

# How to Get in Better Shape than 99% of People

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=agK0hj2ZhuQ>

getting yourself in shape and doing the behaviors to get yourself in shape it is the number one meta habit that is going to make all other areas of your life better as a result of taking care of it this is Dan go a top fitness coach who I recently spoke to about how to get in better shape than 99% of people now Health advice can be really confusing so one of the reasons I love Dan's stuff is that he cuts through the noise and gets straight to the point and he said that there were just six main things that we needed to do to get into the top 1% of Fitness now for each point there is a level one which gets you fitter than the average person into the top 20% and then there will be a level two which gets you into the top 1% of fitness and ahead therefore of 99% of people principle number one the body dashboard now as a business owner I track a lot of numbers in my business so that we as a team know how we're doing and these are important things like monthly revenue and expenses and YouTube views and Book Sales when we're in school we track our exam grades to some degree and when you have a job you might have certain performance goals or kpis that you have to hit but when it comes to our health we often don't track things in the same way but according to the first thing you should do to improve your health and fitness is to build a body dashboard so the body dashboard is a set of numbers that's going to inform you of what your health looks like and you have two sets of body dashboard numbers you have your surface level numbers and you have your deeper numbers but measuring surface level numbers will help you get yourself into the top 20% of people cuz you need at least some data to track your health and to make improvements over time and one of the easiest things I found to do is to just track my weight every day by stepping onto my Wi-Fi enable enabled Bluetooth enabled smart scales every morning this randomized control trial that was published in had different people who were put on a weight loss program now half of these people also weighed themselves up to two times a week and the other half did not and these are the results so you can see that both of the groups lost weight after months but the group that weighed themselves lost 4.

kg more weight overall which was a significant difference but something to keep in mind when weighing yourself is that the scales don't differentiate between fat and muscle so that's why Dan talks about using deeper level body dashboard measurements to get yourself into the top 1% of fitness body dashboard level two so a dexa scan is one of the most accurate ways to track your body composition from your lean mass over to how much fat that you actually have now I actually had my first dexa scan years ago on the 17th of June and I've been having dexa scans about two or three times a year since then now here in London a dexa scan costs about so it's not insanely expensive and for me the dexa scan has been one of the single best things I have ever done for my health because it just makes the numbers visible and with the Dexter scan we're looking at three things so obviously we're looking at how much body fat you have on your body that's number one number two is we're looking at how much lean mass you have now when I talk about lean mass it's not necessarily how much muscle you have because lean mass is a combination of your organ weight of how much muscle you have and also how much water you have in your body as well and the last

thing that we're going to be tracking is going to be your visceral adipose tissue or your VAT okay so visceral adipose tissue VAT is the fat that lines organs it is different to subcutaneous adipose tissue SAT Under the Skin and it's associated with lots of medical conditions like diabetes and cancer and heart disease now in my case I have a pretty strong family history of heart disease and so when I do my DEXA scans which I've been doing about every 6 months for the last like years the visceral adipose tissue is a number that I'm particularly interested in and then the last part is going to be your blood work blood work you can look healthy on the outside but your blood work is going to show you how healthy you are really in general we want to track cholesterol levels we want to track insulin we want to track even this won't you won't get this in blood work but you will get this from a doctor you will want to track like your blood pressure and these are the numbers that will inform you of how healthy you are outside of the surface level of just like looking at you now Dan recommends and actually most athletes and entrepreneurs who really really really care about their Fitness that I've spoken to also agree with this that you should be getting your blood work done about every 6 to 12 months crucially this is not a recommendation for the population level this is only a recommendation if you care about being in the top 1% of health and fitness but the most important takeaway here regardless of whether we want to be average or better than 99% of people is to start measuring the things that we want to manage and track the changes over time another really important habit for being in great shape though is meditation which is where Headspace come in who are the sponsor of today's video Headspace as you've probably heard of by now is an amazing meditation app that can help you build a daily meditation practice whether you need support as you navigate life events or handle daily life or just become the best version of yourself Headspace can help you out in lots of different ways and I've personally worked my way through the introductory course to meditation which has been really great in my case The Habit I'm trying to build is to do a 10 minute meditation first thing in the morning before I do my journaling and before I get my coffee but very excitingly I've recently collaborated with Headspace and there is now a Feelgood productivity collection which can help you on the path to building healthy habits to boost your productivity and efficiency one of my favorite parts of the collection is the section on play play is the very first chapter of my book field of productivity and it's one of the key sections in the collection as well and the content in the collection explores how play is the most underrated secret to productivity how when we can find a way to approach our work in the spirit of Play It boosts our productivity it boosts our creativity it reduces our stress and it also helps us generate more energy which we can then give to the other important areas of our life now if you want to see how Headspace might be helpful for you and you want to check out the Feelgood productivity collection you can try out out completely for free for a whole day all you have to do is sign up with the link in the video description or scan the QR code on screen so thank you so much Headspace for sponsoring this video and let's get back to it principle number two your movement practice all right so when it comes to movement practice let's start with level one I think like one of the simplest things and one of the most underrated exercises that are out there is simply going for a walk outside without your phone going for a walk is one of these things that not a lot of people think of as exercise especially in the society that we live in today but it's one of the most underrated forms of exercise that you can actually do on your body now something I learned recently that's really stuck with me is that about 10 minutes of walking is around 1,000 steps so since knowing that I have been very very much more motivated to get walking and actually I did this

