
THE CrossFit LIFE

Down but not Out

When Sharon Schuh's husband was laid off from his job, they had to give up their CrossFit membership. Fortunately, they didn't have to give up CrossFit.

By Sharon Schuh

January 2013



Courtesy of Sharon Schuh

My son, Eric, started CrossFit at CrossFit Pacific Beach in 2010, and he immediately began using a variety of tactics—including begging, shaming and demanding—to get me and my husband, Tim, to try it out. Eric was convinced we'd love it. And while I hate to admit my child knew more than me, he was right.

We finished the introductory classes, joined, and embraced the CrossFit lifestyle, diet, community, competition, and physical changes we were seeing in our bodies.

1 of 3



Sharon Schuh

The beauty of CrossFit is in its simplicity, and the garage gym is an important part of CrossFit culture.

I had such a love/hate relationship with CrossFit. I was always nervous before each workout, always intimidated, but that high I got after each workout was so addicting. I loved working toward a common goal each night with a group of people who were so supportive and genuinely excited for each new PR and milestone I achieved.

My son had started a new life outside the family home with his new apartment and new friends, and now Tim and I were able to be a small part of that through CrossFit. We were able to get to know his friends in and out of the gym, take pride in the lifestyle choices he was making and, in a wonderful turn of events, learn from our son. We found a better way of working out, a better way of eating and a better way to incorporate fitness into our everyday life.

After eight months of working out at CrossFit PB, Tim was laid off and we had to give up our CrossFit memberships. We vowed to keep up with the workouts; we were both so thrilled with the changes we were seeing in our bodies

and overall fitness. And one of the best things about CrossFit is having the WODs available online and being able to scale them not just to your ability but, in our case, to our equipment. Tim had the typical metal weight set and bench as well as a set of dumbbells and a free-standing pull-up tower. Our garage floor had already been covered with rubber mats.

Our first purchase was a second barbell. We found one at a sports-equipment resale store for \$75. This would enable us to perform the WODs together. Part of what we loved about CrossFit was the competition, and, luckily for us, Tim and I are very competitive with each other.

Bumper plates are expensive, but let's face it: there is something fun about being able to drop the weights. Not to mention Tim had some concerns about me dropping the metal weights on his epoxy concrete floor, even if it was covered in rubber. We bought a pair of 10-lb. bumper plates at Amazon for \$35 each and used them with the metal weights.

Kipping pull-ups are not possible on our free-standing tower, but because Tim can already perform strict pull-ups and I have yet to accomplish my first pull-up at all, we make do with the tower for now. I use a small step box to perform jumping pull-ups. When the WOD calls for pull-ups, we try to rearrange the order so we don't have to wait on each other.

For several weeks, we would write out and tape the workouts to the garage cabinets. This actually became a good way to track our progress, as we would write down our results and then put the papers into a binder. Eventually, we did go high tech and pick up some whiteboards for \$8. These are especially handy for tracking our max numbers and PRs.

We found several great free timer apps for our iPad. Speakers attached to the iPad and Pandora's dubstep and workout stations helped complete our at-home experience. My neighbors, however, are not completely thrilled with some of our new taste in music.

Next up, we really needed some boxes for box jumps. I'm embarrassed to say I was using my old aerobics steps. It's a toss-up as to whether I'm more embarrassed about using a 10-inch box for WODs or that I actually own those steps. Either way, we needed to get our own boxes. My father is a carpenter, so we found a free set of plans online for 20- and 24-inch boxes, and my father helped Tim build two boxes.

Christmas brought me a kettlebell, an AbMat and a customized jump rope. Without rings, scaling muscle-ups and ring dips are not fun, but we will get there eventually.

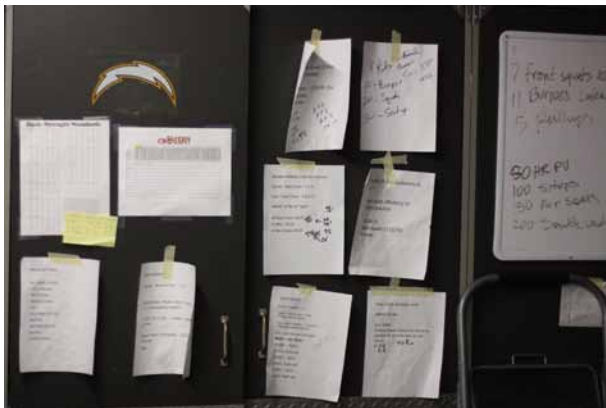
The coaches at CrossFit PB have been wonderful in responding to our Facebook requests for scaling help. The Internet and YouTube are invaluable when we need to double-check the mechanics and correct form for the various Olympic lifts. Most weeks, we are actually getting more workouts in because of the convenience of being at home, although we still miss all the friends we met at the box.

Tim is currently in the interviewing process for new job. If he gets it, we definitely want to get another membership.

Fingers are crossed!



Sharon Schuh



A bit of whiteboard and some WODs taped to the wall instantly turn a garage into a gym.