

# *Beautiful* **Badass** Mini Course

**The empowering, no nonsense approach to  
health and fitness. Be *more*, not less.**

**By Nia Shanks**

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## **Disclaimer**

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You must get your physician's approval before making any changes to your diet and/or exercise program including every step discussed in this program. These recommendations are not medical guidelines but are for educational purposes only. You must consult your physician prior to taking any advice from this program/manual or if you have any medical condition or injury that contraindicates physical activity or supplementation. This advice is intended for healthy individuals 18 years and older only.

The information in this program is meant to supplement, not replace, proper exercise training and nutrition along with the approval of your physician. All forms of exercise and nutrition pose some inherent risks. The author advises all readers to take full responsibility for their safety and know their limits and seek expert guidance for performing all of the exercises contained within this program. The exercises and dietary recommendations in this book are not intended as a substitute for any exercise routine or treatment or dietary regimen that may have been prescribed by your physician.

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You must have a complete physical examination if you are sedentary, if you have high cholesterol, high blood pressure, or diabetes, if you are overweight, if you have had any injuries, may have an injury, or if you are over 30 years old. Please discuss all nutritional changes with your physician or a registered dietician. If your physician recommends that you don't use any information in this program, please follow your doctor's orders. This information is intended for informational use only. Nia Shanks or NS Fitness LLC will not assume any liability or be held responsible for any form of injury, personal loss or illness caused by the utilization of this information.

# Welcome to The Beautiful Badass Mini Course!

Before we begin, please allow me to say hello, and welcome to the Beautiful Badass Mini Course!

I very much appreciate you signing up for this Mini Course and the newsletter. I know you don't give your email address to just anyone, and I want you to know how appreciative I am that you're providing me with the opportunity, and privilege, to connect with you.

I'll do everything I can to send you the most helpful (and hopefully even a little entertaining!) information possible.

Moving on . . .

I'm your host, Nia Shanks, and I'll be leading you through this awesome, exciting, and incredibly rewarding journey that will help you become the strongest, most awesome version of yourself while also allowing you to reach your better-body goals.

**Before we proceed, I must tell you something incredibly important:** I have no intention of solely providing you with just another workout routine, nutrition information, or any typical, banal information you may be used to receiving from health and fitness sources.

**The truth is, I'm not interested in just helping you build the body you want. My main priority is not helping you look great in a bikini. While the information in this Mini Course, the articles on the website, and the products offered there *will allow you reach those goals*, I want to give you something so much more than that.**

And I hope you expect more than just a workout routine from me.

As you'll see throughout this Mini Course and most articles on my website, my main goal is to help you become the strongest, most awesome version of yourself. Together, we'll accomplish this with simple, no nonsense strength training and nutrition information. We'll also include a hefty dose of important elements that are far too often neglected in the fitness world: mindset, maintaining a positive self image, for example.

**Please don't doze off! I know this may sound boring, but I promise it's important and worth your while.**

Your health and fitness journey isn't just about looking great; it's about improving your self-confidence and being proud of what your body can do. It's about loving your body *this very moment* and not vowing to appreciate it once you "lose X number of pounds" or can fit in a certain pair of jeans.

It's about discovering and highlighting your unique characteristics and strengths, and unleashing your true potential. (Because you are absolutely *awesome* in a way that is uniquely your own.)

Defining yourself based on *your* terms and not *their* terms.

When you try to achieve “their” standards when it comes to a certain body shape or size, or physical image, you're selling yourself short. You're ultimately holding yourself back. Trying to achieve and maintain “their” standards only imposes limitations on you.

When you do these things – focus on being the most awesome version of yourself, define yourself on your own terms, and follow proven, simple, and sane workout and nutrition guidelines – you'll reap the body-transforming results you want.

*And you'll get way more than you ever expected in the process.*

In summation, there's a statement on my website that does a good job of introducing you to the Beautiful Badass approach to health and fitness:

Do you know how many minutes of rigorous exercise you'd have to perform to burn off the calories from three cookies?

*Who cares, because that is a stupid question.*

Health and fitness – how you eat and move your body – is about empowerment; becoming the best version of yourself. Health and fitness should reduce your stress, build you up, and make your life better. It should show you the incredible things your body can do, and then leave you wanting to discover *what else* it is capable of.

Health and fitness is about eating well, simply. Not dieting. Not avoiding foods (because that leads to obsessive, disordered, and binge eating habits). Not feeling guilty when you indulge in your favorite dessert (or pizza, or whatever the hell you love).

Health and fitness is not about “earning your food” or punishing yourself for eating. It's about moving your body in ways you enjoy. Getting stronger, and becoming more awesome.

At its core, that's what the Beautiful Badass Mini Course is all about.

And let's face it; chances are you've tried dozens of workout programs that do nothing but leave you exhausted and diets that revolve around restriction and misery, and now it's time to *do what works*.

It's time to *train to be more awesome* instead of revolving your life around a grueling workout regimen that breaks you down instead of building you up. It's time to embrace flexible, stress-free nutrition guidelines that allow you to regain your sanity. It's time to achieve results today that you can not only maintain tomorrow, but years from now. To accomplish these things you must do something. You must not only read the information here; you must *apply* it.

And you can, because it's so very simple.

I thank you once again for allowing me the privilege to show you how.

Let's begin by discussing one of the most confusing topics of all – nutrition.

# Nutrition, The Beautiful Badass Way

If there's one element of health and fitness that causes the most confusion, and stress, it's nutrition. To combat the typical obsessive-type behaviors promoted by fad diets, you'll be presented exclusively with a few bare essentials of smart nutrition.

**Warning!** Do not underestimate the power and effectiveness of what you're about to read. Some people may ignore the following information because it appears "too simple." Yes, the following information is simple, but, and here's the most important thing – *it works*.

