

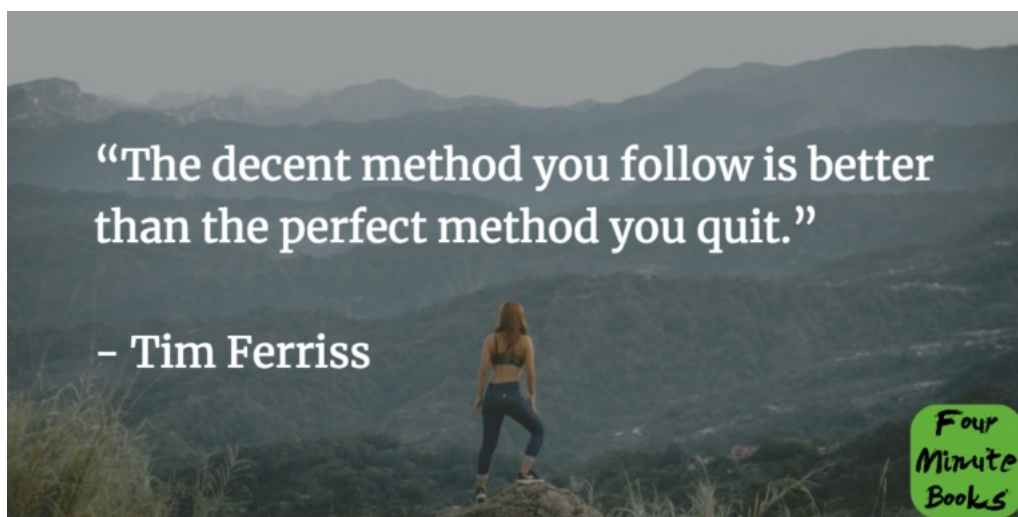
# The 4-Hour Body Summary

 [fourminutebooks.com/the-4-hour-body-summary](https://fourminutebooks.com/the-4-hour-body-summary)

**1-Sentence-Summary:** *The 4-Hour Body is a complete guide to hacking your health, helping you achieve anything from rapid fat loss and quick muscle gain to better sleep, sex, and extreme athletic performance.*

**Read in:** 4 minutes

**Favorite quote from the author:**



In 2013, I first became aware of the importance of my health. I came down with mono during spring break of my study term in the US, which knocked me out for two full weeks. While over there, I also saw both obese and unhealthy, as well as very fit and health-conscious people. After I came back to Germany, I finally began working out, swimming three times a week, and eating better.

I also read *The 4-Hour Workweek* that fall, so in late 2014, when my health progress plateaued, *The 4-Hour Body* became a natural follow-up. Over the course of a decade, Tim Ferriss has hacked everything from weight loss to muscle gain, from endurance to speed, from swimming to running, from sleep to sex and beyond. The resulting book is an encyclopedia of health, which you can grab from the shelf today or ten years from now to solve a specific problem.

While it's impossible to summarize it all, there are some underlying principles to *how* you should approach your health worth sharing and a diet Tim conceived that is both healthy and flexible. That's what will focus on in today's 3 lessons:

1. Make managing your health too simple, rather than too complicated.
2. Start tracking data points of things you want to improve.
3. A Harajuku Moment is what really helps you commit to making changes.

*Mens sana in corpore sano.* That's Latin for "a healthy body holds a healthy mind." Let's see what we can learn from everyone's favorite human guinea pig about the both of them!

## Lesson 1: Oversimplify your health.

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Tim's #1 rule for life is the 80/20 principle that says 20% of the effort gets you 80% of the results. It's a universal law that governs most bilateral relationships in life and health is no exception. He says it's often even more skewed than that. For example, with 2.5% of all Spanish words you can understand 95% of all conversations.

When it comes to making healthier choices, this means you're often better off oversimplifying and sticking to a few simple rules, rather than trying to create a perfect system. 4,000 calories equal about a pound of fat. 30 minutes of cardio burns two cheeseburgers. **Rules of thumb you actually use are better than exact details you don't.**

That's why Tim built his Slow-Carb Diet around just five rules:

1. No white carbs, such as bread, white and brown rice, cereal, potatoes, pasta, tortillas and everything that's fried.
2. Eat the same few meals over and over again. Assemble them only from main proteins (beef, chicken, etc.), legumes (beans, lentils), and vegetables.
3. Drink only water, tea and coffee without milk or sugar.
4. No fruits.
5. Have a cheat day once a week on which you can eat as much as you want of whatever you want.

Combined with a breakfast of at least 30 grams of protein within 60 minutes of waking up, it can help you both lose weight and gain muscle, while increasing your energy levels. No diet is perfect, but this one's simple, so it's a good place to start.

## Lesson 2: Even without making changes, tracking data can help you become more aware of your health.

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One of management guru Peter Drucker's most famous lines is "what gets measured gets managed." The idea is that just by observing something regularly, you develop a bigger awareness of it. Even if you don't plan on making any specific changes, this awareness will help you subconsciously change your behavior to improve.

For example, Tim isn't a big fan of tracking calories, but for an overweight friend, it did the trick. Tim's comment:

*“There are far better things to track than calories. But ... would I recommend tracking calories as an alternative to tracking nothing? You bet. **Tracking anything is better than tracking nothing.** If you are very overweight, very weak, very inflexible, or very anything negative, tracking even a mediocre variable will help you develop awareness that leads to the right behavioral changes.”*

In this example, you can already see oversimplification at work. There are thousands of numbers you can track, but starting with a single one gets most people farther than trying to sift through all the different markers. Some I used when I first started my health journey are:

- Total inches combined for arms, legs, hips, and waist. One number to track it all.
- Weight on a weekly basis.
- Taking pictures of meals before eating them, which forces you to re-evaluate your food choices.
- Before-and-after pictures of your body.

Also, always use the same tool to measure and always measure under the same conditions.

## Lesson 3: Find your Harajuku Moment to really start committing to your health.

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Tim’s overweight friend who lost over 70 pounds tracking mainly calories was Chad Fowler. When he asked him what sparked the change, Chad described an event he called a Harajuku Moment. As Tim defines it in the book:

*“It’s an **epiphany that turns a nice-to-have into a must-have.** There is no point in getting started until it happens. No matter how many bullet points and recipes I provide, you will need a Harajuku Moment to fuel the change itself.”*

For Chad, this moment happened while clothes-shopping in Tokyo. At one point, he heard himself saying out loud: “For me, it doesn’t even matter what I wear; I’m not going to look good anyway.” That’s when he realized he had given in to helplessness. He usually didn’t do so in other areas of his life, so he finally decided to tackle his health with the same resolve to do *something*, anything to change.

I had that moment lying sick in bed with mono instead of attending Ultra Festival in Miami. Today my health management is still far from perfect. It ebbs and flows. But it hasn’t left my mind since and that’s what matters.

## The 4-Hour Body Review

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At first I was scared by the sheer size of this book. Don’t be. You can read only 2-5 pages and find everything you need to start and experiment for a few months. Once you do that, you can go back to it whenever you need. *The 4-Hour Body* is a health compendium that most people’s book shelves would benefit from, in spite of the extra weight.

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## **What else can you learn from the blinks?**

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- The science of the Minimum Effective Dose
- What the Kettlebell swing and Occam Protocol are all about
- How you can increase your sex drive with simple foods
- Why cold baths can help you sleep better
- How to run on ice
- Which swimming technique requires the least energy

## **Who would I recommend The 4-Hour Body summary to?**

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The 17 year old who's already struggling with maintaining her weight at this young age, the 32 year old young professional who's putting his career ahead of his health, and anyone who's kept their fitness on the back burner for too long.