

# He should not be this nimble.

After 15 years of NFL football—all of them on the defensive line, one of the more punishing positions in sports—42-year-old Michael Strahan should be slow. He should be gimpy. He should at least have a limp. But, no. Strahan is agile. He is spry. He is light on his feet, especially for a 250-pound man who spent two entire decades propelling himself into the man-mountains that are offensive linemen, play after play, game after game, year after year. His job was to chase and tackle the quarterback, and he did that as well as any person who's ever played the game, which is why the Pro Football Hall of Fame inducted him into its ranks this summer. But in the pursuit of those 141½ sacks and 429 tackles, he played thousands of snaps, most of them resulting in violent contact between him and other giant humans. Somehow he did that without major injury and without doing harm to the body he has to live with for the rest of his life.

"I feel better than I did when I was playing," Strahan says, flashing the goofy, gap-toothed grin that is as much his signature as the quarterback sack. "And not only when I was playing [pro], but when I was a young player, in my early 20s."

He says this while lying on his back atop a foam roller, stretching out in an empty yoga room in the Upper West Side high-rise where he rents an apartment. Any minute, Strahan's trainer, Latreal Mitchell (who also lives in the building, for convenience, after being convinced to relocate from L.A.), will arrive for the second of the two daily workouts she oversees for her increasingly famous client on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

The morning workout is shorter—a half-hour of high-intensity training with an emphasis on body weight that Strahan does around 7 a.m., before jumping in the shower and walking two blocks to the set of *Live with Kelly and Michael*, the smash-hit syndicated show he has now been co-hosting five mornings a week for more than two years. (He lives so close that he can see the audience line and studio building from the window of his upper-floor apartment.) Earlier in the day, they'd done kettlebells—three rounds of seven exercises, with minimal breaks. "I hate kettlebells, but I did them," he says. Other days, they might rotate intervals between the rowing machine, the bike, and the treadmill, which they don't turn on. Strahan pushes the belt with his own power.

Twice a week, Strahan has no time for the morning session, because he now has to be on set at *Good Morning America*, which officially added him to its roster of hosts in April. Those days, he heads straight to GMA, performs his hosting duties, then hops in a car for the 17-block trip back uptown to *Live*.

Strahan looks trimmer than he did when he was playing football, but he actually weighs about the same as he did when he retired—"between 247 and 252 pounds"—after winning the 2008 Super Bowl with the New York Giants, the only team he ever played for. "I'm leaner," he says. "The weight is distributed differently, but it's still there."

The two-a-days have a lot to do with that, as does having a

trainer who lives in the building, cooks his meals, and advises him on what to eat when he goes out, which he often does. Her rules: Minimize sugar, dairy, and pasta; focus on a high-protein diet; and stick to what she calls the "80/20" plan—that's 80% "clean" (i.e., healthy and fresh) food, with flexibility to splurge. "Don't get me wrong, I eat sugar," Strahan says. He'll occasionally cheat with candy, especially on vacation ("It's hard to walk past a pack

of Rolos"), but cleaning up his diet has changed his cravings, to the extent that he's turned on Oreos, a snack he grew up on and loved for most of his life. Now, he thinks they taste like "a stale cookie with Crisco on top."

Strahan says he actually feels so good these days that there are times, watching NFL games from his seat on the set of *Fox NFL Sunday* (his third regular hosting job), when he feels like he could still put on the pads and explode around an offensive tackle. "In my head I think I've still got it," he says, finishing up a set of pullups.

Then he actually imagines what that would mean. "But I take one hit, man, and I know I'd probably be on the ground for an hour."

THERE ARE REALLY NO EXEMPLARS FOR WHAT STRAHAN HAS accomplished—successfully transitioning from a Hall of Fame sports career into mainstream TV stardom. Plenty of ex-jocks host sports shows, or do play-by-play, but virtually none have become legitimate crossover celebrities. "Tough-looking guys used to come up and say, 'Thank you for what you did for the Giants, man!'" Strahan says, sitting in a chair in his apartment, which has a sleek and modern if slightly generic aesthetic. There are glass walls and limitless views to the north and east. The closest thing to a personal touch is a glass jar filled with pistachios on the counter. "Now they're like, 'I love you on the show with Kelly!'" And I'm like, "Dude, what happened to the football talk?"

