might also want to measure your waist circumference with a tape measure.

Measure regularly and keep it in an app or even just an excel spreadsheet. There is some evidence to suggest that simply measuring your weight and making no other changes can be enough to trigger weight loss (presumably through unconscious mechanisms). The saying goes: 'that which is measured, improves'.

Whatever the case though, this measurement will be the one you use to compare against all others. So if you're looking at the effectiveness of a new weightloss supplement, you can aim to keep your daily intake and outgoings the same for calories and then see if the addition of a supplement accelerates the rate of weight change.

Chapter 3: Why Weight Loss Pills Might Harm Your Results



Many people will start their weight loss odyssey by trying one or several weight loss pills. These are the most straightforward and ‘obvious’ type of tool for many people but unfortunately they’re also somewhat risky and many of them are scams.

If you’ve read the last chapter and taken it to heart, then you know that a good place to start is with a fitness tracker that monitors your heartrate. This way, you should be able to see whether a pill that claims to increase your metabolism really *is* doing that. Likewise, you can keep your calories burned and consumed consistent and see whether or not the addition of a supplement or a new diet is increasing the speed at which you lose weight.

This is a great way to quickly cut through the nonsense: a lot of weight loss pills claim you have to combine them with a ‘sensible diet low in calories’. Often, this is just a way to make those pills *look* as though they’re doing something.

But if you track everything carefully, then you can follow that advice and still isolate the impact that the tool itself is having. Either your weight loss gets faster, or it doesn’t.

How Weight Loss Pills Work

When you use this logical method to test the effectiveness of weight loss pills, then you will often find that they simply don’t work. Looking at the ingredients and the claimed mechanism of action, it’s generally fairly easy to see why this is.

For most weight loss supplements you see, the claimed mechanism of action is to increase the metabolism. These increase your heartrate and increase the amount of calories your body burns in any given timeframe. As such, you end up losing more weight.

Ingredients to help accomplish things include a number of things. Popular options are caffeine, green tea and things like l-tyrosine which increases the alertness neurochemical dopamine.

The reality then is that you’re essentially taking a strong and expensive alternative to caffeine. You won’t see any greater fat burning than you

might expect from a simple strong cup of coffee in many cases and even if you do burn extra calories, it's likely to be something like *five* extra calories – not 100. Is that really worth the money when you could just do a few extra press ups before bed?

There are some exceptions to this rule. One is that the supplement actually contains very large amounts of caffeine along with other ingredients that far more drastically accelerate the metabolism. Now you have the opposite problem though and you can find yourself feeling jittery, struggling to sleep and even getting headaches. In some cases this can even be highly dangerous, resulting in heart attacks, strokes or other problems associated with high blood pressure. Also key to consider is the fact that the body adapts to the consumption of stimulants by altering the number of receptors in the brain. Eventually this can lead to 'tolerance' and even 'dependence' meaning that the same amount of tablets won't give you the same fat burning benefits any more. This can then lead to you overdosing or simply wasting a lot of money. And despite all these risks, even these highly effective stimulants still don't burn that much extra fat as to be particularly noticeable or worthwhile.

The Good Type of Fat Burner

If you insist on burning extra fat, then you should instead look at substances that aim to improve your mitochondrial function. Your mitochondria are small 'power generators' that live inside your cells and which convert glucose into useable energy. When we're younger, we have

more of these and they are more efficient. That's why little children seem to be able to run around endlessly without ever getting tired!

As we get older, these mitochondria decrease in number and degrade in efficiency. Thankfully, some nutrients can help us to increase their efficiency. These include:

- Co-Enzyme Q10
- Lutein
- PQQ
- Resveratrol

There are other alternative ways to increase energy efficiency in the human body too. One example is to look at vasodilators such as ginkgo biloba and garlic. These increase nitric oxide, resulting in the veins widening so that more energy, oxygen and nutrients can get to the brain and the muscles.

Then there's creatine that enables the body to recycle energy – converting energy in its used form (AMP and ADP) back for use (ATP). Unfortunately, creatine also encourages water retention so it can't be recommended for weight loss.

Coconut oil does come recommended though. This stimulates the liver to produce more ketones which provide an alternative form of energy over glucose. While fats are very calorific (9 calories per gram, as compared with 4 for carbs and proteins), it is thought that the body is less likely to store coconut oil due to its structure (as a medium chain triglyceride). In short, this could provide you with a short and immediate spike in energy that doesn't involve a sugar crash and that doesn't get converted into body fat.

