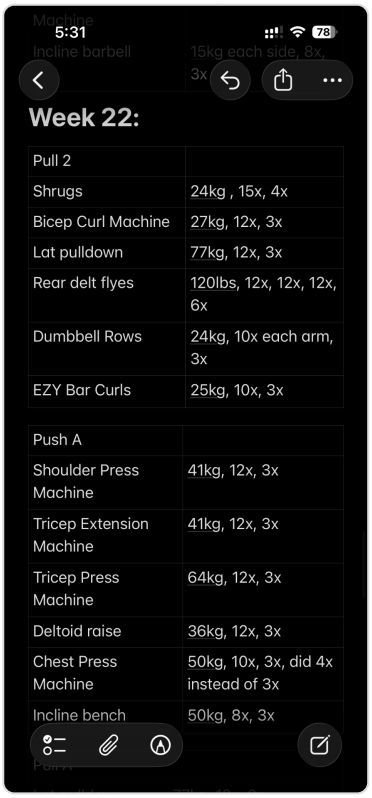
PatGPT

# How I use AI as my own personal trainer

Track your lifts, build a program for any situation, get honest physique feedback and fix your form, with copy-paste prompts for every step.

The gym changed my life for the better. Three years ago I was at rock bottom and seriously unhealthy, so I decided to change that by training consistently. To learn how to lift properly I worked with a personal trainer, which was totally worth it and gave me something priceless: real human coaching. But I get that a trainer is expensive and won't be available to you 24/7. That's where AI comes in, to augment (or even automate) parts of your training.

## 01 Track your lifts properly




For years I tracked my lifts in my phone's notes app instead of paying for an app. It's not the worst idea, but if it isn't backed up to the cloud it can easily get lost. After a while my notes got slow, and I lost **months of tracking** when one note became corrupted.

So I used **Claude Opus 5.5** to build my own lift-tracking app with one prompt. It's been a game changer for logging each session, and the progress chart shows exactly how my strength has moved, which is far more useful than scrolling through notes.

> **Prefer an off-the-shelf app?** Hevy now has an official ChatGPT app that can build plans and analyse your training data, and community-built connectors exist for Claude. Some of Hevy's features sit behind its paid Pro plan.

PROMPT · BUILD YOUR OWN LIFT TRACKER

Build a simple and clean gym lift-tracking web app with the following features:

**Core functionality**

- Allow users to select a day of the week (Monday–Sunday).
- Users can log exercises performed on each day.
- Each exercise entry should include: exercise name, weight lifted, reps completed, sets completed, and the date (recorded automatically).

**Exercise management**

- Include a searchable exercise library with common gym lifts.
- Allow users to create and save custom exercises if they're not in the library.
- Custom exercises should be searchable alongside predefined ones.

**Progressive overload tracking**

- Store historical workout data for every exercise.
- Provide an individual exercise page that displays progress over time, with a line chart.

- Let the user switch between tracking weight lifted, estimated 1RM, and total volume (weight × reps × sets).
- Display personal bests for each exercise.

**User interface**

- Keep the design minimal, modern and mobile-friendly.
- Dashboard should show today's workout, recently logged exercises, and quick access to progress charts.
- Make logging workouts as fast as possible with minimal clicks.

**Technical requirements**

- Use a simple database to store workouts and exercises, and persist data between sessions.
- Focus on speed, simplicity and ease of use rather than advanced fitness features.
- No calorie tracking, nutrition tracking, social features or workout plans: only lift tracking and progressive overload visualisation.

## 02 Build a training plan for any situation

AI is great at building a plan around your real constraints. Paste the base context block first, then add whichever scenario prompt fits. Fill in the [orange brackets].

