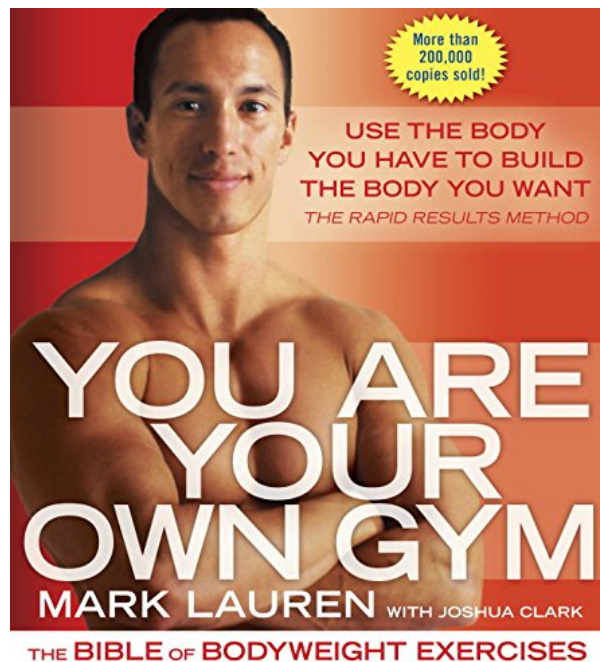
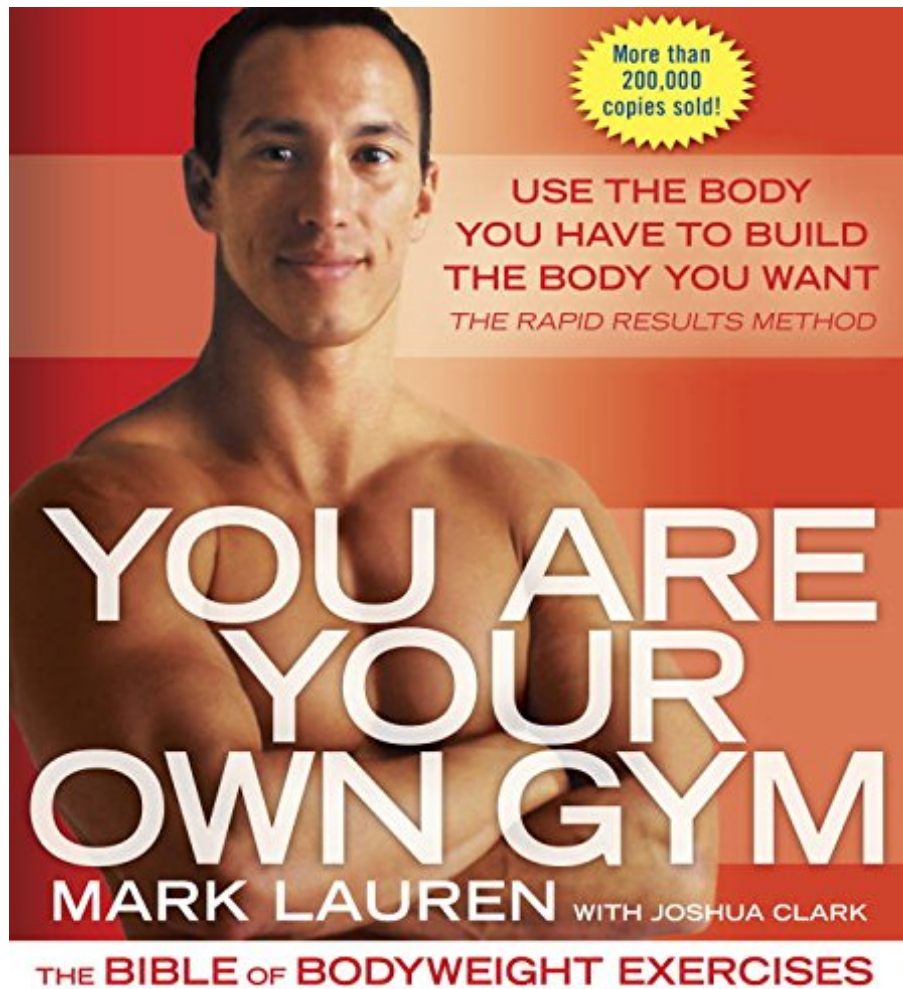