Adding vitamins and minerals to your diet can also do a world of good. Vitamin B6 for instance will help your body to burn carbs for fuel, while vitamin C will boost your immune system to prevent you from being negatively affected by infections and other assaults on your system. Then we have things like vitamin D which helps with hormone balance and improves sleep. Iron and vitamin B12 will improve your body's oxygen supply further, while magnesium and zinc will increase testosterone production for more drive and determination.

One more thing you can do is to use omega 3 fatty acids. These work to help improve the cell membrane permeability, thereby making it easier for your cells to send signals to one another. It's also a powerful antioxidant.

Combining lots of different supplements like this provides you with what's called a 'stack'. If we were to formulate the safest and most natural weight loss stack then, it may look something like this:

- Omega 3 fatty acid
- Coconut oil
- B complex vitamins
- Vitamin C
- Vitamin D
- Lutein
- CoQ10 (\$)
- PQQ (\$)
- Garlic extract
- Zinc
- Resveratrol (\$)

- Magnesium

Take these supplements in the morning, following the dosage instructions on the packet and you will feel more energetic while burning extra fat throughout the rest of the day.

Now of course, such a stack will be quite expensive to use and you still shouldn't expect to see groundbreaking differences. In other words, you don't want to rely on this forever.

But here's the good thing about this stack: all those ingredients can be found naturally in your diet – even creatine can be found in organ meat! So if you start off with this stack to give you that little boost in energy, you can then work on getting those ingredients naturally. What's more, you can also boost mitochondrial count and efficiency through exercise and *especially* by using any exercise plan that incorporates HIIT. HIIT is High Intensity Interval Training and involves alternating between short periods of intense exertion, followed by intervals of relative calm and 'active recovery'.

This is the right way to use a weight loss supplement as a tool – it should contain only natural and safe ingredients and should serve as a starting point to kickstart your progress rather than a crutch that you rely on.

Chapter 4: Weight Loss Shakes, Cleanses and Diets



Now you've seen how weight loss pills work, you can start looking into the use of other weight loss supplements on top of that or instead of that.

Ultimately, weight loss pills aren't recommended – though you can use the recommended stack to jump start your energy levels and to help you make the necessary changes to your lifestyle.

So what about weight loss shakes and smoothies? How can they help?

Weight Loss Shakes and Meal Replacements

Most weight loss shakes essentially amount to meal replacements. These serve to provide you with a certain number of calories and nutrients that you can then use instead of your regular breakfast or lunch.

While this is a good idea in theory, in practice it tends not to be so smart. For starters, there is really no one meal replacement that can offer all the same benefits as real food. Meal replacements often don't provide enough roughage and they are seldom as filling or satisfying as real food. There's a huge psychological aspect to eating and if all you've done is drink a shake then you'll often still feel hungry as you won't have sent those same signals to the brain to let yourself know you're eating. Most shakes are sweet, which means you'll still end up craving something savory and they're hardly as satisfying as a nice sausage roll.

What's more is that the biological availability of nutrients in a shake will *never* be as good as in real food. When you consume vitamins in tablet or shake form, they aren't available in the right combinations or the right quantities to optimize absorption. Different nutrients absorb at different rates and this means that they are more effective when combined together. Our bodies evolved to get the most out of fruits and vegetables from the wild so we *know* this works. Man-made products on the other hand lack the nuance to be as effective.

Other Types of Shake and Meal Replacement

Another type of meal replacement ‘tool’ that’s currently popular is the infamous ‘Bulletproof Coffee’. This is a cup of coffee that has dolloped into it a load of butter alongside some MCT oil. The argument is that it can replace your breakfast and at the same time increase your metabolism and energy levels.

The coffee that goes into Bulletproof Coffee claims to be free from mold and thereby not likely to cause the jitteriness or ‘brain fog’ that regular coffee does. Applying our ‘scam filter’ though, we might dig deeper into this to see if there is any science backing up those claims. What you’ll find is that there *isn’t*. Almost all food contains some mold and it has no negative impact on our health. What’s more, regularly coffee does undergo testing to keep this to a minimum, while Bulletproof coffee actually has been found to contain mold itself. This is an example of a seller using big words like ‘mycotoxin’ to try and make their product sound legitimate – too bad it’s ground-less.

