

Baseline

THE SESSION YOU CAN ALWAYS DO

Fifteen minutes. Zero equipment. Two versions of the same session, picked by the night you actually had. This is one LIFT session of the Hybrid Dad Week, and it's the one workout that survives newborns, deadlines, travel, and 3am. Do it today, not Monday.

WAKE UP	PUSH	LEGS	PULL + HINGE	WALK IT OFF
3:00	4:00	4:00	3:00	1:00

It all counts.

The honest fork is the whole trick.

I'm Tony. Personal trainer by trade, veteran, two kids and the sleep that comes with them. Baseline exists because the version of you on four hours of sleep needs a different session than the version who slept, and every other program pretends there's only one of you. Page 3 has both columns. Be honest about the night you had, pick one, start the clock. **Choosing the rough-night column on a rough night is the strong move, not the weak one.**

The rules that make it work

TWO IN THE TANK

End every set with two honest reps still in you. Grinding to failure feels productive and costs you the next three days. Leaving reps in the tank is how training survives decades instead of Januarys, and it's non-negotiable on strength work. The hard conditioning day in the full Week is where you go looking for a limit.

MISSED DAYS

Part of the plan, not a failure of it. No streaks, no day one, no starting over. Pick a column tomorrow and go again. And when even the right column isn't happening, a 10-minute walk counts.

THE CLOCK RULES

Each block is a timer, not a rep quota. Work in small sets, rest about 45 seconds, and keep going until the block's time is up. More rest is always allowed. The 15 minutes finishes either way.

What you need

A floor, a wall, and a backpack with a few books in it. That's the whole kit. The kid can watch, the kid can climb on you, the kid on your hip counts as load. No shoes required, no gym, no apologies to anyone.

Make it hybrid

Got ten extra minutes and daylight? Finish the card, then walk easy. Stroller counts, dog counts, kid on the shoulders counts. Strength plus easy engine work is the hybrid one-two, and it's the exact shape the whole Week is built on.

The fine print that matters: this is general fitness information from a trainer, not medical advice. If you've got a medical condition, an old injury with opinions, or it's been years since you trained, clear it with your doctor first. Nothing in here is worth six weeks on the couch.

ROUGH NIGHT

15 MIN

3:00 **Same wake-up, half speed**
One unhurried lap through. No hero moves today.

4:00 **Push**
Knee or wall pushups in sets of 6, rest as needed. Form over count, every rep.

4:00 **Legs**
Sit-to-stands from a chair in sets of 8. Steady, controlled, no bounce.

3:00 **Pull + hinge**
8 slow backpack rows per arm, then 8 easy hip hinges, bodyweight, short range. Steady.

1:00 **Walk it off**
Still counts. It all counts.

SLEPT OK

15 MIN

3:00 **Wake the body up**
8 glute bridges, 8 slow squats, 30-second hip opener each side. Two easy laps through. Slow on purpose.

4:00 **Push**
Pushups in sets of 8, rest about 45 seconds, repeat until time's up. Every set ends with two left in you.

4:00 **Legs**
Squats or alternating lunges in sets of 10, same rest, same rule. Kid on your hip counts as weight.

3:00 **Pull + hinge**
8 backpack rows per arm, then 8 hip hinges: soft knees, hinge back with a flat spine, drive the hips to stand tall. Repeat to time. This is the posterior chain that keeps your back working for 40 years.

1:00 **Walk it off**
Shake out. Mark the session in your log. Done.

BOTH COLUMNS ARE BASELINE · PICK BY THE NIGHT

Which column? Answer honestly: two or more wake-ups, under five and a half hours, or a fuse that's already short by 8am reads as a rough night. When in doubt, take the rough-night column: the dad who runs the lighter session today lifts again Thursday. The dad who forces the heavier one skips the whole week.

GLUTE BRIDGE Drive through the heels, squeeze at the top for a beat. Trap: arching the lower back to fake height. The lift comes from the hips, not the spine.

SQUAT Sit down between your heels, chest proud, whole foot on the floor. Trap: chasing depth you don't own yet. Depth you control beats depth you fall into.

HIP OPENER Half-kneel, squeeze the back glute, shift forward an inch. Trap: leaning back and calling it a stretch. Small range, felt deeply, wins.

PUSHUP One straight line from head to heels, elbows about 45 degrees. Trap: hips sagging when you're tired. The knee version with a proud chest beats the saggy full version every time.

LUNGE Step, drop the back knee straight down, push through the front heel. Trap: the knee diving inward. Point it where the toes point.

SIT - TO - STAND Touch the chair, don't rest on it, stand tall without hands. Trap: dropping the last two inches. Lower like it costs something, because that's where the strength is.

HIP HINGE Push your hips back like you're closing a car door with them, soft knees, flat back, feel it in the hamstrings. Trap: squatting instead of hinging. The knees barely bend; the hips do the work.

BACKPACK ROW Hinge, flat back, lead with the elbow, squeeze the shoulder blade. Trap: yanking. Rowing slow is the point; the bag isn't going anywhere.

HOW THE WHOLE SESSION SHOULD FEEL

Warm by minute four, working by minute eight, done before anything screams. You should finish feeling like you could run one more block, and choosing not to. That's not going easy; that's the exact dose that lets you show up again in two days, and showing up again is the entire system.

Same 15 minutes. More strength inside them.

Baseline progresses by density, not duration: the clock never grows, the work inside it does. **Write down your total reps per block** (one line in a notes app or the printed log at thewholedad.com/start), then climb the ladder one rung at a time:

RUNG 1 • REPS **Beat your total.** Same blocks, same rest, one or two more honest reps than last time. When a block's sets feel easy two sessions running, you've outgrown the rung.

RUNG 2 • TEMPO **Three seconds down on everything.** Same reps, slower lowering. This is the cheapest strength you'll ever buy and it's kinder to your joints than adding weight too soon.

RUNG 3 • HARDER SHAPES **Feet-elevated pushups, single-leg bridges, split squats.** One movement at a time, and the rep count resets while you learn it.

RUNG 4 • LOAD **The backpack gets books.** Rows, squats, lunges, even the carries on your walk. Add one book at a time. That's progressive overload with a JanSport, and it works.

When you're ready for the whole Week

Two smooth Baselines in one week is the **green light**. The Hybrid Dad Week wraps this session into the full system: two lifts, three easy days at Zone 2, one scored hard day, 7,000 steps, and one undivided moment with your kids every day. About five hours, total. A missed day is absorbed, never made up. You never start over.

Your first Week guide came in the same email as this card (subject: "You're in. Here's Baseline."). Fifteen pages: every session for your gear, the food targets, the progression system, and the receipts behind every rule. If it's buried, everything lives at thewholedad.com/start. And when you finish today's 15 minutes, reply to that email with one word: **done**. I read every reply.

There's no ceiling on the climb. The rungs keep going long after this card gets easy, and the Week above it goes further still. On the mornings when none of that is available, the floor is these fifteen minutes and it never moves.

It all counts.

Tony