

STRENGTH & SPIRITUALITY · THE 30 PRINCIPLES

The Ramadan Training Guide

Fast strong. Train smart. Keep the barakah.



An evidence-graded companion to Principle 3 — Fasting doesn't mean inactivity. For beginners who want to keep training, eating, and sleeping well through the month.

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9 PAGES · 2026

What actually happens to your body in Ramadan

You are not fragile in Ramadan, and you are not superhuman either. Here is what the research says, graded honestly — strong means meta-analyses and controlled trials; moderate means consistent smaller studies; weak means a practical heuristic.

The dip is real — but it is borrowed

MODERATE

Performance falls and effort feels higher during Ramadan fasting — yet the decline is driven mainly by caloric shortfall, sleep disruption, and dehydration, not by fasting itself. Fix those three and most of the dip goes with them.

Timing is the biggest practical lever

MODERATE

Morning sessions — deep into the fast and after a short night — show the largest decrements. Late afternoon and evening are your natural peak, and training at a consistent time of day narrows the gap.

Weight and fat change modestly — and transiently

STRONG

Meta-analyses find weight and fat percentage fall slightly, clearest in people with overweight, with changes beginning around week two — and often reversing after Eid. Do not build the month on a fat-loss promise.

Muscle is negotiable

MODERATE

Some studies show lean-mass loss in Ramadan, others show it preserved. The difference is boring: total protein, total calories, and keeping resistance training going. That is the whole game — and the whole plan on the next page.

Fasted cardio is not a fat-loss shortcut

STRONG

Fasted exercise burns more fat *during* the session — but when calories and training volume are matched, it loses no more fat than fed cardio. Fasted is fine; it is just not magic.

You start every day mildly dry

STRONG

With no fluids for 12–18+ hours, you begin each fast slightly hypohydrated — and morning sessions compound it. Losing just 1–2% of body mass in water measurably dulls vigilance, mood, and energy before anything else feels wrong. This, not weakness, is most of the “fasting fatigue” people blame on the fast itself.

Evidence base: Fernando 2019 and Al-Jafar 2023 (meta-analyses); Chtourou & Souissi 2012 (time-of-day training); Schoenfeld 2014 and Vieira 2016 (fasted vs fed cardio); Özbay 2024 (mechanisms).

The maintenance-dose plan

The goal is a body that arrives at Eid still trained — a maintenance dose, not a personal-best attempt.

WHEN TO TRAIN

Post-iftar • the hard window

Sixty to ninety minutes after iftar you are fed, rehydrated, and near your circadian peak. The week's hardest sessions — lifting, intervals — live here.

Before suhoor • the easy window

Morning and late-night fasted slots are for walks, mobility, and light technique work only. Easy is the assignment, not the compromise.

WHAT TO CUT

Volume down 30–40%

Fewer sets, fewer exercises, same movements. Keep every session normal-sized and finish feeling able to pray Taraweeh.

Intensity moderate, frequency kept

Do not add weight you cannot recover from on short sleep. Keep your usual number of weekly sessions — that is the variable that protects muscle and the habit.

WEEK	FOCUS	TRAINING NOTES
Week 1	Settle the schedule	Two to three easy-moderate sessions, all post-iftar. Learn the iftar–suhoor rhythm before you judge anything.
Week 2	Expect the dip	Sleep debt peaks and body-comp changes peak here. Program a deload or an expectations reset — planned, not forced.
Week 3	Steady as she goes	Full maintenance dose: usual frequency, volume still cut, intensity moderate. This is the strongest week of the month.
Week 4 + Eid	Hold and hand off	Keep sessions through the last ten nights, scaled down; write the post-Eid week before Eid arrives (page 7).

Principle 3 — Fasting doesn't mean inactivity

The fast is a filter on the day, not a pause on it. Ordinary people fasted and worked for centuries — the maintenance dose is simply the modern, honest version of that.

RULES THAT SURVIVE BUSY NIGHTS

- **Anchor to the prayer schedule, not the clock.** A routine tied to Maghrib and Isha moves with the month; a 5 a.m. template does not.
- **Fasted means easy, always.** Walks, mobility, light technique — the rest waits for the post-iftar window.

WHEN THE NIGHT RUNS LATE

- **A twenty-minute session still counts.** Done badly beats not done — Principle 15, Perfection vs good.
- **Never “make up for it” later.** Doubling volume on short sleep is how week two becomes week zero.