Meanwhile, adding dollops of butter to your morning coffee means consuming huge amounts of calories with very little nutritional benefit. This is *worse* than your regular breakfast. MCT oil is a type of coconut oil *minus* the nutritional benefit, so that can be useful, but not when you consider how much goes into Bulletproof Coffee and how ill this can make you... steer clear!

Protein Shakes

As a rule then, you should steer clear of 'meal replacements' as you'll simply be dissatisfied and hungry while getting fewer nutrients.



Source: <http://lifestyle.howstuffworks.com/weddings/style/wedding-diet-exercise-plans/meal-replacement-shakes2.htm>

When *do* you use shakes then? The best use scenario is as something *additive* to your diet, rather than any kind of replacement. A lean protein shake is a useful tool for instance because it gives you a way to conveniently add protein to your diet without gaining too many extra calories. This way you can get 20 grams of protein or more for less than 100 calories, which is very good going. To build muscle, it is generally recommended that you try and get a gram of protein for every pound of bodyweight while using weight training to stimulate growth. This is a great

way to encourage weight loss seeing as having extra muscle boosts your metabolism and burns energy even when you're sleeping.

The Convenience of Meal Replacement Without the Downsides

So if meal replacement shakes aren't that effective, why are people still drawn to this tool?

The answer is simple: they're convenient. These days, losing weight can increasingly seem like a very complicated process and this can be off-putting for someone who doesn't consider themselves a science buff or who is already frustrated with their diet attempts. In theory, having meal replacements would mean you could simply eat the same shake every day and never worry about tracking calories or about working out whether you're getting your vitamins and minerals. No cooking, no stress and no way to get it 'wrong'.

But you can get these same benefits without any of the downsides.

One option is to look at diet services like Pure. Pure is an example of a diet that gets delivered to your home. This way, you can select from a number of meals and they'll arrive at your door ready to eat. The calories will be predetermined, they'll have a number of crucial nutrients and you won't have to do any calculation or work to prepare it.

Another option is to do something similar yourself. This might mean just coming up with a few reliable meals that are fast and easy to make and that

you know are low in calories. You can even cook these at the start of the week and then freeze them or store them in the fridge – now you'll be able to get them out and heat them up when you get home after work and again you'll have fool proofed your diet.

Juices and Smoothies

Another fantastic tool you can use to improve your diet is a smoothie maker or juicer. These make it super easy to get lots of nutrients in one place and this can give you a real boost throughout the day and make you generally a lot healthier. In turn, this leads to better adherence to your workouts and better energy levels.

The 'NutriBullet' is a particularly popular choice of tool at the moment for making smoothies, as it allows you to quickly and easily create your drink and then take it with you on the go. It saves washing up and generally makes it easier than ever to stick to a diet high in vitamins and minerals.

Another trick is simply to swap your morning coffee for a smoothie that's high in all the fat burning nutrients we've already discussed. Something from a company like Innocent Smoothies with a name like 'Energize' will normally do the trick nicely.

There's a downside to smoothies and juices too though – which is that they're fairly high in sugar and calories. Drink too many and you can end up burning away the enamel on your teeth while at the same time causing an

insulin response that triggers lipogenesis (fat storage) and that leaves you tired and hungry shortly after.

Stick to one smoothie or a couple of fruit juices a day then and make sure to seek out ones that aren't too high in calories. Vegetable smoothies are often a better tool in this regard than fruit smoothies.

Chapter 5: Juice Diets, Cleanses and Detoxes



Seeing as we're recommending limiting your intake of juices, you can imagine what might be wrong with a fruit juice or smoothie diet. These celebrity diets that claim you can lose huge amounts of weight by consuming a diet that consists of *only* juices are not wrong but they're also highly unhealthy and actually quite dangerous.

People can actually damage their teeth beyond repair by sticking to fruit juice and smoothie diets and this of course should be enough to put you off. If that doesn't do it though, then consider that these diets lead to short term benefits, are highly impractical and don't provide anywhere near enough protein. Something like the lemonade diet will lead to weight loss only because you're essentially starving yourself (this one actually recommends combining a diet of only lemon juice with the use of laxatives).

You'll look thin and emaciated in the same way that someone with a serious stomach infection looks thin. If you don't collapse, you'll eventually finish the diet and then put all the weight back on.

