Kick Starter: Chapter 7 — Measuring What Matters

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Welcome

Hi There!

Welcome to the LEVELUP Online Coaching Kick Starter. Whether you are picking up a barbell for the first time or you have been training for years and are finally ready to do it properly — this is where we build the foundation. I have put together 7 chapters covering everything you need to get started with confidence: goal setting, nutrition, energy balance, building your diet, how training works, your training programme, and how to track your progress properly.

Each chapter is focused on one thing — giving you the knowledge to execute your programme and get results that actually reflect the work you are putting in.

Let's get to work.

Andrew

What to Expect in Chapter 7: Measuring What Matters

1. **Why Tracking Progress Matters**
2. **What to Track**
3. **What the Numbers Don't Show**
4. **How to Read Your Progress**
5. **When Progress Stalls**
6. **Conclusion**

Why Tracking Progress Matters

Most people judge their progress by how they feel on a given morning, or whether the scales went up or down overnight.

That is not tracking — that is guessing. And it is one of the main reasons people lose confidence in a process that is actually working.

> Tracking gives you data. Data replaces doubt. When results feel slow or motivation dips, your numbers will either confirm you are on track and need to stay the course, or flag that something needs adjusting. Either way you are making informed decisions, not emotional ones.

There is another reason tracking matters: the scale alone will mislead you. Body weight fluctuates daily based on water retention, food volume, hormones, sleep, and a dozen other factors that have nothing to do with body fat.

A single weigh-in tells you very little. A four-week average tells you a lot. The goal of tracking is to build that picture over time, not to react to every number in isolation.

Single Weigh-In

Tells you very little

Four-Week Average

Tells you a lot

The Goal

Build the picture over time — not react to every number in isolation

What to Track

Body Weight

Weigh yourself every morning under the same conditions — first thing, after using the bathroom, before eating or drinking. Log every reading in Trainerize. The daily number is almost irrelevant. What matters is the weekly average. Add up the seven readings and divide by seven. Compare that average to the previous week and the week before that. That trend is your actual progress.

Expect the number to jump around by 1–3kg from day to day — that is completely normal. A genuine fat loss result is 0.5–1kg per week on average. Anything faster than that and you are likely losing muscle alongside fat, which is not the goal.

Body Measurements

Take measurements every Sunday. We track five sites: arm, chest, waist, hips and thigh. Do it at the same time each week, in the same way. Log them in Trainerize under the measurements tab.

Measurements often change before the scale does, particularly when body recomposition is happening — that is, when you are losing fat and building muscle simultaneously. The scale might barely move for weeks while your waist measurement is coming down and your arms are filling out. This is why measurements and weight together give you a far more accurate picture than either does alone.

Progress Photos

Take photos every Sunday alongside your measurements. Front, side and back. Minimal clothing is best — underwear or fitted shorts — so you can actually see the changes in your physique. Keep the conditions consistent: same location, same lighting, same time of day.

Photos are often the most motivating form of tracking because changes that are invisible week to week become obvious when you compare a photo from week one to week eight. The mirror lies because you see yourself every day. The photos do not.

Training Performance

Every session you complete in Trainerize is logged — the weights you lifted, the reps you completed, the sets you performed. This is your training data and it is one of the most reliable indicators of progress available to you.

If your squat, bench press and deadlift are going up over time, your body is adapting. That is muscle being built and strength being developed. If your weights have been the same for six weeks, something needs to change — whether that is the programme, your nutrition, or your recovery. Your training log tells us exactly where you are and where the programme needs to go next.

Nutrition Tracking

Your calorie and macro targets are set in Trainerize. Log your food daily. You do not need to be perfect — you need to be honest. An honest log that shows you are consistently under on protein or going significantly over on calories at the weekend is genuinely useful information. A log that is curated to look good is useless to both of us.

The goal of logging is not to obsess over every gram. It is to build an accurate picture of your intake so we can make adjustments based on real data rather than guesswork.

What the Numbers Don't Show

The scale, the tape measure and the training log are useful tools. But they only tell part of the story. Some of the most meaningful signs that the process is working will never show up in a number, and learning to recognise them is just as important as reading your weekly average weight.

Energy

Are you getting through the day without the 3pm crash? Are you waking up feeling rested more often than not? Improved energy is one of the earliest signs that your nutrition and training are moving in the right direction — often appearing weeks before visible physical changes.