# **YOU ARE YOUR OWN GYM: THE BIBLE OF BODYWEIGHT EXERCISES BY MARK LAUREN, JOSHUA CLARK**



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## Review

“Mark Lauren puts the strength-training techniques of SpecOps into a comprehensive and easy to understand program that can be done by anyone, anywhere, anytime, paving the way for anyone looking to get into the best shape of his or her life.”—Gregory Peterman, sergeant, Green Beret

“Gain control of yourself through your own body’s gym!”—Mike Fisher, commander, 82nd Airborne Division; U.S. Army Ranger; colonel, U.S. Army

“Perfect for our mobile age of road warriors, this terrific book lets us carry around a full gym in our heads!”—General James Abrahamson, U.S. Air Force

## About the Author

Mark Lauren spent fifteen years as a military physical-training specialist for the Special Operations community. Now a sought-after personal trainer to civilian men and women of all fitness levels, a triathlete, and a champion Thai boxer, he is the author of the internationally popular body-weight bibles *You Are Your Own Gym*, *Body by You*, and *Body Fuel*. He lives in Tampa, Florida, and Phuket, Thailand.

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From an elite Special Operations physical trainer, an ingeniously simple, rapid-results, do-anywhere program for getting into amazing shape.

As the demand for Special Operations military forces has grown over the last decade, elite trainer Mark Lauren has been at the front lines of preparing nearly one thousand soldiers, getting them lean and strong in record time. Now, for regular Joes and Janes, he shares the secret to his amazingly effective regimen—simple exercises that require nothing more than the resistance of your own bodyweight to help you reach the pinnacle of fitness and look better than ever before.

Armed with Mark Lauren’s motivation techniques, expert training, and nutrition advice, you’ll see rapid results by working out just thirty minutes a day, four times a week—whether in your living room, yard, garage, hotel room, or office. Lauren’s exercises build more metabolism-enhancing muscle than weightlifting, burn more fat than aerobics, and are safer than both, since bodyweight exercises develop balance and stability and therefore help prevent injuries. Choose your workout level—Basic, 1st Class, Master Class, and Chief Class—and get started, following the clear instructions for 125 exercises that work every muscle from your neck to your ankles. Forget about gym memberships, free weights, and infomercial contraptions. They are all poor substitutes for the world’s most advanced fitness machine, the one thing you are never without: your own body.

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## Most helpful customer reviews

431 of 459 people found the following review helpful.

Best bodyweight exercise book out there

By Paul S. Okstad

UPDATE: There is now a companion app for iPhone available on the app store! Search for "You Are Your Own Gym" on iTunes. This app goes great with the book since it allows a user to use timers for the workouts.

## INTRO

This is an awesome book with a great introduction using the author's military experience. I've been using the workouts for a short while and already notice my ass getting kicked by stuff I wasn't doing in the gym.

## PRO'S

\* The 10-week workout plans are awesome, and the beginner workouts will challenge strong guys that come from a weight training background. They are written in such a way that a beginner can jump in and get in shape with less than an hour a day (usually 15-30 minutes). They are very detailed and describe which exercises to do on which days. They also describe what type of set/repetition methodology to use, such as: ladders, tabatas, interval sets, etc. Slowly the workouts transition from high-volume/low-intensity to high-intensity/low-rep and finally alternates between the two rapidly. It may remind a lot of people of P90X, except it's a fraction of the price and with more sensible theory explained.

\* This book is an excellent fitness reference with over 100 bodyweight exercises categorized by one of the following types:

PUSH, PULL, LEGS, and CORE. In addition to this, there is a set of exercises that develops all of the body's muscles.

\* The theory behind the programs are also included so that users can formulate their own programs.

\* Almost all of the workouts in the book can be done inside with minimal equipment. Great for people who travel or are on a budget.