Remember that no tool is a silver bullet. We've said it already but let's reiterate: if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. The best tools act as supplements and additions to your program not as simple solutions. In this case, juice and smoothies should be used to provide extra nutrients that will boost your health and energy levels. Your calorie reduction meanwhile should come from simple lifestyle changes and some calorie tracking apps.

The same also goes for any fad diet that involves completely cutting out a food group, fasting for any long period of time or cutting calories to obscenely low degrees. These diets are trying to get faster results by 'cheating' the system and they're all doomed to failure. Nine times out of ten, these fad diets fail to provide you with the nutrients you need to feel healthy and well throughout the day and they will usually trigger rapid weight gain as soon as you finish them. These are unsustainable, which ultimately makes them a waste of time.

Should You Detox?

While we're on the topic of fad diets that don't work, you should also avoid detoxes and cleanses. A lot of diets will try to recommended detoxing and cleansing as a weight loss tool, as well as a general health fix.

In reality though, there is actually no evidence to support the idea that we need to detox at all. Thousands of companies claim their products provide ‘detoxification’ benefits but when officially, none has ever been able to name the ‘toxins’ that they are targeting. No study has ever shown a benefit for colonic irrigation and nor is there any evidence for the build-up of waste in the colon that many detox-proponents describe. In fact, some ‘detox’ products will even purposefully include coagulants in order to make it *look* as though you’re removing lots of compacted feces when you go to the toilet.

The truth is that your body is highly efficient at detoxing itself. Anything that doesn’t get used comes out the other end and starving yourself won’t have any noticeable impact on your health. Don’t be confused or tempted by these fad ‘cleanses’ – stick to what works when it comes to losing weight which is simply to reduce your caloric intake slightly.

Are All Diets Bad?

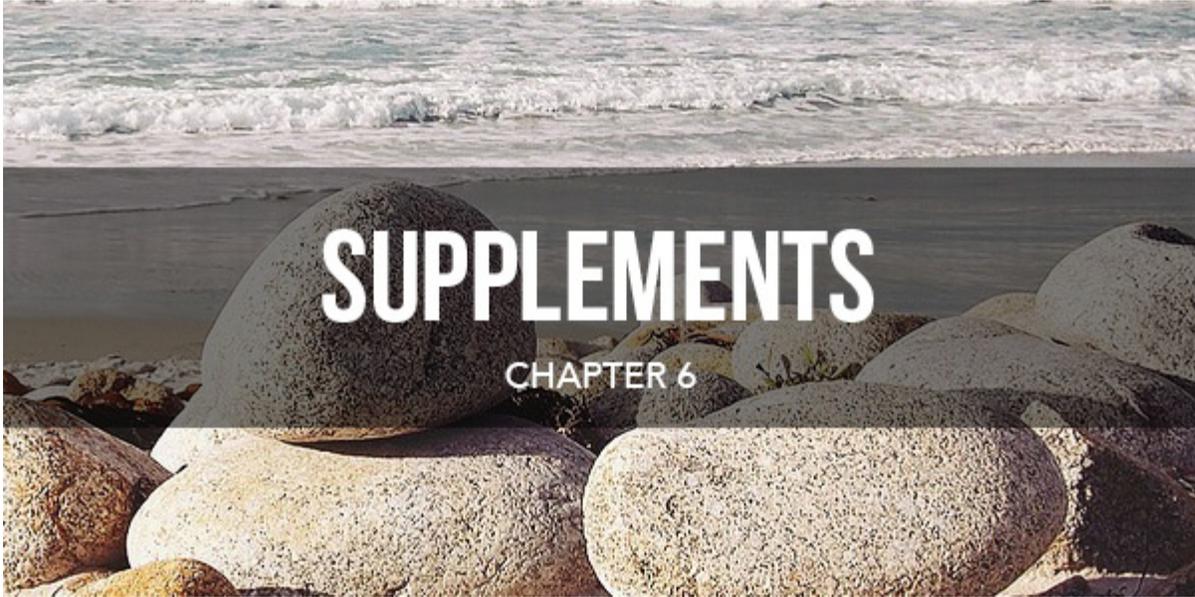
The word ‘diet’ can be seen as a bad thing as it implies a finite end. Far more effective is to simply make healthy lifestyle changes that you can sustain. This prevents yo-yoing weight and is much better for you psychologically as well as physically.