interview with a few weeks ago and since then after realizing the importance of walking my step count on average has just absolutely shot up because now each morning I go for a walk I have my little walking treadmill walking pad C2 thing under my standing desk so I'm kind of taking meetings and stuff while walking I've tried to switch a lot of my zoom meetings to be walking meetings that I'm just on my airpods and walking around in the local park and actually if I look at what my Apple Health shows ah look at this I've averaged 20,733 steps a day over the last Days oh yeah anyway if you walk to 10,000 steps a day that generally gets you into the top 20% of Fitness which is pretty easy to do but if we want to get into the top 1% then we need to think about two different types of cardio we want to do two types of cardio one of them is Zone cardio and another one is called Hit training or high-intensity interval training now with Zone cardio it's what I call conversational cardio it's the type of cardio that you can do while having a conversation for a lot of people this is going to vary so depending on your cardiovascular level for some people it's going to be walking or walking at a really fast pace depending on what your cardiovascular level is for other people it's going to be jogging but you really want to be able to do a type of cardio that keeps you at a conversational pace and you want to do this for anywhere between to minutes per week so if we take brisk walking for example you could do four pretty fast-paced minute walks four times a week or you could do a 30- minute very light zone cardio jog around days a week and both of these would take you to a total of minutes of Zone cardio per week I don't do this yet I've just Incorporated the steps into my life and now I need to start incorporating The Zone because I'm like ah you know I really want to improve my cardiovascular fitness now the second type of cardio is hit training or what we call high intensity interval training and high-intensity interval training I call it the heavy lifting for the heart it's what's going to be working your heart at a maximum pace and a maximum rate and then we want to be doing this at least once a week week anywhere between to even minutes every single week and when you have both of these types of cardio uh in your system in your routine what's going to happen is is that you're going to be increasing this number that we call V2 Max which is the amount of oxygen that your body is able to use in at any given time especially when doing a fitness activity and when you raise V2 Max that is going to raise your Fitness levels and also that number has also been correlated with uh living longer with the improved longevity okay so the way that we measure V2 Max properly is pretty intense I've never done it myself but it's on my bucket list at some point so basically they hook you up to a heart rate monitor and you're wearing a mask that measures the oxygen you inhale and exhale and you're either running on a treadmill or cycling on a stationary bike and the intensity of the exercise is increased gradually over time and apparently this is a really Grim thing to do because you're basically exercising until the point where you literally can't do it anymore and that gives you somehow a measure of your V2 Max now obviously this would be the gold standard way to measure V2 Max but actually most of these phones like apple health and stuff also has a sort of a pseudo VO2 max measurement on it with like cardiovascular fitness and mine was below average and then I started working a lot more and now it's become average which is very nice so we can look here that if we look at the last months I am very below average in terms of cardio Fitness level which is a sort of proxy for the V2 Max but over the last months my cardio Fitness has very very slowly gone up and also I have turned so the average the average for a 30-year-old has gotten down it's it's quite a big step change so now I'm I'm average rather than below average basically I need to work on Zone cardio and doing the hit stuff as well cuz my cardio Fitness kind of sucks so in