\* People who weight train at the gym a lot will notice they are getting more range of motion and working out more muscles. E.g. If you do squats at the gym, the side lunges and 1-legged Romanian dead lifts will hit other muscles you neglected while improving stability.

\* Diet theory and suggestions are included in a dedicated chapter, but not so much data that it overloads the reader. The main emphasis of the book is still on exercises.

## BOTTOM LINE

Great job Mark on putting together these 10-week programs. This is a great book and I hope to buy another copy from the next edition of "You Are Your Own Gym" by Mark Lauren!

387 of 414 people found the following review helpful.

The trainer of Special Ops gives everyone the tools to get in elite shape

By Susanna Hutcheson

The lack of quality editing greatly harms this otherwise wonderful book. Whoever edited the book should

have known that to lose weight is not to "loose weight." But, because the contents of the book are so valuable, I won't take any stars away from my opinion of it.

I'm told a second printing is in the works (may be out by now) and hopefully all these messy things will be fixed. That doesn't help those who bought the book in its current state, however. Get the second printing if you can wait.

Now to the contents of the book . . .

I was very impressed by the fact the author, Mark Lauren, says straight out that he doesn't train movie stars. He trains men and women to survive, to be able to function well in life. That's what's really needed. The good looks, the great body, come as a side effect but is not the goal.

Lauren says, "I want you to understand, unlike many other fitness authors, I do not train movie stars, television celebrities, models, or other personalities whose livelihoods hinge on being fit. I train those whose lives do. For a decade I've used bodyweight exercises to create the leanest, strongest, most confident people of our civilization."

"This book comes to us at a time when, despite their best intentions, most people are too crunched for time and money to devote enough of either to attaining their fitness goals. In this age of information we are bombarded with incorrect advice, useless gadgets and pills, and pure hype. The methods outlined by Mark Lauren are proven and time tested. I know because I've seen his results. I've commanded the best of the best, and Mark's training has helped make them that way. Now he has honed his program into one for every man and woman." That's what John T. Carney Jr., Colonel USAF says in the forward. And that pretty much sums up what you'll get from the book. And that's a lot!

This is powerful stuff. It really spoke to me because I'm all about functional training. I don't care so much about the shape of my butt as the shape of my health. I care less about the numbers of the circumference of my butt than the numbers of my blood pressure. The fact that these exercises make me look good is just a wonderful side effect!

Mark says that in less than two hours per week you can get as fit as an elite warrior. I follow the PACE program of Dr. Al Sears and the way he trains and his philosophy works hand in glove with what you'll learn in this book. In fact, let me recommend Sears book to you. Pace: The 12-Minute Fitness Revolution

Mark says, "The popularity of training equipment, systems, and fad diets is mostly the result of marketing --- not a genuine attempt to help a generally out-of-shape society reach higher levels of fitness and well-being. In this age, where our homes and gyms are cluttered with fitness gadgets, the simplest and most effective method for developing strength and losing fat has been largely overlooked ---knowing how to train using nothing more than your body."

He adds, "Most weight training exercises isolate only certain muscles, requiring a fairly small portion of your body's total muscle mass, unlike bodyweight exercises that incorporate many at once. These exercises have the added benefit of being much more demanding of core strength (6-pack anyone?) than exercises that require weights and machines."

The heart of the program is interval strength training. This is one area where these exercises work well with PACE.

Many people are turning from aerobics (cardio) and other forms of exercise because of injury and discomfort as they age. The author says, ". . . things like running are extremely high-force, damaging to your knees, hips and back." Oh, is this ever true! And when you get my age, you'll really feel it if you've spent a lifetime pursuing these activities.

Even Kenneth Cooper who started the aerobic era now says it's a bad thing.

Mark says, ". . . interval strength training is superior to aerobic activity in burning fat, as well as building strength, speed, power, and even cardiovascular endurance. All this in far less time than tedious 'cardio' sessions."