Fad diets should certainly be avoided but that’s not to say that there aren’t some other approaches you can take to weight loss. For instance, lowering your intake of carbohydrates may well be effective as this will reduce the

amount of sugar in your diet. The 'slow carb diet' detailed in *The Four Hour Body* is a good place to start.

Again, this is all down to what works for you – both for your biology and for your routine and habits.

Chapter 6: More Supplements for Controlling Weight



Still want more supplements? We've looked a lot at what doesn't work, so let's address a few new tools that *do* work and that you can use together to accelerate your weight loss as well as improving your energy levels. These include a few agents that work differently to the other weight loss tools we've looked at and some of the better compounds found in weight loss pills.

Read on to learn more about each of these weight loss supplements and to see if it might be useful for your specific goals and routine. You can combine these with the stack recommended earlier, or use them on their own. As these can't easily be obtained through your diet, you can also continue to use them once you've straightened out your dietary nutrient intake.

Chromium Picolinate

Chromium picolinate is often used to treat chromium deficiency and to accelerate weight loss. It is used not only by those looking to quickly shed pounds but also by people who want to improve their energy efficiency (such as athletes) and by diabetics.

As a chromium supplement, chromium picolinate increases the production of insulin and thereby helps the body to use the sugar that's in the blood stream. Insulin is the hormone that the body produces when blood sugar levels get too high – this in turn encourages the body to burn that sugar for energy and thereby provides a boost in energy levels while also reducing lipogenesis (fat storage).

As mentioned, different people respond better to different weight loss tools. Chromium picolinate is the perfect example of a supplement that will work well for some people and have little impact on others – depending on the condition of your metabolism and your insulin resistance. For people with normal insulin sensitivity, this might not be particularly effective according to studies. If you have tried everything else though and suspect that you may not be metabolizing sugar correctly, this is worth a shot, especially as it can be acquired very cheaply.

Glucomannan

Glucomannan is another weight loss supplement that is currently quite popular. Does it deserve a place in your stack? Like chromium picolinate,

this one works primarily on insulin levels and can be used by diabetics. It fairs slightly better in studies on those with normal insulin though, so you might prefer this one or to try the two together.

Bitter Orange

Bitter orange is found in some fat burners but is one of the better ingredients. It's natural and more effective than some of the other ingredients thanks to its ability to work on the beta-3 adrenergic receptors. In other words, this works like a *very* mild amphetamine. It's proven fairly effective in studies and can increase fat breakdown when combined with a workout regime.

If you want to save money on fat burners and avoid the hype and marketing, then you can go straight to the more effective ingredients – this being one of them.

Green Tea Extract

Green tea extract is another one found in some of the fat burners that didn't fair all that well in our earlier analysis. That said, the green tea extract itself isn't to blame and like bitter orange, might prove useful when taken on its own. As well as being an antioxidant, green tea extract contains a combination of different xanthines and amino acids including caffeine, l-theanine and theobromine. It is more gentle than simply ODing on caffeine (which most diet pills do) and provides a more 'even' energy boost throughout the day. Better yet, why not go straight to the source by just

drinking green tea? The best option here would be to try yerba mate which combines the active ingredients in a particularly potent way and also contains vitamin C, manganese, potassium and zinc. Darwin called this the 'perfect stimulant'.

Hoodia

Finally, hoodia is a herbal supplement that is said to help suppress appetite. This can provide a handy 'one-two' punch when combating weight gain. As with many of these supplements, the effect seems small – but every little bit helps.

Chapter 7: Is Weight Loss Surgery a Viable Option?



If you're really keen on losing weight very fast and without putting in the usual time or work, then you might consider turning to one extreme 'tool' for your weight loss. This is a tool that's guaranteed to provide *immediate* results, but is it something you should consider?

Weight loss surgery is surgery that offers you an immediate 'quick fix' when it comes to losing weight. There are two main choices of surgery here which include liposuction and tuck.

If you get liposuction, this will involve the use of a needle which will extract fat cells from your body after first breaking them up with vibration or ultrasound. This literally sucks the fat out from your body and while it's

uncomfortable, it doesn't leave any permanent scars and is actually a very fast and routine process.