terms of actionable recommendations if you are starting from nothing your progression might look something like this number one walk for minutes a day number two keep on increasing your steps each week to hit around 8,000 steps per day and at this point you're probably in the top 10% of people or at least above average then walk a bit faster or do a light jog to get into your Zone cardio range but that could also be things like swimming or yoga or Pilates or whatever instead and then as the last level up once a week we want to try doing some sort of high-intensity interval training like sprints on a treadmill or skipping or a spin class or boxing in a group activity I still need to work on the zone cardio thing and the hit thing but that is next on my bucket list oh by the way if you're interested in more real time updates about my own health journey and stuff I'm learning and reading and conversations I'm having along the way you might like to subscribe to Life notes this is a free email that I send around once a week with notes from what I've been learning and what I've been incorporating into my life along with favorite books and podcasts and articles and videos and that kind of stuff it is completely free you can unsubscribe whenever you want if you think it's not very good there'll be a link down below if you want to check it out principle number three the strength practice principle number three is lifting weights using Progressive overload now depending on what kind of athlete you want to be it's going to look different for every single sport that you want to get better at but let's just call it like if you want to get into the top 20% of people what does that look like it looks like using just the most basic exercises and just trying to get stronger or trying to increase the amount of volume that you are doing in those exercises so if you're starting out as a complete beginner it can be useful to follow a program to help guide you through the workouts Jeff nip hard for example has a really good beginner program that I was following back before I had a personal trainer and actually investing in a few sessions with a personal trainer can also be really really really helpful other than getting a Dexter scan every now and then hiring a personal trainer has been one of the most ROI positive expenses uh in terms of my own uh my own health Journey because like on a very basic level they help teach you like the right form and you can use the weights and stuff appropriately to avoid injury but really I use a personal trainer as an accountability mechanism because without a personal trainer I tend not to show up to the gym and if I do show up to the gym without a personal trainer I tend to half ass it whereas when I have a personal trainer there they push me I work hard I get very sweaty and then I'm I'm I'm always glad I did it once it's over now based on my own Dexter scan results I'm currently above average for the sorts of people that get Dexter scans which tends to skew sort of more athletic anyway which is kind of nice but I'm inching I'm trying to inch into the top 20% but if you really apparently want to get into the top 1% then that's going to be a little bit trickier so to get into the top 1% of Fitness that's going to the gym more often probably like to five times per week pushing yourself Harder by lifting heavier weights and doing more reps and sets and tailoring your workouts to train specific muscle groups all right principle number four is the Sleep practice now the reality here is that if you don't prioritize your sleep then you are not going to optimize the other two-thirds of your life because sleep is one of the most important things we can do to improve our health when it comes to say for a complete beginner the thing I would say is at the most basic level is okay are you going to sleep in and are you waking up at the same times are you getting anywhere between 7 to 9 hours of sleep per night and then if you just look at those things right there it is going to inform you of whether or not you're getting enough sleep which is actually one of the most important factors now we often focus on our sleep quantity as in how many hours we're sleeping but what a lot

of people don't know is that sleep regularity as in whether you go to bed and wake up at roughly the same times is pretty important as well now the sleep stuff is interesting like there's there's loads of conflicting advice out there uh I have a video up there and Link down below where I interviewed Professor Russell Foster who is a professor of circadian Sciences at Oxford University who's literally studied the Circadian rhythm and sleep for his whole life so if you're interested in more like legit evidence-based tips around sleep you can check out that video but there is one thing that Dan recommends that I find very useful called the method so hours before you go to sleep you're not going to be eating any food because anytime that you are going to be resting you don't want to be having to digest anything in your body and hours before you go to sleep especially for people who wake up and go pee at night you don't really want to be taking in any liquids whatsoever and hour before you go to sleep you want to stay away from screens because screens have this tendency to make you wake up all right principle number five is the nutrition practice we want to get ourselves to a whole food single ingredient nutrient-dense diets and usually with like single ingredient Foods they do have the most nutrients as opposed to something that you would get that's like hyper processed like potato chips or could be even like fries like we want something that is going to be as minimally processed as possible okay so basically what we want to do is we want to focus on foods that are minimally processed so what does it look like if a food is ultra processed so generally you can tell a food is ultra processed if it has a lot of ingredients which you wouldn't recognize like e numbers and artificial colorings and flavorings and preservatives and all that kind of stuff usually these foods have had a lot of industrial processing they're in very bright colorful packaging that makes them very enticing they're very very convenient and they'll keep you coming back for more because they're low in fiber and they are designed to taste incredible and they're high in things like calories and salt and saturated fat and maybe it's not that surprising that this paper in looked at data from studies and concluded that no study reported an association between ultra processed foods and beneficial Health outcomes instead most of the studies found dietary ultra processed food exposure associated with at least one adverse Health outcome among adults these included overweight obesity and cardiometabolic risks cancer type diabetes and cardiovascular diseases irritable bowel syndrome depression and Frailty conditions and all cause mortality so basically ultra processed food are probably bad but this does not mean that you can never ever ever eat Ultra processed foods it's to look at your diet as this ratio instead of saying like I think like the the biggest thing that that harms people is thinking that they have to be all or nothing with their diet when in reality it's like you can actually go 80/20 with your diet where 80% of your calories are coming from Whole single ingredient nutrient-dense foods and 20% of your calories are coming from whatever you want if you obsess over trying to be perfect with this and only trying to eat healthy foods then you're probably more likely to binge on unhealthy Foods at some point but if you really want to get into the top 1% then we need to sort of dial down that flexibility a little bit that 80% becomes more like 90% And so you eat less of the stuff that is very bad for you and we also want to try and hit certain goals like protein intake you want to eat at least to g of protein per pound of Ideal lean mass now what does that mean it means that whatever your ideal body weight is you want to eat at least G to gr of protein per that ideal weight you know I'm currently about kg and so I should be aiming for to gram of protein per day which is a lot more than I initially expected and actually a lot more than I have by default there's going to be some people that are like H you know quibble about this because they're like ah protein kidneys like oh it's not

