

Online coaching FAQs

Diet

What is flexible dieting?

Flexible dieting is a way of being able to eat a wider variety of foods providing they fit into a calorie / macro controlled framework. You will be given a calorie and a protein target to hit each week and (within reason) you have flexibility to choose what you eat, provided you hit your target calories / macros.

Remember, however, that although the total number of calories in/out will determine if you lose weight or not, the *quality* of your food will determine how well you function, how well you sleep, how much energy you have and even how clear your skin is. This is something to bear in mind when choosing your food sources.

I personally like to follow an 80/20 rule.

80% of your calories are made up from healthy foods; lots of green vegetables, healthy fats and lean protein. 20% of your calories can be made up from whatever you like.

What is a macro?

‘Macro’ is short for macronutrient. The three main macronutrients that make up your daily diet are protein, fat and carbohydrates.

Why do I have a protein target?

Protein is essential for maintaining muscle mass while we lose weight. Ideally we want to be able to hold onto as much muscle mass as possible as we diet to improve body shape and strength.

Why do I need to track my food?

To lose weight you need to put yourself in a calorie deficit. This is where you expend more calories than you are taking in. To do this, it is essential that we know how many calories a day you are taking in.

How do I track my food?

The best way to do this is to use a free app called MyFitnessPal. It has the most complete database of foods you can find and is pretty accurate.

Do I need to weigh out my food?

For loose food that's easy to overeat, yes. Things like pasta, uncooked rice, potatoes, etc.

Unless it has a barcode on it and you can scan it using MyFitnessPal or it comes in certain serving sizes (e.g. 1 apple, $\frac{1}{2}$ pack of microwave rice, 1 pre packed salmon fillet, etc)

Is there a better time to eat certain foods?

Yes. If you feel like large, carb-heavy meals make you feel sluggish and tired then the best time to eat these would be as your last meal of the day. Probably don't have this meal before you go to the gym as you won't feel like doing much!

Should I eat before I go to the gym?

It depends what time of day you choose to exercise. If you are going to the gym first thing in the morning then you might not want to have a lot to eat. My advice if you are doing this would be to have some fruit, a handful of nuts and a coffee.

If you choose to exercise after work then bear in mind if you have had lunch at midday and you are in the gym at 8pm, that's a long time without any food. Try to have something small about 60-90 mins before you go into the gym.

Exercise

How do I find my plan?

You will have been emailed a link to the Truecoach app. All your workouts will be stored on there and updated each week.

How do I warm up?

You will do a ‘pulse raiser’ on either the cross trainer or rowing machine for 5 mins before starting. This is to raise your heart rate and get blood pumping around the body.

Before you start the first exercise for each body part, you should do 2-3 ‘warm up sets’ where you do lower reps (than your working sets) of increasing weight before you start your main ‘working sets’.

For example, if you are to do 3 sets of 12 reps on the bench press and you are going to be aiming for 12 reps at 60kg then you might do 8 reps at 30kg, then 5 reps at 40 kg, then 3-4 reps at 50kg before you start your 3 sets of 12 reps at 60kg.

What does ‘Tempo’ mean?

Tempo will be written with 4 numbers (e.g. 3110).

The first number is always the eccentric or lowering part of the movement, so the lowering of the bar on a bench press or the controlling of the weight back up on the lat pull down.

The second number is the amount of time you pause at the bottom of the movement.

The third number is the concentric part of the movement, or the actual ‘lift’ itself.

The fourth number is how long you pause at the top of the movement.

What is R.P.E?

Rate of Perceived Exertion. This is a scale from 1-10 (1 being no effort at all, and 10 being as hard as you can possibly work).

For example, if you have a set of 10 reps at RPE 8 then you should be able to finish the set of 10 feeling like you had the ability to do a few more reps if you needed to.

What is RIR? (reps in reserve)

This refers to how many reps you have left in the tank at the end of each set. So, 2 RIR means that at MOST you could have got another 2 reps before completely failing.

What if the equipment I need is being used?

This can be quite common in busy gyms, especially at peak times. You have 3 options:

1. You can ask to work in with whoever is using the equipment
2. You can move on to the next exercise and come back to that one later
3. You can pick an alternative exercise that works the same body part in the same range of movement (only do this if you are confident in doing so)

Why do I have a step target?

Although you may be going to the gym for 4-5 hours a week, there are a lot of hours left in the week that we can make better use of!

Increasing your daily step count is the easiest and most effective way of burning extra calories throughout the week and will make a BIG difference to your fat loss goals.

To track your steps you can either buy a cheap FitBit (or amazon alternative, there are plenty for around £20) or use the 'Health' app on your iPhone.

How do I track my progress?

You can use the app to record all your sets, reps and weight lifted.

Do I need to record my workouts?

100% yes. You need to know what you have done previously so you can improve each week.

What do I do if I have an injury?

If you have a pre-existing injury or you pick up an injury while training it is important to tell me as soon as possible so adjustments can be made.

Check in procedure

When do I check in?

The day for check-ins is Saturday.

How do I check in?

Every week you will be asked to check in via Truecoach. It will appear as a workout in your app. You should fill it in with as much detail as possible so the feedback you get is as detailed as it can be.

This is your opportunity to ask any questions you may have or let me know about any issues you have been having in the last week. Also, if you think something has been going really well then let me know that too!

I will then respond to you explaining any changes we have made to your diet / training programme and feedback on your progress.

What if I can't check in?

The check in process should only take about 5 mins. Failure to check in may result in a delay to updating your programme and diet plan and may negatively impact your ability to get the results you want.

How often should I take progress photos?

You need to take them before you start, and then every 2 weeks after that. All photos should ideally be taken against a white background. They need to be full length photos and you need 1 front on, 1 side on and 1 from the back.

Men – Shorts, no shirt

Women – Sports top and shorts

How often do I need to weigh myself?

Ideally every day first thing when you wake up. You will then take the average of your weight for the whole week.

This may sound strange but your body weight will fluctuate quite a bit over the course of the week, depending on what you've eaten or drank the day before or even how much sleep you have gotten. Women's weight will fluctuate even more especially around their time of the month.

If you do not have scales at home and only at the gym, then do it every time you go in.

What do I do if I have a problem?

Read back through all the FAQ's again to see if you can find the answer first.

Ask yourself if you think it can wait until your check in day.

If you are still struggling and it is urgent, then email me at alex@alexscholespt.com and I will get back to you as soon as possible.

Cancellation / refund policy

ASPT Online operates a no refund policy with online training. Please contact Alex on alex@alexscholespt.com for any issues with this.

Thank you!

Thank you again for choosing me as your coach, hopefully that is everything you need to know to get the most out of online coaching.

In the meantime, check out my social media pages for constant exercise and diet tips!

<https://www.facebook.com/AlexScholesPt/>

https://www.instagram.com/alex_scholespt/