The other option is a tuck, which means literally cutting away the fat and then sewing closed the skin afterward. The tuck is even faster than liposuction and allows more to be removed in a single go but it is also much more invasive and painful and can leave nasty scarring. Really, the only advantage to using a tummy tuck over liposuction is that it can also tighten up the skin which prevents it from looking baggy after the fat has been removed. Unless this is likely to be an issue for you, you will almost always do better to choose liposuction over a tuck, so that's what we'll focus on here.

Pros and Cons of Liposuction

With this in mind then, is liposuction something that you should consider?

For most people the answer is no. If you haven't already tried *everything* else, then you shouldn't yet turn to liposuction. While this is a relatively routine procedure as mentioned, it is nevertheless *still* surgery and it still carries some specific dangers as a result.

Having a large amount of fat removed from your body is always going to place a strain on your system and in rare instances this can put your body in shock. While it's highly unlikely, there are *some* documented cases of death resulting from liposuction and it is far from natural.

What's more, suddenly removing fat in this way means your body weight will have changed without your hormone balance and efficiency changing. Your body will continue to act as it did before, meaning it will continue storing fat and meaning you will still be tired and low on energy – all this makes it much easier to put the weight straight back on than if you had gone through the work of losing it naturally.

Liposuction is also uncomfortable and it is expensive. For most people it will also cause some bagginess of the skin, which is aesthetically not pleasing. For all these reasons, it should never be your first port of call when trying to lose weight.

Good Candidates for Liposuction

That said, liposuction is still a useful tool for some people. For instance, if you have an illness, disability or injury that makes it hard for you to work out and exercise, then you may want to consider the use of liposuction or other surgical means in order to help yourself lose weight.

Liposuction is also a useful tool for those who are dangerously overweight. This can be even more of a shock to the body meaning that it's a risk still but if you've tried everything else and you're in danger of health problems, it can once again offer a good starting point to get you on your way.

Gastric Band

One more medical procedure that can act as a weight loss tool is to have a gastric band inserted. This works to keep your stomach feeling smaller and thereby to reduce the appetite. This process can lead to rapid weight loss and on average it leads to the loss of around 2/3rds of the user's bodyweight.

Gastric band surgery is still expensive however and can be somewhat uncomfortable and invasive. This method *forces* you to suddenly make big diet changes which can be unpleasant and quite unenjoyable. In rare cases they can lead to complications such as infections or damage to the surrounding organs. These sorts of complications tend to affect 1 in 10 individuals.

Finally, gastric bands eventually have to be removed at which point there is the usual risk of suddenly gaining weight again.

Gastric bands are a relatively extreme solution but do generally work. As with other forms surgical options you should only consider this route if you have tried everything else and/or are at risk of weight-related health issues. You should also always consult with your doctor prior to seeking out surgical solutions.

Chapter 8: Could a Personal Trainer Help You Shed Pounds



Something a lot less extreme and potentially dangerous and invasive than a gastric band or liposuction is just to increase your activity and to start working out more. Working out will help you to burn more calories in a day but when done correctly, it should also help you to improve your body's energy efficiency so that it burns more calories even when you're at rest.

This is what a good personal trainer can help you to do. And a personal trainer really *can* accelerate your progress – which is why almost every celebrity who needs to get into shape will use one. If Sylvester Stallone still sees it fit to use a personal trainer, then you can probably benefit from one as well! And if you're not using one? Then there's a good chance you're massively limiting your potential for rapid weightloss and muscle gains!

What Can a Personal Trainer do for You?

While personal trainers all offer pretty much the same service, it's important still to recognize that they're all different and that they all provide slightly different services and advice. As with many of the tools on this list then, a lot of this will come down to personal preference and to finding the right person for your specific personality and training goals.

Still though, you should also be able to tell the difference between a good personal trainer and one who doesn't deserve your money. And this means you should know what a personal trainer can do for you.

To begin with, a good personal trainer should start out with a consultation so that they can get an understanding of who you are and how you currently train. They should ask you about your previous training experience, about your general health, about what kind of training you enjoy and about what you hope to achieve in what kind of timescale.

By the end, they should have a complete picture of you and should then discuss a training plan with you that you can both agree on. Notice that once again, the emphasis is on coming up with something that is tailored to the individual. Everyone is different and while some people will benefit from doing lots of squats, other people might find leg extensions and running offers them more benefits. Other people won't be able to do any of those things! A great personal trainer should take these individual differences into account and shouldn't let their own personal preferences get in the way or color their decisions. If your personal trainer doesn't seem to be listening to you then you should look elsewhere right away!