Strahan made his first appearance on *Live! with Regis and Kelly* in 2007, as the defensive leader of the Super Bowl champion New York Giants who was planning to retire at the perfect moment—on top of the world. When Regis Philbin asked him what he was planning to do next, Strahan replied that he wasn't sure yet. "Maybe one day you'll retire and I can take this," he told Philbin. He was joking. Until he wasn't. Four years later, Philbin retired, and after a 10-month search for a replacement—during which 59 different guest hosts appeared—Strahan was selected to replace



Your better-body blueprint

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Fit at 40: one man's success story p 140

# The Book

EDITED BY SEAN HYSOON, C.S.C.S.

## DO IT ALL AGAIN

When you're successful, it's easy to get comfortable. But there's always another challenge—if you're game. Success after success, former pro football player Michael Strahan continues to seek out and tackle those challenges, and holding on to his NFL physique has helped him. We got Strahan's two-a-day workout straight from his trainer. You can see what it's done for him; now try it on for size.

Hair: Diane Dagostino; Grooming: Michelle Champagne; Tailor: Jose Herrera/Lars Nord

Clothing:  
TOMMY HILFINGER  
Watch: TAG HEUER  
AQUARACE AT  
TOURNEAU  
Want it?  
See page 143.

PETER YANG



# DOUBLE TROUBLE

Can you handle Michael Strahan's two-a-day training?

By Sean Hyson, C.S.C.S.

Michael Strahan may have hung up his cleats after his Super Bowl-winning 2007 season with the New York Giants, but he's still a jock at heart. The *Live with Kelly and Michael* co-host trains twice a day, three days a week, and throws in two more single sessions a week for good measure, usually taking week-ends completely off. While Strahan doesn't need to be in defensive lineman shape to handle his 5'3" co-host, his workouts—and physique—don't indicate he's lightened up much since exiting the gridiron. We asked Strahan's trainer for the details of his program.

**HOW IT WORKS** "Our morning workouts are high-endurance, functional sessions," says Latreal Mitchell, Strahan's trainer ([latrealmitchell.com](http://latrealmitchell.com)). "The second session of the day is heavy lifting—more of a bodybuilding split." The combination keeps Strahan healthy and lean while maintaining muscle. Included here is a typical morning routine, done as a circuit to keep the heart rate up and build conditioning, and a sample afternoon session, where the back, hamstrings, and abs are targeted.

**DIRECTIONS** Perform the morning workout as a circuit. Complete one set for each exercise in turn, resting as little as possible between exercises. Repeat for 3–4 total circuits. (The workout should take 20–30 minutes.) Perform the afternoon workout as straight sets, completing three sets of 10 reps for each exercise in turn.

## Morning Workout

### 1 BATTLING ROPE UP/DOWN WAVE

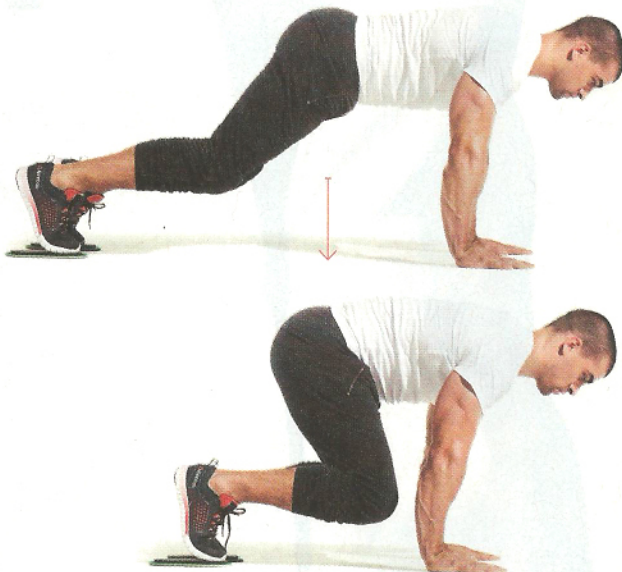
Reps: Repeat for 30–45 sec.

Attach battling ropes to a secure anchor point and grasp an end in each hand. Get into an athletic stance with hips and knees bent and raise both ends in the air. Slam them down into the floor and repeat as quickly as possible—your reps should cause the rope to make waves.