STEP 1 · BASE CONTEXT BLOCK (PASTE THIS FIRST, EVERY TIME)

About me: **[age]**, **[height/weight]**, training for **[X years]**. Current lifts (working sets): **[squat/bench/deadlift/OHP or equivalents]**. Goal: **[hypertrophy / strength / fat loss / recomp / athletic]**. I can train **[X]** days/week for **[X]** minutes. Injuries or limits: **[none / details]**. Exercises I like or hate: **[list]**.

### STEP 2 · PICK YOUR SCENARIO

**Full program, commercial gym**

Using the info above, build a [X]-week program at a fully equipped gym. Include the split, exercises, sets, rep ranges, RIR or RPE targets, rest times, and a clear progression rule (how and when to add weight or reps). Explain briefly why you chose this split for my schedule.

**Hotel gym or travelling**

I'm travelling for [X days/weeks]. The hotel gym has: [e.g. dumbbells up to 25kg, cable machine, treadmill]. Design sessions that maintain my strength and muscle with this equipment, [X] sessions/week, max [X] minutes each. Suggest swaps for my usual main lifts.

### Home, minimal equipment

I train at home with: **[e.g. adjustable dumbbells to 30kg, pull-up bar, bench, bands]**. Build a **[X]**-day plan for **[goal]**. Since load is limited, use tempo, pauses, higher reps or unilateral work to keep progressing, and tell me how to progress when I outgrow the weights.

### Bodyweight only

No equipment at all, just floor space **[and maybe a door frame or park bars]**. Give me a **[X]**-day plan for **[goal]** with easier and harder variations for each movement, so I can keep making it harder over **[X]** weeks.

### Short on time

I only have **[20–30]** minutes, **[X]** times a week. Give me the highest-return plan for **[goal]** using supersets or circuits where sensible. Prioritise compound lifts and tell me what I'm sacrificing versus a longer program.

### Crowded gym, equipment taken

Here's today's planned session: **[paste it]**. The **[squat rack / bench / cable]** is taken. Give me the closest substitute for each affected exercise that trains the same muscle and movement pattern, with adjusted sets and reps.

### Returning after a break

I've been out of the gym for **[X weeks/months]** due to **[reason]**. My previous lifts were **[numbers]**. Build a **[X]**-week ramp-back plan that starts conservative, reduces soreness risk, and tells me roughly when I should be back to my old working weights.

### Working around an injury or niggle

I have **[e.g. sore left shoulder on overhead pressing, no pain on rows]**. A professional has **[cleared me for / not assessed this]**. Adjust my program to avoid aggravating it, suggest pain-free alternatives, and list warning signs that mean I should stop and get it checked.

### Cutting or bulking phase

I'm in a **[cut at roughly X kcal deficit / lean bulk]**. Adjust my training for this phase: volume, intensity and cardio. On a cut, focus on keeping strength and muscle; on a bulk, focus on progressive overload. Explain what changes and why.

### Sport or activity specific

I also play/do **[e.g. touch rugby twice a week / surfing / running]**. Build gym sessions that support performance and reduce injury risk without leaving me fatigued for **[sport days]**. Show how to arrange the week around **[days I play]**.

### Check-in and adjust (every 4–6 weeks)

Here's my current program: **[paste]**. Over the last **[X]** weeks: **[lift progress, what stalled, energy, sleep, soreness, bodyweight change]**. Diagnose what's working and what isn't, and give me specific changes for the next block rather than a whole new program unless it's warranted.

### Make it trackable

Format this program as a table with columns: Day, Exercise, Sets, Reps, Target RIR, Rest, Weight (blank for me to fill), Notes.

## 03 Get feedback on your physique

AI can assess your body composition and tell you what to focus on. To test it, I uploaded a photo of someone who's textbook "skinny fat" (not me, btw!) to Claude and simply asked: *"What should I do to improve my physique?"* Here's what came back.



**MY PROMPT (WITH THE PHOTO ATTACHED)**

"What should I do to improve my physique?"

Claude's full reply is below, unedited apart from formatting.

