



Bio-Psycho-Social Tips for Boxing and Health:

A Simple Booklet Guide for Boxing and Fitness Athletes



Year 2026

Dr. Darren Sosa DHSc, LMSW

Boxing and Fitness Coach

USA Boxing Certified





"This booklet guide was created out of my passion, respect, and support for the community of boxing. My years of experience training in the sport, coaching, and being a professional therapist have taught me that boxing is both a lifestyle and a medicine."

– Dr. Darren Sosa DHSc, LMSW

**Doctor of Health Science
Licensed Master Social Worker
Boxing and Fitness Coach**

**Contact:
hustlefitnessboxing@gmail.com**





Outline

Overview

Post-Training Habits

Meals

Nutrition

Metabolism

Social Network

The Coach

Sleep Hygiene

Medical Health

Mental Health

Boundaries

Stress Management

References





Overview



We are a system.

Bio = Biological Health

Psycho = Mental Health

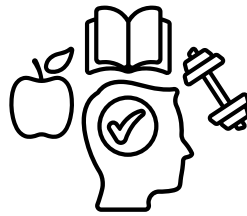
Social = Social Health

To get started on building goals with boxing and fitness, here are some important athletic factors to implement in your lifestyle.





Post-Training Habits



Boxing and training does NOT stop the minute training is over.

Success is making it a lifestyle.

Start with small accomplishments and small habits around your schedule.

We are reflections of our habits, and they channel in other parts of our lives.

Extra tip:

Be patient with building YOUR relationship with YOU and YOUR system.





Post-Training Habits II



Tips for post-training habits:

- 1) RUN. MOVE. Get Cardio and Strength up.**
- 2) Practice purposeful shadow boxing**
- 3) Reflect on your days and training**
- 4) Take note of any questions for training**
- 5) Self-care for post-recovery**
- 6) Set good boundaries with others**
- 7) Follow the bio-psycho-social tips**





Meals



**Meals can be simply done by following
the athlete plate method on the next
following pages.**

****We are not the creators of the athlete plate
and only share for educational purposes only****

***Athlete plate resource can be downloaded
on the webpage 'resources link.'
www.hustlefitnessboxing.com***

Extra tip:

**Meals can depend on our weight goals and
the intensity of your training.**



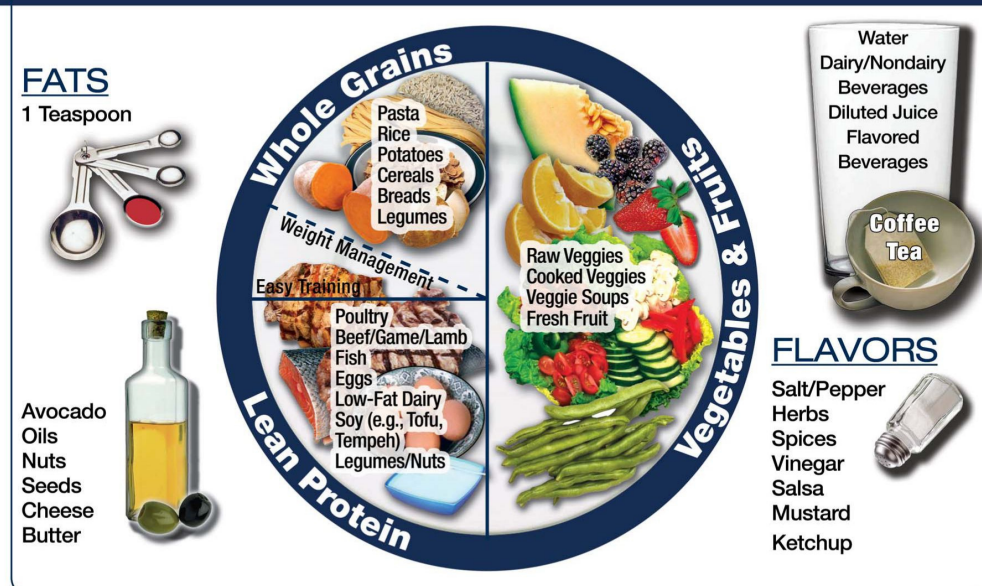


Meals II

Athlete Plate Method: Easy Training / Weight management

ATHLETE'S PLATE

EASY TRAINING / WEIGHT MANAGEMENT:



