



Forming Shepherds, One Workout at a Time

## A Guide to Leading a Fit Shepherds Workout

### Opening

- Gather men around at 7:00am sharp! Wear a watch to ensure you begin on time.
- Invite men to take a knee and lead them in an “Our Father”

### Disclaimer

- Give reminder that anyone who hasn’t completed a waiver form needs to do so prior or after working out (forms will always be available)
- Further disclaimer similar to the following:
  - *I am not a professional. I have no knowledge of any injuries or medical concerns you may have. Modify as needed. If something doesn’t feel safe, don’t do it. Know your limits.*
- Make sure to talk in a loud and commanding voice in the middle of the circle to ensure all are able to be led. If the circle is large you really have to shout in the middle. Command the circle.

### Warmup

- We always begin with a warmup. Command the men to “circle up” and perform a number of exercises in cadence to get the muscles warm. *(list of a few possible warm-up exercises are below) (cadence instructions below).*
- Preferably the warm-up also includes a jog to ensure muscles get warm. The jog should end at the location of first exercise.

### Workout

- Usually after the warmup you will want to do an exercise or routine that will gobble up time and push the men. Consider including partner routines or exercises that require groups of men. *(list of examples of routines below to help get your mind flowing; these are just examples of routines that have been done in the past—possibilities are endless)..*
- Consider running to a different location to do another exercise or routine.
- The objective is to plan a workout that pushes men to their limit, bringing the men to point of failure, but allowing them to succeed.

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## Notes

- If you need to, write your workout on notecard. Don't hesitate to refer to the workout if you need
- Arrive at Notre Dame no later than 6:45a. Welcome the men as they arrive. If you don't know a guy or you suspect he doesn't know you, always introduce yourself.
- Walk the grounds you plan to use during the workout to see if everything is available. Be ready to improvise.
- When leading a workout, be in charge at all times. If something doesn't go as planned, that's fine; simply keep control of the group and move on to the next exercise. If you start showing you're not in charge, you'll lose the group.
- Be ready to ask a brother to help with anything involving running for a prolonged distance. If you're running to the park, you might have them be right next to you at the front of the pack. As you get halfway to the park, you might ask your friend to take the lead guys to the end destination while you double back to encourage stragglers and keep them from falling too far back.
- Keep things *as simple as possible* for your first workout. As you lead more workouts, you'll get more comfortable with what you can reasonably do as the leader. But to start with, you want to keep things dirt simple. For example, if you have an exercise that takes a minute to demonstrate, that's too complicated; don't do it. Also, you don't want anyone getting hurt. The more complicated things get, the more likely someone will perform an exercise with bad form and possibly injure themselves.
- Leading a workout is not about you. You're not up there to demonstrate that you're in better shape than the rest of the guys, stronger than them, faster than them, etc. Leading a workout is about seeing that every guy there gets stronger; every guy there grows in their fellowship with other men; and every guy emerges challenged but not hurt. It's not about you; it's about them. It's about you taking your God-given talents and sharing them with the other men.
- You might consider going through your workout on your own or with a partner to ensure you can get through it, and still have enough strength left to yell out encouragement, to sprint back and pick up a straggler, to literally carry someone on your back if need be. Be ready to be strong for those who are not as strong as you. Give away your strength to them, and they will give you their respect. Flout it, and you'll lose them. Again, you're not out to prove anything about yourself.
- Cadence is important. It builds a sense of solidarity among all the men. Practice counting in cadence before you lead. You'll notice two things: a) it can be a little tricky at first. practicing helps you coordinate the cadence with the movements of your body. b) it takes a little breath out of you to shout out cadence. in other words, it's harder than you'd think. practice! If you're cadence is off, everyone in the group will be off, too. Keep it simple, and do it correctly.

