

PRESERVE / Foundation / weight loss

Keep strength in your plan.

Two accessible full-body sessions prioritize strength practice and everyday function during weight loss. Suitable modifications help you find a manageable starting point, whether or not you use a GLP-1.

6 weeks | 2 or 3 days weekly | 25-40 minutes | Home or gym

Your training effort

Keep 3-4 good repetitions in reserve. The goal is repeatable strength practice, not exhaustion or extra calorie burn. Start with one set if needed.

Before you begin

For adults 18+. General exercise education, not individualized medical or rehabilitation advice. Ask a qualified professional about activity if you have an injury, chronic condition, pregnancy/postpartum concerns or uncertainty about suitability. Stop for sharp pain, dizziness, unusual breathlessness or chest discomfort. Seek urgent care for severe or persistent symptoms. Inspect equipment and bands, use stable supports and barbell safeties, and seek coaching for unfamiliar lifts. Breathe through repetitions.

The plan is free. No account, equipment brand or supplement purchase is required.

Current instructions and substitutions: physiforge.com/training/preserve

YOUR WEEK

Example day	Session / recovery
Monday	Everyday strength A
Tuesday	Recovery / gentle movement
Wednesday	Recovery
Thursday	Everyday strength B
Friday	Recovery / gentle movement
Saturday	Optional next A/B session if recovered
Sunday	Recovery

Adapt the schedule

Use two nonconsecutive days. A third session is optional only when energy and recovery are good; alternate A/B/A then B/A/B. Use a higher chair, wall push-up, lighter band or shorter range as needed. Missed sessions move forward with a rest day between them; there is no catch-up workout.

Progress over the block

Weeks 1-2: use one set while learning, or two if already comfortable. Weeks 3-5: work toward the listed two sets before adding weight. When both sets reach the top of the range with 3-4 reps in reserve on two sessions, add a small amount of resistance. Week 6: keep comfortable loads, use one set if tired, and review strength, energy and consistency rather than scale change alone.

When to ease back

During low energy or reduced food intake, maintain a comfortable load and reduce sets rather than chasing more work. Persistent dizziness, unusual weakness, poor intake or medication-related symptoms warrant advice from your clinician. Stop exercising if symptomatic. This plan is not a treatment or a guarantee against muscle loss.

PREPARE TO TRAIN

Warm up

Begin with 5-8 minutes of easy movement you tolerate. Practice the first exercises unloaded, then use 2-4 gradually heavier warm-up sets for the first compound lift. Warm-up sets are not work sets. Start only when movement feels comfortable.

Technique and effort

Keep the lowering phase controlled and lift smoothly through a comfortable range. Reps in reserve estimates how many more sound repetitions you could perform; stop earlier if unsure. Each unilateral set includes both sides; rest after both or between sides as needed. Choose one substitute, not extra exercises. Start alternatives light and keep the target effort.

Equipment

Home versions use a stable chair or support, mat, dumbbells and an intact resistance band with a secure anchor. BUILD and FORGE assume a gym. Use the simpler alternatives below when the original movement is unavailable; do not force an unsafe setup.

Missed sessions are moved forward, never doubled. Recovery belongs in every week.

Everyday strength A

Work sets shown. Use the introductory / easier-week adjustments in your progression instructions.

Exercise	Sets	Repetitions / time	Rest
Chair squat	2	6-10	90 sec
Incline push-up	2	6-10	90 sec
Seated band row	2	8-12	90 sec
Glute bridge	2	8-12	60-90 sec
Bird dog	2	5-8 each side	60 sec

Technique: physiforge.com/training/exercises

Everyday strength B

Work sets shown. Use the introductory / easier-week adjustments in your progression instructions.

Exercise	Sets	Repetitions / time	Rest
Hip hinge to a wall	2	8-10	90 sec
Low step-up	2	6-8 each side	90 sec
Dumbbell floor press	2	8-12	90 sec
Supported one-arm dumbbell row	2	8-12 each side	90 sec
Farmer carry	2	15-25 sec	60 sec

Technique: physiforge.com/training/exercises

MOVEMENT GUIDE

Chair squat

Quadriceps, glutes | Stable chair against a wall

Stand just in front of the chair, feet comfortably apart. Send hips back and bend knees toward your toes. Touch down under control, then push through your whole foot to stand. Use your hands for support if needed.

Avoid: Dropping onto the seat; knees collapsing inward; using an unstable chair.

Easier: Use a higher stable seat and hand support.

Progress: Reduce hand assistance, then progress to a goblet squat.