The Athlete's Plates are a collaboration between the United States Olympic Committee Sport Dietitians and the University of Colorado (UCCS) Sport Nutrition Graduate Program.
For educational use only. Print and use front and back as 1 handout.

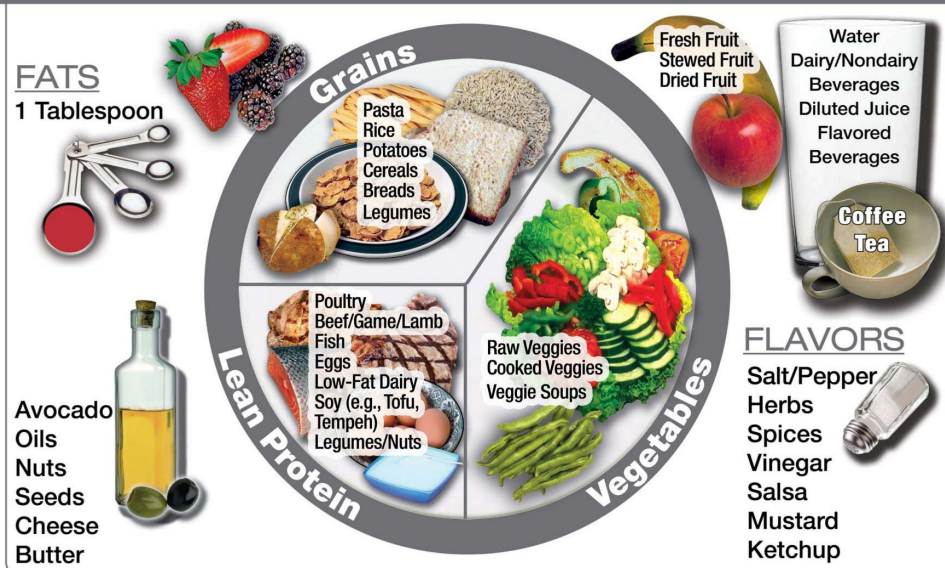


Meals III

Athlete Plate Method: Moderate Training

ATHLETE'S PLATE

MODERATE TRAINING:



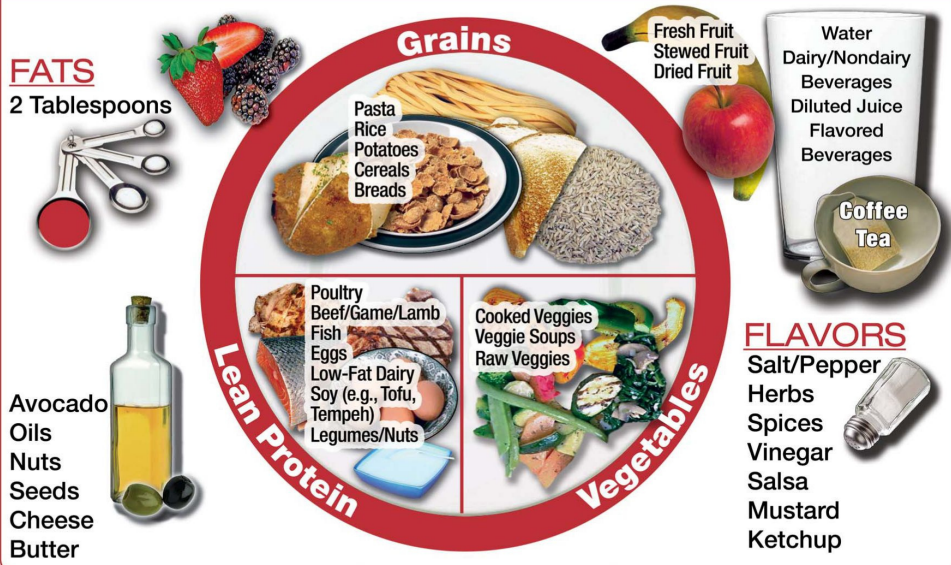
The Athlete's Plates are a collaboration between the United States Olympic Committee Sport Dietitians and the University of Colorado (UCCS) Sport Nutrition Graduate Program.
For educational use only. Print and use front and back as 1 handout.