Once you've agreed on your training program, your PT should then be able to help you through your workouts. They will provide one-on-one advice and guidance and will be on-hand to help you with your technique and to encourage you when you're low on motivation. What's more, they should be constantly adapting to what's working and what's not working – keeping an eye on your technique, watching your energy levels and learning more about you as you go.

If you're an absolute beginner, then a PT will show you the basics of working out and how to use the various equipment in the gym. If you're a seasoned pro though, they should show you how to get *more* out of that equipment and they should push you in ways you couldn't push yourself.

The best way to find out if a personal trainer is likely a good match for you then is to have that consultation and to see what they say. You might even have a trial session first before you commit – and make sure you're not tied into a lengthy contract.

Personal trainers can be a highly beneficial tool but unfortunately they're not particularly well regulated – so you'll need to use a little common sense to avoid wasting your cash!

Do You Really NEED a Personal Trainer?

Personal trainers can be expensive though and you certainly don't absolutely need one in most cases. If you can afford it, then they can act like a gastric band for your enthusiasm – preventing you from cutting corners and forcing you into that uncomfortable zone. They just don't come with the same health risks as a gastric band.

But you can certainly lose weight without a personal trainer too and if you're low on funds you might prefer to try and go it alone at least at first.

A good tip in this case is to consider signing up to a gym where you can get help from the trainers that work there, to have a one off consultation with a trainer, or to find a training buddy who can help you to feel motivated at the gym. If your training partner is more experienced than you, then you'll have the added advantage of being able to get tutelage and advice from them – and hopefully they won't charge you for it if you're friends!

A personal trainer is a *great* addition to your weight loss goals and can make a huge difference. Unfortunately, they're also not particularly affordable so many people will want to try some of the other tools in this book first.

Other Ways to Get Motivation and Encouragement

Other than using a personal training or a gym buddy, there are a few other ways to get structured workouts and encouragement.

One for instance is to look for workout DVDs and programs that you can find online. Things like 'Insanity Workout' will give you guided workouts you can follow, show you how to perform the movements and give you a great amount of encouragement. Likewise, there are countless eBooks on the web that detail effective workouts that might work for you.

Can these work out? Certainly. In some cases, the best books will act essentially like having your very own personal trainer in your living room who can guide you through workouts – like a virtual personal trainer. There are apps that can do this too, such as the 7 Minute Workout app or Stronglifts 5x5. The Microsoft Band also comes with a number of workouts it can talk you through and it can even be synced with Xbox Fitness for some detailed workout analysis.

The only problem is that these DVDs, workouts, apps and tools don't have the same feedback loop that a personal trainer has. In other words, they can't see what's working for and what's not. They can't back off when you start to slow down with your training and they can't add new techniques as your gains start to plateau. Thus, you might have to try a lot of different apps and workouts before you happen on the one that will really work for you. This is fine as long as you are willing to put in the effort and you have a little cash to spare.

A tip then is to start by looking at free workouts and regimes – or even to ask one of the many online communities for advice. Head to [Reddit/r/fitness](#) and ask the community for help coming up with a workout routine. You'll find lots of experts here and lots of other beginners all of whom will be able to give you tips and advice and this way you can come across programs and routines that will suit you completely for free.

Chapter 9: Gyms and Exercise Equipment



If you're an absolute beginner and/or if you're badly overweight and out of shape and you're *not* using a personal trainer, then it's not recommended that you join a gym.

Why?

Because joining a gym means you now have to travel somewhere in order to start training. This means you'll need to muster a lot of enthusiasm when you're feeling tired and stressed and it's wet outside. It also means that you'll have to workout in front of lots of other people when you're feeling self-conscious and it means you'll have an awful lot to learn in one... where do you begin?

Much better then, is to invest in some home training equipment which you can then use to workout at home in your own time and at your own pace.

This means that if you only have five minutes spare, you can quickly get in a five minute workout. And it means that if you're feeling tired or lethargic, you don't need to travel anywhere. You're thus *much* more likely to stick at your plan, with the help of some kind of guide or an online community.