I like the fact this is a no-nonsense book. Moreover, Mark doesn't limit the information to men like many military and fitness writers. He writes to both men and women and treats both equally. He gets lots of points with me for that and I appreciate it. We all face survival and the need to function in daily living, regardless of our sex.

There's also a nutrition section in the book. No recipes. Just some good, solid nutrition advice that's pretty much on the mark as far as I'm concerned.

In some of the exercises you will need some sort of equipment. But it's equipment most anyone has around the house such as a broom or telephone book. You won't need any equipment with most of the exercises, however.

Frankly, in the few exercises that suggest a phone book, I'd rather use dumbbells. But, if you're in a hotel room, a phone book is handier.

I put a bar between two chairs to do the chin-ups. You can also use a broom, anything that won't break.

He gives all sorts of ways to work out. I like the Tabatas: 20 seconds of exercise followed by 10 seconds of rest, for 8 rounds, for a total of 4 minutes. It's a total 15 minute workout. On the days I do PACE, I use a different interval. But the results are great!

Of the exercises Mark says, "Many of these 111 exercises I developed and named myself, others are little known gems, and still others are classics modified in new ways. Each exercise description detail a single repetition. Obviously, you should do multiple repetitions for multiple sets with rest in between sets. For more advanced athletes, typically each set should be done until you hit muscle failure and cannot do another rep."

There are also variations at the end of some of the exercises. You can make them easier or harder. And yes, these exercises are safe and effective for both young and old. If forty is so far in the rear view mirror that it's disappeared from view, as in my case, have no fear. If I can do it, you can do it. And if you're young, you would be well advised to get going on this right now. These exercises will keep everyone who does them functioning for life and able to take care of themselves in any event.

If you've done power yoga, you've done many of these exercises. One of his exercises is simply a combination of the sun salutation, down dog and the cobra. If done in a flow, as in power yoga and as the author advises, it's a powerful exercise that works almost every muscle. Mark calls it "Dive Bombers" and says it's for the "pectorals, triceps, deltoids and core."

He also rates the exercises from 1 to 4 with one being easy and 4 being the most difficult. Many are



combinations and almost all of them can be modified.

Very good photos of each step of the exercises are presented. Then the author gives us his program. You can select how you want to set up your program. He gives you a number of workouts or you can do your own.

There are programs for endurance, power, intervals, supersets and undulating. They cover a number of weeks. Then you change off. Fact is, there is a program here for anyone. But, you can always do things your own way.

At the end of the book there's a helpful appendix called "The 6 necessary training principles behind any successful program." There is another one called "The science behind the program." There is also a useful appendix called "Household Equipment", which as it sounds describes items around the house you'll find useful in some of the exercises.

I opened this book expecting to find just another workout book by another fitness "guru". What I discovered was a wonderful adventure written by a no-nonsense guy who knows what he's doing and who presents it in a really great way. He trains for function, not beauty. And function is what gets us through life and helps us survive when called on to do so.

Highly recommended.

- Susanna K. Hutcheson

169 of 178 people found the following review helpful.

This stuff is harder than the gym... just try it  
By David J. Roberts

I used to be super fit, cycling 50 miles a day, going to a body building gym (owned by a former Mr Great Britain) and a tonne of other sports. My resting heart rate was 40bpm in the morning. I've since grown up, got busy and become a lot less fit. I just started going to the gym again and I thought I was making decent progress and wasn't going to give this type of exercise the time of day. After a short period of time I was pressing 90lb dumbbells and feeling good again. This body weight stuff looked too easy. Big mistake. I've only just started this program but I can already tell it is a lot better for my body and it makes the gym feel easy - no matter how hard you push it at the gym.

Can you, mr big gym man, do a spiderman? I doubt it. The compound exercises and techniques like ladder and so on combine together to give you a much more practical type of fitness. I don't know about you, but when lifting, hauling, pushing things in the real world, I don't get to support my back against a seat back and use an isolated muscle! This type of fitness will really grow your stabilizing muscles so much more.

At first, I laughed at exercises like burpees. Really not laughing after even just 20 of them, never mind 50 - 100.