Meals IV

Athlete Plate Method: Hard Training / Competition day

ATHLETE'S PLATE

HARD TRAINING / RACE DAY:



The Athlete's Plates are a collaboration between the United States Olympic Committee Sport Dietitians and the University of Colorado (UCCS) Sport Nutrition Graduate Program.
For educational use only. Print and use front and back as 1 handout.

Meals V



Strategies when creating meals:

- 1) Go to the grocery store at least once 1x week to load on high-performance foods**
- 2) Try not to go to the grocery store on an empty stomach. Your eyes will be hungry**
- 3) Make a list and purchase only what you need**
- 4) Follow the athlete plate methods**
- 5) Meal prep with serving-size containers**



Meals VI



The market is FLOODED with many meal programs and supplements.

Try following the athlete plate method, our nutrition guide resources on our webpage, or consulting with a dietitian.

Extra tip:

If you're short on time or have difficulty getting started, meal prep businesses are available. Look online to find what's available in your area for pick-up or delivery.





Nutrition



Our body runs on 4 main macronutrients.

1) Carbohydrates

2) Proteins

3) Fats

4) Water

**Each macronutrient has an important role in
our body's function and performance.**

Extra tip:

Gut health.

**Our gut is connected to our brain and can
affect our mental health.**



Nutrition II



Carbohydrates

Break down into sugar and are a major fuel source for our body and brain to function.

There are complex and simple carbohydrates.

Complex = nutritious carbs like whole grains.

Simple = sugars like candy or fast food.

Extra tip:

Too many carbohydrates can lead to weight gain, grogginess, and bloating.

Nutrition III



Proteins

Help build, repair, and replenish our body.

Everyone's body can require a different amount of protein depending on size, weight, age, and activity.

Extra tip:

**Amino acids are building blocks for proteins.
They can be found in rich macronutrients.**

Nutrition IV



Fats

Fats play an important role in storing and carrying things in our bodies.

example: vitamins

4 types of fats:

- 1) polyunsaturated fats (oils, nuts, avocados)**
- 2) monounsaturated fats (fish, eggs, corn)**
- 3) saturated fats (red meats, dairy)**
- 4) trans fats (try to limit! found in vegetable oils, fast foods, red meats)**



Nutrition V



Micronutrients

Small essential vitamins and minerals our body needs for important functions.

Examples:

Energy, metabolism, bone health, immune system, blood, brain, and nerve health.

Examples of micronutrients:

Vitamins A's,B's,C's,D's, Calcium, Zin, Iodine, and Iron.

Extra Tip:

Can be found in macronutrient-rich foods or taking daily multivitamins.





Nutrition VI



Water

Water consumption should be EVERY day.

The average recommended consumption of water is 8 cups daily = half a gallon.

Depending on age, weight, and intensity of training, you want to consume a good amount of water to stay hydrated in training.

Extra tip:

Dehydration can lead to fatigue, difficulty concentrating, and an impact on performance. Drink a reasonable amount of water DAILY.



Metabolism



- 1) Our body converts what we eat and drink into energy.**
- 2) Our body burns energy even while at rest, which is called:**

BMR = Basal Metabolic Rate

Extra tip:

- BMR can increase by HIIT/boxing training**
- An unbalanced diet or unhealthy diet control can affect our BMR and cause our weight goals to backfire**

Metabolism II



Calories

Calorie = A unit of energy that is found in foods and drinks for our body to use.