the minimum guideline requirement and stuff we are working on a whole video that's going to be fact checked by people who specialized in protein research as well to figure out like what actually is this but at least from what I can see from my basic understanding of literature broadly this recommendation of around g of protein per pound of body weight seems pretty reasonable assuming you're trying to build muscle which is the thing that I'm trying to do right now and actually something useful that Tim Ferris recommended way back in his book *The 4-Hour Body* is g of protein within minutes of waking up which for me basically translates to waking up and then going for a walk and then having a protein shake which gets the protein into my system and generally apparently helps and then finally principle number six is the mindset practice so when it comes to getting into the top 20% of people a lot of this is about building routines so that the things that we've talked about in this video become habits things that we do automatically like hitting our step goals and working out to three times per week and incorporating some sort of cardio into our life and eating healthy foods and focusing on our sleep the more we can make all of this stuff into habits the more likely we are that our fitness is going to be better than 80% of people anytime that anyone is trying to focus on a specific outcome when it comes to their health that leads to a lot of anxiety because they don't necessarily have the control over the outcome but they do have control over the behaviors and I do find that a lot of people put way too much emphasis on these outcomes whether it be how much they weigh the inches or the blood work whatever and they don't put enough emphasis on like making sure that they're showing up every day hitting the gym putting the right Foods in their body and making sure that they are just quantifying uh the things that matter to them and really having an action bias and simply just showing up to do the thing is far more important than obsessing over specific outcomes and trying to minmax hyper optimize every little measurement but then being in the top 1% when it comes to the mindset around Fitness means turning these routines into rituals where the things that you do for your health become part of your core identity and they have a much deeper meaning in your life the people who are the fittest people on the planet it's not like they feel like they have to push themselves to go to the gym and push themselves to be healthy it is a part of who they are as people already I am currently nowhere near this but I aspire to get to this level and a lot of the people who are older than me who I look up to as having like their Fitness really dialed in it really is a part of their identity and they almost can't get through a day without feeling like they have to do some sort of Health thing CU otherwise they realize that they feel really bad and they kind of get kind of sad and you know all this sort of stuff I'm sort of aspiring to a healthy a healthy mix of that sort of thing where being a healthy and fit person genuinely becomes part of my identity so trying to move from like I have to go to the gym and like oh god I've got a workout coming up more to ah I'm so looking forward to go to the gym I love my I love my time in the gym I love working out that is the transition that I'm attempting to make right now so if anyone is actually fit and has any tips on how to enjoy the fitness stuff a little bit more please do let me know down in the comments All right so those are the six key principles that Dan and I talked about when it comes to leveling up your health and fitness to hopefully become fitter than 99% of the population although having done a bunch of research for this video and having having had that conversation with Dan I've realized damn getting into top 1% of anything is actually just really really really hard and requires you to really make it a focus but if you want to learn more about evidence-based ways to improve your sleep then you might like to watch this video over here thank you so much for watching and I'll see you hopefully in the

next video bye-bye