

The get  
lean  
routine

# Trim your waistline — and still eat carbs and fat

With 295,000 Instagram followers and a new book on the way, online trainer Joe Wicks tells Peta Bee how you can transform your body at home

**A** 29-year-old Instagram fitness guru with a whopping 295,000 followers, Joe Wicks is the first trainer to have properly harnessed the power of social media.

You may not have heard of him, but he is earning footballer-level amounts of money. Every week, 1,000 new people join his online eating and exercise plan, paying £147 for a 90-day personalised programme — his gross income is about £147,000 a week.

Wicks has been labelled “the Jamie Oliver of the fitness world”. He’s a loveable, cheeky chappie who makes health fun. His Instagram feed is a mix of “before-and-after” pictures of whittled-down clients who have embraced his online plan, his “Leanin15” healthy recipes (see page 8 for the recipes), instructional fitness videos and clips of himself singing or telling jokes. Since launching in January last year, more than 19,000 people have signed up, from places as far flung as Australia and Sweden. Wicks has a sports science degree, and has continued to develop his knowledge during five years as a personal trainer, three years as a nutrition coach — and a lot of time spent reading nutrition journals. It is his eccentric personality and sculpted body, though, that are behind his extraordinary success.

His official moniker is the Body Coach but nowadays he’s mostly known as “the Leanin15 Man”. Such is the spike in demand for his programme that Wicks, whose own buffness is the perfect advertisement for his plan, has hired an expert team of 30 support coaches, all of them former clients. He has also signed a deal for

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AMIT LENNON FOR THE TIMES

Joe Wicks

his first cookbook, to be published in January next year. (his publisher is releasing the first eight recipes next month as a teaser). The book will feature the type of meals that make up much of his Instagram feed. Wicks is filmed in the kitchen of his one-bedroom flat above a shop on Surbiton High Street, southwest London, shouting or singing his recipes — none of which will take longer than 15 minutes to make, hence “Leanin15”. Nearly every recipe starts with him flinging coconut oil into a pan, followed by “add a lovely fillet steak”, some “midget trees” (broccoli), various other vegetables and “good” fats, and always finishing with his catchphrase “and that is Leanin15”.

He’s part of a new wave of personal trainers and nutritionists who are changing the way we train and eat. By posting online workout videos and recipes, they are proving that you don’t need a six-figure salary to have your own personal trainer and tailor-made meal plan. What’s different about Wicks is his approach to shedding fat, and the proof it works comes in

the form of the thousands of photos posted by satisfied clients on Instagram. He promises no quick fixes and no fads, instead claiming that you will be transformed with a short, tough workout regimen and a daily diet of frankly delicious “Leanin15” meals. Can it really be that simple? Yes, Wicks says. His key to his three-cycle Shift, Shape, Sustain regimen’s success (each cycle lasts 30 days) is that it’s easier to stick to than dieting.

In fact, the basic rules underpinning his programme (which starts on the page opposite and continues overleaf) will be music to the ears of any yo-yo dieter. First, he insists that you “throw away the sad step”, or weighing scales, as they tell you nothing useful, only sap confidence and motivation. Clients sign up, pay their £147, are assigned one of Joe’s coaches and are asked to fill in a questionnaire, which includes medical history, measurements, a seven-day food diary, etc. The information is analysed, and seven to ten days later the

programme is emailed through — about 80 pages of material detailing the food, drink and exercise programmes for the next three months. One of the “coaches” is always on hand to answer questions, promising to respond within 24 hours.

Second, comes the biggest revelation of all: you should eat more of the foods that dieters are usually warned to avoid — fats and carbs. Even white pasta and potatoes are allowed, with Wicks claiming that you can eat healthy versions of both and that the timing of meals is crucial when it comes to achieving leanness. “So many clients who sign up are under-eating and living on low calories in a desperate attempt to shed weight. It just does not work in the long term.” Reducing calorie intake will burn fat initially, but when your body realises it’s being starved, it slows down and conserves energy. “This means no more fat-burning and you’ll actually start to gain body fat. The body needs energy to burn fat and fuelling it with fats, proteins and carbohydrates at the right times is the best route to achieving this.”

Instead of dropping calories for short-term weight loss, Wicks ramps up energy consumption over the three phases. “People are very surprised they eat a larger amount of food, but they need to fuel their body to burn fat and build lean muscle.” Integral to success is the exercise regimen, based on three plans that get more challenging. “They are a combination of high-intensity cardio and resistance training to build a strong and lean body. You can do the workouts at home or the gym, and because they gradually increase in intensity it doesn’t come as a shock.”

It’s tough and will leave you sweating, but, in tandem, the eating and exercise produce astounding results. “You can completely change your shape,” Wicks says. “I’ve got clients who have dropped two dress sizes in 90 days and can’t believe they’ve done it without being hungry.” Men who have followed his programme have dropped about six inches from their waists in the same time. The biggest difference between the “before” and “after” photos is the smaller waist and dramatic loss of tummy fat — in other words losing the dad bod. Wicks explains that “abdominal leanness is a result of eating well and the combination of exercises”, rather than ab-specific exercises.

His mission, he says, is to dispel the industry-spun myths about what it takes to get into super-athletic shape. “Fat loss is a journey not a race, so be patient, work hard and take control of your body. Make your own meals, exercise when it suits you and you will achieve the body you want. In 90 days you can look and feel like a different person.”

The Body Coach’s 90-Day “Shift, Shape and Sustain” programme is available for £147 from [thebodycoach.co.uk](http://thebodycoach.co.uk). Times readers can get a £20 discount by entering the code GOODTIMES (until June 13). Joe’s free ebook, *Beach Leanin15*, can be downloaded from June 18 from [www.beachleanin15.com](http://www.beachleanin15.com)