Really looking forward to being able to do some of the level 4 exercises like the spiderman and that one where you do a push up but also lift your legs!

I don't care if some of this stuff is like yoga but renamed, or exercises that have been taught for centuries. It is well thought out and communicated in such a way as to make it accessible to everyone.

ps, I just calculated that I would create \$600,000 of savings by putting my \$45 gym membership in a good

growth stock mutual fund for the next 40 years (accounting for inflation so the \$45 would increase by 3% also).

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I just came across my review and had to add to it for my experience one year or so later. For most of this year, I was saving my business and trying to spend the very little down time I had with my family. So with all of that, I neglected the plan and doing so definitely affected my health and how well I was taking care of myself. I've only just got gotten back onto the First Class plan (plan 2 of 4) and I'm on week 7. I feel so much better than I did 7 weeks ago and in that short amount of time, I've progressed much quicker than I ever did at pushing iron around. Now, when I have a busy week at work, I'm more careful to get that session in, even at a lunch break, because I know I need to in order to be 100% at work and home.

FUNCTIONAL: This time around I've really appreciated the functional side to this fitness. I moved office this week and wasn't ever afraid of injuring myself from lifting incorrectly or having to carry heavy, awkward objectives. You can get strong at a gym but the compound exercises set me up perfectly for all the full body lifts, pushes, pulls and holds I had to do. To me, that's functional. Even if you're a specialist in some sport and functional means something else to you than it does for me, I think having a strong core, better flexibility and balance along with the proficiency of having practiced lots of full body movements in the program makes for a real-world functional body. You can't rely on the guidance and support of a machine when lifting heavy goods so why would you train by using a some type of squat machine in the gym?

He has an iphone and android app and to be honest, that is what has made a huge difference this time around. I don't need to find the table in the book/ebook and then re-find an exercise if I'm not sure about it and all that jazz. I put my iphone in my armband, turn the app on and press 'Start workout'. It then guides me through the whole thing with timers and rest periods along with pictures and writing on each exercise and type of workout (ladders/tabatas/supersets etc.). This solved my biggest frustration so now all I have to think about is doing the work! Having said that, I would strongly recommend reading the book first, then getting the app. I've recommended the app to many friends and without reading the book, they want to pick and choose exercises from it but I know they don't. The understanding you gain from the book shifts your perspective on the body weights so you take a more purposeful approach rather than throwing in a few body weights you pick from an app.

Hope this helps.  
Cheers, David.

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Just came across this and had to give it another update. I mentioned in the last update that I was in week 7 of of plan 2 of 4, that's the First Class program. I finished that up and then went into and completed the Master Class program. I didn't mention his periodization before and I think that is a big part of the success of his programs. In his traditional programs you basically change your routine every 2 weeks. So for two weeks you may be focusing on endurance, then for 2 weeks you may focus on strength, then power and so on. Not only does this work with your body so you don't plateau but it's also mentally beneficial too. It gives you a bit of a break and provides different short-term goals. One week you're trying to stay consistent and hit a high number of reps then you do a strength block and you're trying to hit some low numbers before or by the time you fail and cannot do any more.

This plan is now my winter training plan and I use the exercises throughout the other seasons for my core. I've made this switch only because I've started cycling again after a 9-year hiatus and that requires very sport specific training. I only have time to train for one thing each day so it's cycling now. However, I'm really missing my upper body strength as I had gotten to the point where I could do one-arm pushups quite easily and handstand pushups were also a breeze. I'm looking forward to getting back into it here soon. When early spring comes and I'm putting more focus back on cycling again, I'll make sure I don't completely turn this program off again but rather do maintenance during the cycling season instead.

Lastly, I've had a personal trainer for my cycling and he has prescribed for me specific workouts according to my cycling goals and my weekly schedule. To be honest, the YAROG is almost on par with this high level of personal training because it's done so well and because it doesn't take a lot of time each day. My cycling trainer has state champion athletes and has won national pro races himself so I don't say this lightly. When it comes to overall strengthening and fitness, these programs feel like they are tailor made for you if you just do what he says.

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