### 2 SLIDER KNEE TUCK

Reps: 20

Get into pushup position, resting your feet on furniture sliders, Valslides (available at [valslide.com](http://valslide.com)), or towels or paper plates (if you're on a waxed wooden floor). Brace your abs and draw your knees up to your chest, sliding your feet along the floor. Don't let your lower back round.



SLIDERS CHALLENGE YOUR STABILIZER MUSCLES.

### 3 BATTLE ROPE IN/OUT WAVE

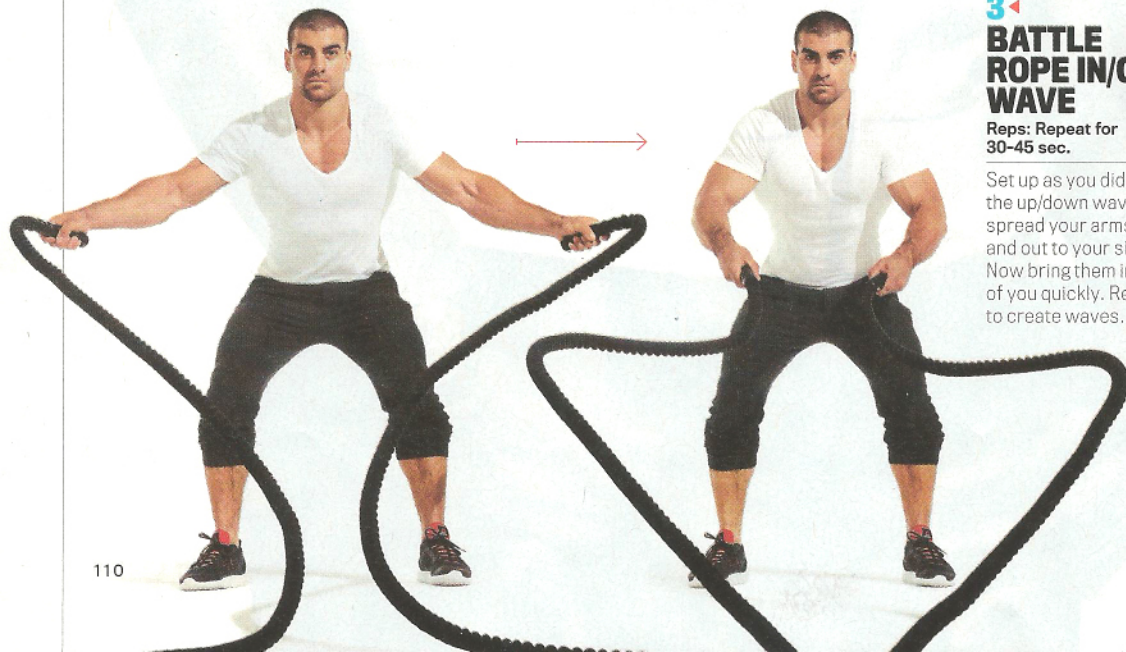
Reps: Repeat for 30–45 sec.

Set up as you did for the up/down wave but spread your arms apart and out to your sides. Now bring them in front of you quickly. Repeat to create waves.

### 4 KETTLEBELL SWING

Reps: 20

Hold a kettlebell with both hands (or grasp one of the ends of a dumbbell) and bend your hips back while keeping your lower back in its natural arch. Allow your knees to bend naturally. When you feel a stretch in your glutes, explosively extend your hips and let the momentum swing the weight up to eye level.





## 5 ALTERNATING REVERSE LUNGE W/ROPE

Reps: Repeat for 30-45 sec. (each side)

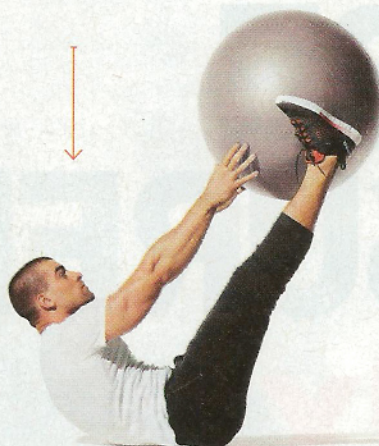
Set up as you did for the previous rope waves and begin waving the rope with alternating hands—raise your left arm and then the right; slam the left side and then the right. While you're waving the rope, step back with one leg into a lunge, lowering your body until your back knee is just above the floor.