Calories can be found in all macronutrients.

"Counting calories" is a way of measuring for weight.

Extra tip:

This always depends on age, weight, height, sex, and your current activity level.



Metabolism III



Counting Calories

A basic way to find your calorie intake is by multiplying your current weight by 15.

Example:

150lbs x 15 = 2,250 calories

Losing weight would decrease calorie intake throughout the day.

Gaining weight would add to calorie intake throughout the day.

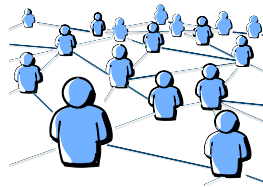
Extra tip:

**Calorie journal logs can help with organization.
Digital logs can be found on phone apps.**





Social Network



Our social network can be a very important part of our athletic goals.

Having healthy, supportive relationships can be beneficial to our health.

The people we are surrounded by and their behaviors can affect us.

Reflective questions to ask ourselves:

How are my relationships healthy?

How are the people around me supportive?

Any changes to make with my relationships?



Digital-Social Network II



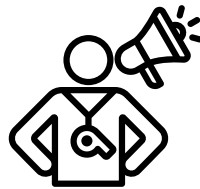
We live in a digital world and our social media community can have benefits and cons.

Things to consider for social media networks:

- 1) Digital content can promote and motivate us**
- 2) Be aware of social comparisons with others**
- 3) Have healthy boundaries with its use**
- 4) People's opinions are not in our control**
- 5) Have a digital community that YOU want**

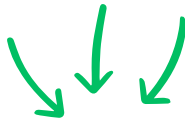


The Coach



**Finding the right coach and gym
are important questions
to ask ourselves.**

**Every coach has a different coaching style,
In terms of how they train and teach.**



Important questions to ask yourself

Experience?

Education?

Are they safe?

What do they value?

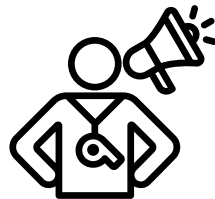
Do they practice what they preach?

What kind of environment do they promote?





The Coach II



**The field and industry of coaching
has many people in it.**

**Especially in the boxing and athletics
community.**

Extra tip:

Coaches and gyms are like shoes.

**What fits great for others may fit differently
for you.**

**Find what fits you, your goals, and your
system that you have.**





Sleep Hygiene



Sleep hygiene is like taking care of your teeth and washing your body.

Try to keep your sleep clean.

A disrupted sleep cycle can slow down our results with our training.

Extra tip:

If you work long hours, school, or have responsibilities, TRY to set boundaries for naps in your day/night.



Sleep Hygiene II



5 stages of sleep

Stage 1 - 2 = light-lighter sleep

Slower breathing, heart rate drops, and the brain processes learning and memory

Stage 3 - 4 = Deep sleep.

Builds and replenishes muscles, bones, repairs injuries, and strengthens the immune system.

Stage 5 (REM) = rapid eye movement sleep regulate mood, process memory, and learning.

4-6 cycles through stages = full sleep.



Sleep Hygiene III



Sleeping is an essential part of athletic recovery. Our body restores, grows, and replenishes itself when resting.

Sleep hygiene can be the following:

- 1) Clean room or resting area**
- 2) No caffeine, nicotine, or alcohol before bed**
- 3) Obtaining at least 7-8 hours of sleep**
- 4) Scheduled bedtime and wake-up time**
- 5) Minimal light, screentime, and noise**

Extra tip:

Sleep applications can provide soothing noises for people who prefer sounds.





Medical Health



All of our bodies are different, and it's important to stay on top of medical conditions.

If you have a current medical condition, it's suggested to discuss with a provider/doctor how to still work with boxing training.