A List of Home Workout Equipment

Here are some of the best examples of equipment you can get for your own home that will make a big difference to your training:

Kettlebell

A kettlebell is a weight that is shaped a little differently from a dumbbell or a barbell. This is essentially a round ball with a handle on the end which can be held in one or two hands. One of the best uses for it is to perform the 'kettlebell swing' which involves swinging the weight in front of you and then back between your legs by performing a squat movement with a 'hip pop' at the end. This trains your arms, legs and core all together while also being a great form of 'resistance cardio' (a type of cardio training that is particularly good for burning calories). Combine this with a tabata routine (look up 'tabata songs' for guidance) and you can burn a *lot* of calories at home in a way that's fun.

Punch Bag

A punch bag is a simple purchase that can transform your weight loss efforts. Punching bags are a lot of fun to use and are brilliant for catharsis after a stressful day. At the same time, they lend themselves ideally to cardio at varying speeds and they toughen up your shoulders, triceps and pecs as you generate force and power. This is the kind of workout you can find yourself looking forward to, rather than dreading.

Pull Up Bar

If you're building muscle then you can actually do all the training you need pretty much using your bodyweight alone. The main challenge here is training your biceps and lats which require a pulling motion. The solution? Getting a pull up bar. A pull up bar will let you do pull ups, chin ups, leg raises and more and can provide a complete upper body workout along with some press ups etc.

Running Shoes

Running is something you can do anywhere and that you don't really need any specialist equipment for. That said, if you've tried and failed to get into running in the past, one thing holding you back (other than the lack of tracker as we discussed earlier) could be your shoes. The right running shoes make a *world* of difference to your training as they can cushion your foot strides and help you to spring up off the tarmac.

Again, what really matters here is finding what works for you specifically. In this case you need to have your run analyzed to see whether you strike

with the ball, heel or midsole of your foot. This will dictate whether you need a 'minimal' or 'structured' shoe.

These are just a few examples of tools and equipment that can make training easier and more fun. Depending on how you like to workout, you might get more benefit from some of the many other tools out there – be that a trampoline or a skipping rope. Don't worry if it's not conventional; what matters is what works for you!

Conclusion



So there you have it: a complete run down of the various different weight loss and training tools available to you. If you can employ these in the very best way, then you will be leveraging technology in order to more closely measure your progress and to enhance your metabolism for greater results. Hopefully, you'll also now have a good idea of how to spot scams and money grabs so that you can avoid wasting your time and cash.

The last thing to do is to bring this all together into a single strategy that can utilize the best of these tools in the most effective way. The key to doing this though is to recognize that everyone responds differently to different tools and different strategies. Thus you need to be constantly analyzing your progress and tweaking things to try and improve your results – something that technology makes a lot easier. Likewise, you need

to use these tools to find ways to make your training programs and diet changes really work with your unique lifestyle.

This is how that might look...

1. Invest in fitness tracking apps and devices. Now keep a log of your calories in and out on any given day.
2. Measure your weight and waist circumference, see how this is changing over time. You'll now apply various strategies to try and increase your calorie deficit and to accelerate the weight loss this provides.
3. Try adding supplements to your diet to increase your fat burning potential. Measure the outcome to see what's working for you. Stay away from anything that seems to promise immediate results.
4. Make your diets easier by coming up with meal plans and sticking to them. Alternatively, you can try supplementing certain meals with shakes and smoothies, or you can use diet systems that deliver to your door. This way you are again using technology to make your diet work for *your* routine. Stay away from fad diets.
5. If you are in serious risk of illness, or if your other strategies haven't worked, then consult with your doctor about liposuction or a gastric band – only as a last resort.

6. Find a personal trainer if you can. If you can't? Look for cheap programs you can try and keep moving around until you find one that works for your routine and biology. Use a training buddy and consult the online fitness communities.

7. Invest in some home tools to make working out easier and more fun. Again, find what you enjoy to work out with!

Now rinse and repeat! With progress and careful monitoring, you will be able to set up systems and routines that help the fat to really fall off.

Thanks to the precise nature of technology and its ability to make all kinds of things that much easier, you've removed the guesswork and all that's required is a little time and patience.

Reading this book was the first step on your journey so congratulations! Don't drop the baton now though – it's time to take the next one...

IMPORTANT: To help you further take action, print out a copy of the *Checklist* and *Mindmap* I provided. You'll also find a Resource Cheat Sheet with valuable sites, posts and articles that I recommend you go through.