One Week of Strength Training

BarbellBasics LLC · You Are Not In Shape. Fix It.

Start Here

You don't need to be in shape to start lifting. You lift to *get* in shape. This free plan gives you one simple week of barbell training: three short sessions, a few basic lifts, and clear steps. Coach Mark Anderson built it for beginners and for adults coming back after years away.

The Week at a Glance

Day	Session	Exercises (sets x reps)
Monday	Workout A	Squat 3×5 · Overhead Press 3×5 · Deadlift 1×5
Tuesday	Rest	Walk 20–30 min, sleep, protein
Wednesday	Workout B	Squat 3×5 · Bench Press 3×5 · Deadlift 1×5
Thursday	Rest	Walk 20–30 min, sleep, protein
Friday	Workout A	Squat 3×5 · Overhead Press 3×5 · Deadlift 1×5
Sat / Sun	Rest	Light activity, recover, get ready for next week

"3×5" means 3 sets of 5 reps at the same weight. Your deadlift is one heavy set of 5 after the warm-up.

How to Warm Up

1. Do 2 sets of 5 with the empty bar (45 lb / 20 kg). Move slowly and focus on position.
2. Add weight in 2–3 jumps toward your work weight, doing fewer reps as it gets heavier (for example 5, 3, 2).

3. Then do your work sets. Warm up for every lift, not only the first one.

Choosing Your Starting Weight

- **Start light, on purpose.** Choose a weight you can lift for all 5 reps with clean form and a little left in the tank.
- If the empty bar is challenging, start with the empty bar. That's normal.
- If you're unsure, go lighter. Starting too heavy is the most common beginner mistake.

Adding Weight

- If you finished every rep with good form, add a little weight next session:
  - **Squat / Deadlift:** +5–10 lb
  - **Press / Bench:** +2.5–5 lb
- If you missed reps, use the same weight next time.
- Rest **3–5 minutes** between work sets. Heavy sets need full recovery.

Simple Form Cues

- **Squat:** Feet about shoulder-width, toes slightly out. Push your knees out, sit your hips back and down until the hip crease is just below the knee, then drive up.
- **Overhead Press:** Hands just outside your shoulders, elbows slightly in front of the bar. Squeeze your glutes, press straight up, and move your head forward under the bar at the top.
- **Bench Press:** Eyes under the bar, shoulder blades pinched, feet planted. Lower the bar to your mid-chest under control, then press back up.
- **Deadlift:** Bar over mid-foot, shins touch the bar, back flat and chest up. Push the floor away and keep the bar against your legs the whole way.

Rest Days Matter

Your body gets stronger while you recover, not while you train.

- **Walk** 20–30 minutes on off days.
- **Sleep** 7–9 hours a night.
- **Eat protein** at every meal, and drink plenty of water.

Ready for More? Join the 12-Week Program

One week is a start. **You Are Not In Shape. Fix It.** is Mark's coached 12-week barbell program. It gives you a full progression, form feedback, and accountability so you keep getting stronger week after week.

Join here: [CONFIRM: program sign-up link]

Safety Note

Talk with your doctor before starting any exercise program, especially if you have a medical condition, an injury, or have been inactive. Stop if you feel pain, dizziness, or shortness of breath. This plan is general education, not medical advice. Lift with proper equipment, use safety pins or spotter arms where possible, and train within your ability.

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