- “Next exercise is [brief pause], [exercise name].” The group then repeats the exercise called.
- “Starting position [brief pause]...In cadence [brief pause], Exercise.”
- The leader indicates the completion of an exercise by a higher inflection on his last repetition.
- Pray before your workout. We're doing this to improve our fitness and to deepen our fellowship. But what does it profit a man to gain the whole world -- or gain the best six pack the world has ever known -- and lose his soul? Ask God to bless what you're doing throughout the week before your lead. Pray for the men you will be leading. No other workout group that I know of asks God, right off the bat, to bless the workout. Embrace that unique part of our group. Use it to make yourself not just a better person, but a holier person; a more grace-filled person; a more saint-like person; a Fit Shepherd. If we're not modeling that behavior for the rest of the group, we're not doing our job as leader.
- Plan more exercises than there is workout time. Time will pass faster than usual, most likely.
- Exercises should be designed to push the men!
  - We want to bring guys to the breaking point, but without having them break. Overcoming our limits is how we become better men.
  - It is better to have guys modify down than have guys thinking it is too easy and have to modify up on their own.
- Keep track of time and at 7:40-7:45 lead men back to church
- Have fun!

### **Ideas for Warm-ups**

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| ● Jumping Jacks     | ● Cherry-Pickers                             |
| ● Push-ups          | ● Arm circles                                |
| ● High knees        | ● Lunges                                     |
| ● Butt kickers      |  |
| ● Lunge to Knees    | ● Lizard Steps                               |
| ● Squats            | ● Toe Touches opposite hand to opposite foot |
| ● Leg swings        | ● Hand to Toe Stretch                        |
| ● Jump lunges       | ● Walk out Push Ups                          |
| ● Mountain Climbers | ● Plank Jacks                                |
| ● Happy Feet        |  |

## Ideas for Routines

- Catch me if you can burpees
  - About 10 men get in a line and begin a slow run. The last person drops and does 5 Burpees, while the rest of the line does a slow trot forward. After completing the Burpees, the last guy runs to catch the group, tapping the (new) last guy on the shoulder, who then stops to begin his 5 Burpees, while the (former) last guy continues on to the front of the line. Continue until all men have performed a set of Burpees/or until destination is reached/ or until leader calls it
- Trinitys
  - This is a partner exercise. The goal is to cumulatively perform 100 jump lunges, 200 push-ups, and 300 jump squats (or any trifold number with three different exercises). Partner 1 begins jump lunges while partner 2 sprints to (insert destination) and back; then switches with partner...so partner 2 takes off running while partner 1 begins jump lunges. Once the partners reach 100 jump lunges combined (again, not individually); then they move to push-ups. Once push-up goal is reached, then jump squats. This takes awhile, (maybe 15 min)
- “Mad Dash”
  - Anything that involves sprinting all out
  - Suicides, ladder sprints, etc
- Crawl from sin
  - This killer workout will leave your arms numb. Everyone lines up and does 1 push-up, then stands and does 1 knuckle-to-knuckle overhead touch. Then immediately drops and bear crawls to other end 15-20 feet. Then does 2 push-ups, 2 knuckle-to-knuckle overhead touch, then bear crawls back to starting position. There he does 3 push-ups, then 3 knuckle-to-knuckle overhead touch. Go back and forth until they reach 10. Brutal.
- Indian Bear Crawls (team bear claws)
  - Group up into evenly numbered teams. Men get in a single file line facing same direction--all begin in a plank. Last person in line Bear crawls to the front of the line. Once he arrives in the front of the line, the new last person bear claws to the front. Repeats
- Jumping rope and push-ups in parking lot
  - Count off in partners. Partner on outside of circle jumps rope. Together as a group, complete 10 pushups (count off together “Down 1, Down 2, Down 3,

Down 4 Down 5, Down 6," etc.), jog to partner 2. Switch roles. The sequence will be 10 pushups, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2...10!

- Satan Stompers
  - Similar to Trinitys but more than 3 exercises. Partner up. 1 does exercise while other partner runs to the other end of the (insert your destination). Swap out and continue the exercise until each amount of reps are complete. The exercises and reps are: 50- Burpees / 100- Overhead Claps / 150- pushups / 200- Sit-ups or crunches / 250- Squats.
  
- Help a Shepherd up
  - Partners lays down on back while other partner lifts him. Do desired reps then switch
  
- "The Serpent"
  - Break up into teams of 10-15. Everyone planks. One guy crawls under everyone else. Once that guy gets to end and begins planking, next guy crawls. You finish when everyone has crawled once. This can continue until team covers desired distance

The best way to come up with ideas for your workout is to come to the workouts leading up to your lead.