## 6 MEDICINE BALL SLAM

Reps: 20

Stand with feet shoulder-width apart and hold an eight- to 10-pound ball in front of your chest. Raise your arms overhead until you feel a stretch in your abs, then throw the ball hard into the floor. Catch it on the rebound.

USE THE LARGEST SWISS BALL YOU CAN CONTROL.



## 7 V-UP W/ SWISS BALL

Reps: 10

Lie on your back on the floor and place a Swiss ball between your feet. Squeeze the ball and raise it off the floor with your legs straight. At the same time crunch your torso up and reach for the ball with your arms straight. Pass the ball from your feet to your hands and lower your torso and legs to the floor, reaching the ball behind your head. Repeat the V-up and pass the ball back to your feet. Each pass is one rep.

## 8 JUMP ROPE

Reps: Jump for 60 sec.

The rope's handles should reach up to chest level when you stand in the middle of it. Perform any style of jump you like for 60 seconds.

## Afternoon Workout

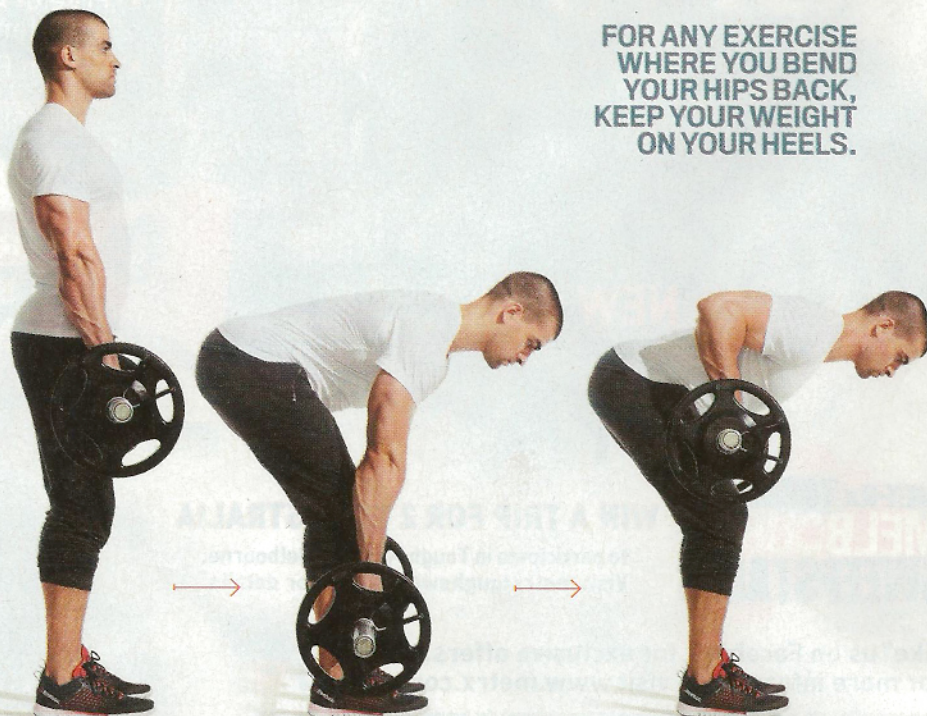
### 1 TEMPO PULLUP

Hang from a pullup bar with hands outside shoulder width and palms facing forward. Take three seconds to pull yourself up until your chin is over the bar. Take one second to lower yourself to the starting position.

### 2 STIFF-LEG DEADLIFT/ ROW COMBO

Hold a barbell at arm's length in front of your thighs. Brace your abs and bend your hips back, keeping your lower back in its natural arch. Allow your knees to bend only slightly, and continue until you feel a stretch in your hamstrings. From there, squeeze your shoulder blades together and row the bar to your belly. Lower the bar and extend your hips to come straight up again. That's one rep.

FOR ANY EXERCISE WHERE YOU BEND YOUR HIPS BACK, KEEP YOUR WEIGHT ON YOUR HEELS.



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Pants: TODD SNYDER  
Shoes: REEBOK  
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See page 143.