Iftar architecture

What happens between Maghrib and Fajr decides the month — not the fast.
Three structures keep it sane: the order, the plate, and the water ladder.

- 1

Break lightly, then pray Maghrib
Dates, water, and soup first — rehydrate and ease the glycemic load — then pray. The prayer is a natural 15–20 minute gap that blunts the spike before the main meal arrives.
- 2

One plate, protein first
Build the plate the Principle 4 way: the protein on first — chicken, eggs, dal, or chole — then vegetables, then a capped portion of roti or rice. Served once; seconds are a decision, not a reflex.
- 3

Climb the water ladder to suhoor
Roughly 2.5–3 litres spread between Maghrib and Fajr: a glass at iftar, one with dinner, one after Taraweesh, one or two at suhoor. One flood at iftar mostly becomes a bathroom trip — spread beats gulp.

WINDOW	ANCHOR	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE
Maghrib	Iftar	One to two glasses of water plus dates and soup — fluids and gentle carbs before anything heavy.
After Maghrib	Dinner	A glass with the meal; the protein-first plate from step two.
Night	After Taraweesh	A glass or two on the way home — also where a protein-rich drink fits if the day was short on protein.
Fajr	Suhoor	A glass or two with the meal; pale-straw urine by morning means the ladder worked.

Principle 1 — Drink a lot of water • Principle 18 — Reduce sugar

The site’s water ladder ties every glass to a prayer time; in Ramadan the same ladder runs Maghrib to Fajr. And the sugar guardrail holds all month: sweet drinks are the loudest lever on the plate — keep them a weekend guest, choose fruit over mithai, and if it tastes like dessert, the body reads it as dessert.

Suhoor that holds you

Suhoor decides the fasting day’s trajectory: slow carbs plus protein holds you to Zuhr and past it; syrup holds you to nine-thirty. Keep it simple, keep it from the pantry you already own.

THE FRAMEWORK

- **Slow carbs** — oats, dal, whole-grain roti: the slow-release base.
- **Protein** — two eggs, yogurt, milk; the shaykh’s model suhoor is oatmeal, a couple of eggs, and some dates.
- **A little fat** — eggs and yogurt carry it; it slows the morning crash.
- **Fluids** — a glass or two of water beside the plate, not after it.

WHAT TO CAP

- **Pheeni, jalebi, syrup drinks** — pure sugar that buys a spike and pays for it mid-morning (Principle 14 — Avoid the morning crash).
- **Sweet chai as the meal** — it crowds out appetite for protein while adding everything you did not need.
- **A feast at 4 a.m.** — a huge meal right before sleep trades a crash for a restless night; eat normal-sized.

PANTRY ITEM	WHAT IT GIVES	SUHOOR NOTE
Oats	Slow carbs	The base — cooked with milk for extra protein.
Eggs (2)	Protein + fat	Carry both; boiled eggs are a five-minute suhoor.
Dates	Quick carbs	A few, with water — tradition and immediate fuel.
Whole-grain roti	Slow carbs	One or two, paired with eggs or dal — not syrup.
Dal / chole	Protein + fiber	Yesterday’s dal is a legitimate suhoor.
Yogurt / milk	Protein + fluids	Counts toward both the protein and the water ladder.
Chicken / keema	Protein	For late nights after Taraweeh, when the day needs a third feeding.

Protein logistics: hitting roughly 1.6 g per kilogram of bodyweight in two feedings is hard. A protein-rich drink between Taraweeh and sleep — milk, yogurt, a simple shake — is a legitimate tool, not a gym-bro hack. Nothing exotic, nothing mailed to you.

Sleep strategy: the blessed windows

Principle 10 — Compensate for lost sleep — teaches that not all sleep is equal. The sleep windows below are the shaykh’s classroom teaching, offered as his instruction and matched here to the Ramadan schedule; verify with him, and let your own two weeks of lived evidence speak alongside.

WINDOW	QUALITY	WHAT TO DO WITH IT
After Isha	Stretches further	The treasury window — an hour here does the work of more later. In Ramadan: bed within an hour after Taraweeh, not after the 2 a.m. social hours.
Middle of the night	Stretches further	Protect a core block between Taraweeh and suhoor; this is the sleep that keeps Fajr reachable.
After Zuhr	Good — the nap	The built-in repayment window: ten to twenty minutes, timer set, up at the first waking. The reset button, not a second sleep.
After Fajr / after Maghrib	Leaks the day	The tempting sleep-ins. They feel like repayment but leave the night broken and the day foggy — hold out for the Zuhr nap.

