

***** FACSIMILE COVER SHEET *****

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Making Weight

Here are the principles of "making weight", if you are very fit:

1. ***Water loss is the very last thing to do***; if possible it is left to be done in the last 6 hours before weigh-ins.

Do you weigh-in the day before the matches? If so...then there is plenty of time to recover from water reduction the day of weigh-in. So water loss is a "one time" bounce down, not a long term, over some days, process. It is foolish to even think about water loss in any day prior to the weigh-in day... holding it down is not only unhealthy, but daily bouncing of water down in the days before weigh-in, or water restriction, teaches the body to retain water. I see wrestlers with heavy suits and in long sleeve workout gear, days before weigh-in, starting to sweat down and they then hold the water loss... this is foolish... water is water... leave any water loss to the last day, and before that work out to train wrestling not to train water loss or water restriction... that restriction or water corruption as I said is counterproductive. Depending on your size, a quick dehydration effort over max 3 hours wrestling or workout in a hot room, will lose a middle weight wrestler between 4 to 6 lbs or 2 to 3 kgs.

Two glasses of water is 1 lb or about ½ kg. As you know, use of a sauna or plastic suit is improper for juvenile and younger age groups.

2. ***Fat reduction efforts by calorie restriction should stop at 3 days before weigh in*** ... you will not lose significant fat/mass by calorie reduction in those last 3 days sufficient to make any real difference in what you weigh. One kg of body weight is about 8000 calories. A normal training wrestler of mid size, training hard, requires about 3000 calories a day to maintain weight. So unless you starve, which is stupid for performance, with normal optimal fat reducing of at best 500 calories a day, calorie reduction is mostly irrelevant in those last 3 days. Only wrestlers who are undisciplined starve themselves over the last week. Even then, at best a "starvation" no food diet will lose only ¾ of a lb a day, and that is as much muscle as fat loss. What matters in the last 3 days is reducing food bulk remaining in your stomach on weigh-in day. So, starting 3 days before weigh in (maybe 2, but not 4 days), you have to empty your stomach but still take in calories. And do not worry about fluids until last day... lots of water to help flush out your system and to empty your stomach.

3. ***Starting at least 4 days before weigh-in (this is a good idea at any time) take high fibre foods***...fruits, vegetables and take a dose of METAMUCIL, a fibre supplement, in morning and at night... this keeps you regular and this helps eliminate bulk in your bowels on weigh-in. Take lots of fluids. Body builders who want to lean out fat before shows, eat high fibre diets in the weeks before shows to cut fat. Stop fibre intake over the last night.

4. ***If a large weight loss is required, the last big meal (stomach filling) is no earlier than 4:00pm in afternoon 2 days before weigh in.***

5. ***The day before weigh in, eat light, non bulky foods, but take in high calories. Keep taking water to allow your stomach to empty itself of food bulk. The object is to empty your stomach but maintain your energy levels.***

6. *At all times* ensure you are taking vitamins and salt, to keep good electrolyte and health balance.

7. *By the morning of weigh in* you should be fairly empty in the stomach not having had much "food" over night, but still being "regular" and not dehydrated. This stomach emptying will reduce 1 to 2 kg in weight.

8. *The day of weigh in you minimize the water in your body for a very short time*, keeping in mind that it is normal to have a fluctuation in water in the body... as you know, you are lighter after a workout or when you wake up in the morning, so the point is to be at your low point in water retention.

9. When you wake up do not drink, since you are at your overnight "drift down" weight (you lose water as you breathe, about 1 kg overnight). Then do as follows:

- (a). *Be careful that you do not run out of time*, so count on a little over 3 lbs or 1 & 1/2 kg per hour (the first water comes off easy but the last water is harder) and leave yourself room for error. So for 2 kgs to lose or so you should start about 4 hours before weigh-in to be safe giving you a 2 hour cushion.
- (b). Work out vigorously for about 10 minutes to get heart rate up to 140 to start sweating. Once you are sweating, continue exercising gently in the hot room or sit in a warm place to maintain the sweating so it is like training in the hot summer time. After 5 minutes of rest, run for 5 minutes and repeat... the point being to keep the sweat going but not to tire out.
- (c). I like to skip, on and off, to keep up the core body heat and your sweat. Work out at least 90 minutes before you check your weight... do not let yourself cool down... and if you must check your weight do so quickly so that you do not cool off... it is hard to restart the sweating, so do not shower.
- (d). Do not drink!
- (e). You may need to change your under clothes if you are very wet, but do so in the hot room so that you do not stop the sweating.

Reducing Body Fat

10. All wrestlers should reach an optimal level of body fat before any thought of dehydration. Fat loss should be by exercise and by some calorie reduction if necessary, but should be done slowly overtime (by training and by an athlete's diet)... aim to reduce body fat by about 600 calories a day. That is about 1/2 kg a week, 2 kgs a month. Loss of more than that is troublesome. Healthy fat reduction can be done marginally faster, but you should step up the running, and not increase fat reduction by the further reduction of calories. On eating:

- (a). Maintain appropriate protein intake daily by having protein at each meal.

- (b). Eliminate most fats, except the good fats like fish, flax seed, olive, canola or omega oils.
 - (c). Eat high fiber carbohydrates whenever possible... whole grain cereals to start at least 2 meals a day is my favourite weight loss diet, because it has good slow digesting carbs, is filling, and it reduces my appetite. Eat the cereal 20 to 30 minutes before your planned meal, with apples between meals as snacks.
 - (d). Overall, maintain water intake, and consume adequate protein at each meal.
11. Soluble fibre is helpful in fat reduction, so I recommend take a dose of Metamucil (fibre supplement) every day or so.
12. Up the mileage that you run. Run at a fat reducing pace which is a medium jog, for at least 45 minutes to 1 hour each day. If the weight to lose is very high, then you increase the run to 2 times a day.
13. Be sure to eat carbohydrates to fuel your workouts. If you need energy, so be sure to eat good carbs at least 1 hour before you work out, and always maintain good hydration. Do not restrict water.
14. In high weight loss requirements, with lots of exercise in 3 weeks you could lose 1 kg per week of fat, for a total of 3 kg.

Dropping to a Lower Weight Class

The decision to go down to a lower weight class must be considered carefully. If you are at a weight class and you are already lean and fit... stay there.

If, after a lengthy training regime, you are between weights, then you have to make a decision... can you realistically minimize more body fat, to a point that after reasonable water reduction, being a water workout, your are close to the lower weight class? If so, and if you think that your body size of being between weights is a handicap (and it may not be), then train for the "making weight" process, and follow the above protocol.

Otherwise, consider that success will be achieved by becoming a better wrestler, not a better weight loser. In my experience significant weight loss or dropping to a lower weight class, at Cadet/Juvenile is met with disappointment, since the wrestlers are equally tough at the lower weight class. Overtime chronic ("making weight") is very debilitating. Finally, accept the fact that as you mature, you will gain muscle mass and you shall move up weight classes. It is problematic to "fix" your mind on a weight class too early in the season, or too early in your career. Once you are a mature adult wrestler, consider carefully your size, muscle mass requirements, body type, and optimal fat levels to determine your optimal weight class.