Sleep

Are you falling asleep faster, sleeping more deeply, waking up less? Training and nutrition have a direct impact on sleep quality. Improvement here is a genuine marker of progress.

Mood and Concentration

Regular training and consistent nutrition stabilise blood sugar, reduce stress hormones and increase the neurotransmitters that regulate mood. If you are feeling sharper, less anxious, and more even-keeled day to day — that is the programme working.

Sex Drive

Low libido is often a sign of chronic stress, poor sleep, undereating or overtraining. As those factors improve, drive tends to return. It is a useful indicator of overall hormonal health that most people do not think to track.

How Your Clothes Fit

Your jeans telling you something has changed before the scale does is completely normal — particularly during body recomposition when fat is being lost and muscle built simultaneously. The scale barely moves. The clothes do.

How You Look in the Mirror

This one is less reliable week to week because you see yourself every day and your brain adjusts. But over six to eight weeks, you will notice things — shoulders looking broader, stomach sitting flatter, arms looking more defined. Trust those observations. They are real.

Confidence

This one compounds over time. The person who completes their sessions consistently, hits their nutrition targets most of the time, and sees their strength improving in the gym starts to carry themselves differently. More decisive. Less self-conscious. Braver in other areas of life. That is not a side effect of the coaching — it is one of the main outcomes.

None of these replace the data. But they sit alongside it, and on the weeks when the numbers are frustratingly flat, these signals are often where the evidence of progress is hiding. If four of the things on this list are moving in the right direction, the programme is working — even if the scale has not caught up yet.

How to Read Your Progress

Progress is rarely linear and it rarely looks the way people expect. Here is what to actually look for:

Weeks 1–4

Do not expect dramatic physical changes. What you should notice is strength improving in the gym, energy levels becoming more consistent, and your relationship with food becoming more structured. These are meaningful adaptations even if the mirror has not caught up yet.

Beyond 8 Weeks

The compound effect of consistent training and nutrition becomes clear. This is when clients typically notice the biggest visible changes.

1 2 3

Weeks 4–8

Body composition changes typically become visible — particularly in measurements and photos. The scale may or may not have moved significantly, but the measurements will start to shift.

> If the scale has not moved for two or more weeks, look at the full picture before drawing conclusions. Are measurements changing? Is training performance improving? Are you actually hitting your calorie and protein targets? Progress is almost always happening somewhere — the job is to find it in the data.

If multiple metrics are genuinely stalling, that is the signal to message me. We adjust and move forward.

When Progress Stalls

A week of flat progress is noise. Two weeks of flat progress across multiple metrics is a signal worth acting on. The most common causes are straightforward: calories are higher than the tracking suggests, protein is consistently low, sleep is poor, or training intensity has dropped.

Calories Higher Than Tracked

Intake may be exceeding targets without it being reflected in the log.

Protein Consistently Low

Insufficient protein undermines muscle retention and recovery.

Poor Sleep

Sleep quality directly impacts recovery, hormones, and body composition.

Training Intensity Has Dropped

Reduced effort in sessions means reduced stimulus for adaptation.

Message me through Trainerize when this happens. Do not wait until a check-in. The faster we identify what has shifted, the faster we fix it. That is what the coaching relationship is for.

What to avoid: changing everything at once, or abandoning the process because one week did not go to plan. Consistency over weeks and months is what produces results. One difficult week does not undo the work that came before it.

Conclusion

> Progress tracking is not about obsessing over numbers. It is about having reliable information so that decisions are made on evidence rather than emotion. The clients who get the best results are the ones who track consistently, log honestly, and communicate when something is not moving. The data does not lie — and when it flags a problem, we fix it together.

Track Consistently

Build the picture over time with daily and weekly data.

Log Honestly

Accurate data leads to accurate adjustments and real results.

Communicate

When something is not moving, message me — we fix it together.

Keep logging. Keep showing up. The results will follow.

Tools and Resources

A curated set of resources to support your training and nutrition knowledge.

Andrew Caine PT Academy

Access training guides, nutritional resources, and educational content.
www.andrewcainept.com

Andrew Huberman Podcast

Evidence-based content on health, fitness, performance, and neuroscience.

Examine

Research-backed resource covering nutrition and supplements.

YouTube

Useful for exercise tutorials and form guidance.

Andrew Caine PT on Instagram

Regular evidence-based content on training, nutrition, and the balanced lifestyle you are working towards. **@andrewcainept**

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