**CLAUDE'S RESPONSE**

This is a pretty common starting point: not overweight, but carrying some softness around the lower belly and sides, with fairly modest muscle in the chest, shoulders and arms. The good news is this responds well to the basics.

1. **Lift consistently, 3–4 times a week.** A simple full-body or upper/lower program built on compound lifts: squats or leg press, bench or incline press, rows and pull-ups or pulldowns, overhead press, Romanian deadlifts. Track your weights, aim to add reps or load over time, and take most sets close to failure.
2. **Give the "visual" muscles extra work.** Lateral raises for shoulder width, incline pressing for upper chest, and pull-ups or pulldowns for back width make the biggest difference to how a frame looks. Add some direct arm work too.
3. **Eat around maintenance, or slightly below, with high protein.** At this body composition a beginner can often lose fat and build muscle at the same time (recomposition). Roughly 1.6–2.2 g of protein per kg of body weight is a good target. A crash diet would mostly make you smaller, not more defined.
4. **Move more outside the gym.** Walking 8–10k steps a day helps fat loss without eating into recovery.
5. **Cover sleep, posture and patience.** Get 7+ hours of sleep, and add some core and glute work (planks, dead bugs, hip thrusts) for posture. Expect visible change over 3–6 months of consistent effort, not weeks.

**Get a second opinion.** AI can make mistakes, so sense-check its advice with a personal trainer, or post to **r/BulkOrCut** on Reddit for a human take.

## 04 Fix your lifting form

You can even use AI to improve your form. Upload a clear video of yourself lifting with the prompt below, and you'll get a focused rundown of what to fix and how.

PROMPT · FORM REVIEW

You are an experienced strength coach reviewing my lifting form. I'm uploading a video (or screenshots) of a set.

**About me**

- Lift: **[e.g. barbell back squat / deadlift / bench press]**
- Weight and reps: **[e.g. 100kg x 5]**
- Experience level: **[beginner / intermediate / advanced]**
- Goal for this lift: **[strength / hypertrophy / technique / rehab]**
- Any pain, injuries or mobility limits: **[e.g. tight hips, old left shoulder injury, none]**
- Camera angle: **[side / front / 45 degrees / behind]**
- What feels off to me (optional): **[e.g. hips shoot up first, bar drifts forward]**

**How to review it**

1. First, tell me what you can and can't reliably judge from this angle and video quality. Don't guess about things you can't see.
2. Break the rep into phases (setup, descent/eccentric, bottom/transition, ascent/concentric, lockout) and note what you observe in each, with timestamps if possible.
3. List the 3 most important issues, ranked by injury risk first, then performance impact. For each: what's happening and where in the rep, why it matters, one simple cue to think about mid-set, and one drill or accessory exercise to fix it.
4. Tell me what I'm doing well so I don't accidentally change it.
5. Say whether this weight looks appropriate for my current technique, or whether I should drop the load while I fix things.
6. Tell me what camera angle to film next time to check the main issue.

**Rules**

- Be direct, specific and brutally honest. No generic advice that would apply to anyone.
- Give me no more than 3 fixes, so I can actually focus on them.
- If anything suggests a risk of injury or pain beyond normal effort, say so plainly and suggest I see a physio or qualified coach in person.

## FILM IT SO THE AI CAN ACTUALLY SEE IT

**Side-on, hip height**

Best default angle for squats, deadlifts and bench. Use front-on to check knees caving or uneven pressing.

**Whole body, whole set**

Keep the bar and your feet in frame from setup to lockout. Film a working set, not a warm-up.

**Steady and well lit**

Prop the phone up rather than having someone hand-hold it, and avoid filming into a bright window.

## The verdict

AI won't replace a great coach. Mine taught me things no chatbot could. But for the 99% of the week your trainer isn't there, it's a **tracker**, **program designer**, **physique reviewer** and **form checker** in your pocket, for the price of a subscription you might already pay for. Use it to stay consistent, sense-check the big calls with a human, and see a professional if something hurts.

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