Incline push-up

Chest, triceps, shoulders | Fixed wall, counter or stable bench

Place hands on a fixed surface, slightly wider than shoulders. Step back and keep a straight line from head to heels. Bend elbows at a comfortable angle to lower your chest. Push away without sagging through the hips.

Avoid: Using a movable surface; sagging hips; flaring elbows sharply outward.

Easier: Use a higher fixed surface such as a wall.

Progress: Use a lower stable surface, then a floor push-up.

Seated band row

Upper back, lats, biceps | Intact resistance band and secure low anchor

Check the band and anchor according to manufacturer instructions. Sit tall with the band in front of you. Pull elbows back toward your ribs, then return slowly. Keep your shoulders relaxed and trunk still.

Avoid: Unsecured anchor; damaged band; leaning back to create momentum.

Easier: Use a lighter band or shorter range.

Progress: Use a stronger band only after controlled repetitions.

Glute bridge

Glutes, hamstrings | Mat

Lie on your back with knees bent and feet flat. Gently brace and squeeze glutes to lift hips. Stop before your low back arches. Lower slowly. Keep your neck relaxed.

Avoid: Arching the low back; pushing through toes; holding the breath.

Easier: Use a smaller comfortable lift.

Progress: Add a brief pause, then a light padded weight across the hips.

Bird dog

Trunk and back stabilizers, glutes | Mat

Start on hands and knees. Brace lightly and reach one leg back and the opposite arm forward without rotating your pelvis. Pause, return and change sides. Keep the reach small enough to stay steady.

Avoid: Arching the back; raising the leg too high; rotating hips.

Easier: Move one limb at a time or do a standing wall-supported version.

Progress: Add a longer controlled pause before increasing reach.

Hip hinge to a wall

Glutes, hamstrings; hinge coordination | Wall

Stand a short step away from a wall with your back toward it. Soften knees, brace and send hips backward to touch the wall. Keep your trunk long. Return to standing. Move closer if you cannot reach without rounding.

Avoid: Bending mostly at the knees; reaching with the shoulders; forcing the range.

Easier: Shorten the distance to the wall.

Progress: Use the same pattern for a light Romanian deadlift.

Low step-up

Quadriceps, glutes | Low stable step and handrail

Place your whole foot on a low stable step. Use a rail if needed. Push through the leading foot to stand on the step, then lower slowly. Complete both sides. Choose a height that keeps you in control.

Avoid: Pushing hard off the trailing foot; dropping down; using an unstable platform.

Easier: Lower step or supported chair squat.

Progress: Increase control and repetitions before height or load.

Dumbbell floor press

Chest, triceps | Dumbbells and mat

Lie on the floor, knees bent. Start dumbbells over your chest. Lower until upper arms touch the floor gently, keeping wrists over elbows. Pause and press up. Set weights down carefully.

Avoid: Bouncing elbows off the floor; sharply flared elbows; using a load too heavy to position.

Easier: Incline push-up.

Progress: Add repetitions or progress to a stable bench.

Supported one-arm dumbbell row

Upper back, lats, biceps | Dumbbell and stable bench or support

Support one hand on a fixed bench and hinge with a long back. Row the weight toward your hip without twisting. Lower until the arm is long and controlled. Repeat both sides.

Avoid: Rotating the trunk to lift; jerking; shrugging the weight.

Easier: Light chest-supported row or seated band row.

Progress: Add repetitions, then load.

Farmer carry

Grip, trunk, upper back | Dumbbells and clear level walkway

Pick up manageable weights with a controlled hinge. Stand tall, keep arms long and walk with short steady steps. Turn carefully, then set the weights down under control. Use a light load and a clear level path.

Avoid: Leaning; rushing turns; carrying until grip suddenly fails.

Easier: Shorter walks with lighter weights or one supported standing hold.

Progress: Add distance or load, one at a time.

WORKOUT LOG

Program: _____ Week: _____ Date: _____

Session: _____ Load units (kg/lb): _____

Record actual repetitions for each set; note substitutions and reduced sets. No maximum testing is required.

Exercise / variation	Load used	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Notes / setup / next-session adjustment:

Energy and recovery: _____

Next suitable session: _____

KEEP BUILDING

Use your training log to choose the next appropriate session. Review steady technique, manageable effort and recovery before adding load.

Programming references

Original Physiforge schedules apply established training principles. These organizations do not endorse these plans.

ACSM 2026 resistance-training position stand: doi.org/10.1249/MSS.0000000000003897

ACSM summary: acsm.org/resistance-training-guidelines-update-2026/

CDC: cdc.gov/physical-activity-basics/guidelines/chronic-health-conditions-and-disabilities.html

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