Medical conditions can:

- 1) Impact our performance**
- 2) Limit our ability to train**
- 3) Cause injuries or lead to worse conditions**

Don't ignore injuries or medical conditions

Seek treatment to continue training





Mental Health



Being aware of our thoughts and emotions is essential to athletic and boxing goals.

Not coping with uncomfortable thoughts and feelings can lead to increase in:

anxiety

depression

stress eating

anger outburst

disrupted sleep

difficulty concentrating

relationship problems

quitting athletic goals

alcohol and substance abuse





Mental Health II



**Uncomfortable thoughts and emotions
DON'T just go away, or we'll forget.**

**If we suppress them, they will channel through
us in different ways and impact us.**

Be careful with **avoidant coping behaviors:**

- *Risky behaviors**
- *Alcohol or substance abuse**
- *Unhealthy Isolation or withdrawal**
- *avoiding responsibilities and roles**
- *self-harming actions**



Mental Health III



How to cope:

- 1) Consult with a mental health professional for therapy**
- 2) Engage with supportive social support**
- 3) Notice urges for unhealthy behaviors**
- 4) Notice negative mood and thoughts**
- 5) Engage in healthy coping skills**
- 6) Daily self-care and recovery**
- 7) Practice good boundaries**



Mental Health IV



Performance Anxiety

Our natural survival instincts are fight, flight, freeze, and fawn.

Basic human emotions of fear and secondary emotions of fear (anxiety) never go away.

Performance anxiety can arise anytime in boxing, whether it's training in front of other people, sparring, or competitive bouts.

It's completely normal, and it's about making space for it, working through it, focusing on our performance, and preparation leading up to the performance.



Mental Health V



Coping with Performance Anxiety:

- 1) Slow, controlled breathing reconnects your body to your brain.
*(slows the fight-flight response)***
- 2) Train with intention and drill for mastery**
- 3) Aim for flow and the present moment**
- 4) Talk to your coach about your performance anxiety**
- 5) Consult with a licensed therapist**

Boundaries



Boundaries are our limits or rules.

**This applies to us (what we do) and
with other people.**

**They protect us emotionally, physically, and
psychologically.**

**Your boundaries are valid and should be
respected.**

Reflection questions:

What boundaries could I use?

How will my boundaries help me?



Boundaries II



Boundaries with others:

Boundaries help clarify our relationships.

You don't have to negotiate your non-negotiables.

People who violate or don't respect our boundaries are red flags.



Extra tip:

Have boundaries for yourself:

- 1) Know when it's time to take a break**
- 2) Set boundaries around your time**
- 3) Push yourself but don't hurt yourself**





Stress Management



**Stress releases a natural hormone called
'Cortisol.'**

**There is a balance between good stress and
unhealthy stress**

**Healthy stress encourages learning, growth,
and motivation.**

**Unhealthy stress can be
harmful, traumatic, or draining.**



Stress management II



Chronic and unmanaged stress increases the risks of:

Burnout

Disruption of sleep

Disruption with gut health

Disrupted immune system

Developing medical conditions

Developing mental health conditions

Undesirable changes in behavior



Stress Management III



Simple management strategies for stress management.

- 1) Daily self-care and hygiene**
- 2) Have 'check-ins' with yourself**
- 3) Engage in healthy coping activities**
- 4) Having boundaries with ourselves**
- 5) Taking breaks and having restful sleep**
- 6) Find some time with social support, friends, or family**



References

All information in this booklet has been based on professional practice and educational resources.

Contact us to request specific reference resources for any of this booklet's topics.

Referencing sources:



USA Boxing

MedlinePLUS

Cleveland Clinic

Harvard University

Franciscan Health

John Hopkins Medicine

Atomic Habits: James Clear

Inner Excellence: Jim Murphy

Every Moment Matters: John O'Sullivan

National Association for Mental Illnesses

U.S. Olympic Committee Sport Dieticians

National Institute of General Medical Sciences

University of Colorado Sports Nutrition Program