THE POST-TARAWEEH NAP

Short night behind you? A ten-to-twenty-minute nap after Taraweeh — before the meal settles or after it, seated or lying — takes the edge off without stealing the night. The mistake is going back to sleep: thirty minutes later you wake groggy and the window is gone.

WHY IT MATTERS

Restrict sleep and appetite hormones move within days: ghrelin up, leptin down, hunger for exactly the calorie-dense carbs sitting on the iftar table. Sleep is a nutrition variable in Ramadan, not a separate department — no plan fully compensates for a 2 a.m. bedtime.

Principle 16 — Not all sleep is equal

Two practical anchors: finish large meals two to three hours before sleep where the schedule allows, and take caffeine after Taraweeh — not before the suhoor sleep it will steal.

The post-Eid reversal — and the 40-day carry

The research's least welcome finding is also its most useful one: Ramadan body-comp changes begin around week two and often reverse after Eid. Iftar feasting and late-night social eating can make the month quietly hypercaloric. The fix is a plan written before Eid arrives — not willpower on Eid morning.

1 Before Eid: write the week after

One line on a calendar — which days you train, what the meals look like. The rebound is behavioral, and behavior planned in advance beats behavior improvised.

2 Days 1–10: the four basics, nothing else

Prioritize protein. Stay hydrated. Sleep to recover. Maintain movement. The lecture's own closing advice — the owner's manual for the trust — needs no Ramadan edits.

3 Days 10–40: one habit, marked daily

Principle 19 — Win the consistency battle: hold a single habit for 30 to 40 days without stacking anything on top. The post-Isha walk is the usual winner. A missed day is a hole in the calendar, not the end of it — resume tomorrow, keep counting.

4 Eid day itself: one plate, one walk

The holiday is for gratitude and family — and the plate rules still hold. One plate, protein first, a walk between visits. The reversal is built at the table of the second and third day, not the first.

Principle 30 — The link between body and soul

The body is an amanah — a trust. Wear and tear is expected. But we have to maintain it. The month ends; the maintenance does not. Keep the four basics, hand the teaching to one more person.

Evidence base: Al-Jafar 2023 (LORANS cohort plus meta-analysis — anthropometric changes begin ~week 2, diminish, and often reverse post-Eid); Correia 2021 (Ramadan vs structured intermittent fasting); Fernando 2019 (fat changes clearest in overweight, heterogeneous and transient).

The fridge card

The whole month in six daily checks. Print this page, pin it to the fridge, and let the calendar keep the score.

The Ramadan Fridge Card

Six checks. Every day. That's the month.

☐

Water on the ladder

A glass at iftar, with dinner, after Taraweeh, at suhoor. [Principle 1](#)

☐

Protein at each meal

Eat the egg, the chicken, or the dal before the roti and rice. [Principle 4](#)

☐

One plate at iftar

Served once, no seconds — eaten with attention, phone away. [Principles 22 & 2](#)

☐

Twenty-minute walk after Isha

The fast day stays in motion; the body arrives at sleep unpacked. [Principle 3](#)

☐

Sleep in the blessed window

Bed within an hour after Taraweeh; nap after Zuhr, not after Fajr or Maghrib. [Principle 10](#)

☐

Sugar stays a guest

Sweet drinks weekend-only; fruit over mithai on the weekdays. [Principle 18](#)

Done badly beats not done — Principle 15, Perfection vs good. Mark the day, not the misses.



About the thirty principles

This guide stands on thirty principles taught by Shaykh Sa’ad Quadri — a beginner-first path that builds the soul through the body, one small habit at a time: water tied to prayer, protein first on the plate, sleep in its blessed windows, movement kept through every season including this one.

Read them all, in order, with the food plans and the 40-day journey, at

strength-and-spirituality.safinastudio.com

Education, not medical advice. This guide is general information; reading it creates no doctor–patient or coach–client relationship, and nothing here is diagnosis, treatment, or prescription. Individual decisions belong with you and your licensed provider.

Consult before fasting or training if you are pregnant or breastfeeding, take medication — including insulin or sulfonylureas for diabetes — or manage a chronic condition such as kidney disease. Eating-disorder history deserves individualized, professional support.

Emergencies: if you have chest pain, severe shortness of breath, fainting, or signs of a stroke, call emergency services.

A gift project for Shaykh Sa’ad Quadri.

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