Think about it: would you rather have simple, flexible, stress-free nutrition principles that you can apply today and adhere to long-term, all while regaining your sanity, or would you rather have overly complicated, stressful diets and meal plans that you could follow for a week before going crazy?

There's absolutely no reason to follow complicated diets. You can, and will, get amazing health and body-transforming results from applying this proven, simple information.

Are you ready? Here's the first thing you should focus on:

## Eat Primarily Real Food

What is *real food*? Let's not overcomplicate this. You *know* what real food is. Meat, poultry, fish and seafood, eggs, dairy, nuts and seeds, beans and legumes, grains, fruits and vegetables. (You can omit items you're allergic to, if you're vegetarian or vegan, etc.)

While eating mostly real food isn't magical, it is an important step to take. Commit to following this guideline (or at least applying it the best you can). Don't worry about weighing your food. Don't worry about eating 5-6 meals a day. Don't obsess over calories.

Begin by eating real food, most of the time.

I say "most of the time" because, let's face it: there are some tasty things in this world that don't fit neatly into the real, minimally processed category. When you eat primarily real, minimally processed food, you can easily fit the not-so-healthy things you love into your lifestyle.

## The Three Other Nutrition Principles

In addition to eating mostly real food, give these three guidelines a try:

- Eat when you're hungry
- Stop eating when you're satisfied (but not stuffed)
- Apply the 90/10 principle (eat real food meals 90% of the time; the other 10% is up to you)

These are very simple guidelines, and they produce results.

Apply this information today and you'll see and feel the changes very soon, both physically and mentally. Don't underestimate the effectiveness of this information, because it works. It's also likely to be the simplest, easiest, most rewarding thing you'll try when it comes to nutrition.

And I'm willing to bet you'll never feel the need to look for another diet ever again.

Flexible guidelines, like those provided above, trump diets and meal plans because they can be tailored to your lifestyle and preferences *and* are sustainable long-term.

Here's what Kelly D. (a fellow Beautiful Badass) had to say:

“Following the basics and just eating real food (most of the time) and stopping when I'm full is helping me so much mentally!! I haven't wanted to binge and I'm naturally losing weight without having to worry about it so much. No food scale no measuring everything, just eyeballing portions. I feel so free and so normal ... I truly from the bottom of my heart thank you for helping me find good information that isn't the new quick fix etc just allowing me to be a real human and be myself again.”

For more information about ditching diets, breaking free from obsessive eating habits, and for additional details on the nutrition guidelines above, be sure to check out the following articles:

[The Nutrition Survival Guide \(Don't Become a Diet Zombie\)](#)

[The Diet That Has No Name \(Why It May be The Best Thing Ever\)](#)

Those articles will provide more details about the nutrition guidelines discussed above.

Now, let's talk about working out, the Beautiful Badass way.

## Beautiful Badass Strength Training

“Working out” can mean any number of things, but we’re going to discuss strength training because, after all, the website where you got this Mini Course has *Lift Like a Girl!* splashed all over it.

First, if you’re not already participating in strength training, I encourage you to read this article: [8 Reasons Women Should Strength Training \(Number 8 May be The Best\)](#)

If you have any hesitation about strength training, or you think it’s about nothing but losing fat and transforming how your body looks, that article will leave you ready to start lifting weights and seeing what you’re capable of doing.

Ready to achieve maximum results in minimum time while having fun in the process?

Well let’s get to it!

Let me start this off with a disclaimer: progressive strength training, as outlined below, does not make women “big ‘n bulky.” I’ve never had a client proclaim she got big from strength training.

Not a single one.

If they did, they wouldn’t work with me, and neither would anyone else. That’s just a myth and I assure you, you won’t look like an NFL linebacker when you follow the provided workouts in this Mini Course.

By following the sample workouts you can lose body fat, “tone up,” improve your self-confidence, and discover the physical and mental strength you possess. And all of those things are very, very good.

**Here are the few, important elements of a Beautiful Badass workout program:**

**Use primarily big, compound exercises.** This includes squats, deadlifts, single leg exercises, push-ups, inverted rows, dumbbell presses and pulls, chin-ups and variations of those exercises; they should comprise the majority of your workouts. Those exercises allow you to build a better looking body in the least amount of time possible. And don’t worry if you can’t perform exercises like chin-ups and push-ups. You can (and will!) work up to them.

The exercises you use will depend on the equipment (or lack thereof) that you have available. But know this: whether you attend a fully loaded gym, train at home with dumbbells and a weight bench, or have nothing to use but your own bodyweight, you



can still achieve phenomenal results. All that matters is that you make use of what you *do* have, perform compound exercises, and improve your performance over time.

Back to the best exercises ... not only will working toward being able to do exercises like push-ups, chin-ups, and maybe even some heavy deadlifts help you build the body you want, but you'll also improve your self-confidence in the process.

It *never* fails. Any time one of my clients performs her first bodyweight chin-up, something in her changes, noticeably. Strength training is one of the best things you can do that will improve your self-confidence. You may not believe me yet, but you will once you experience these results for yourself. Once you get a taste of your true physical abilities, you'll *want* to discover what else you can do. This is what makes working out the Beautiful Badass way so incredibly effective – you'll *want* to keep working out because you'll have long-term motivation.

You now know why you should use mostly compound exercises in your strength training workouts, so let's discuss the second important factor of strength training.

**Focus on getting stronger and improving your performance.** This is important. By getting stronger and improving your performance, your body has no choice but to keep changing, which means you'll achieve whatever results you're after (e.g., lose fat, “tone up”). Also, this is a much more enjoyable and positive training goal than simply focusing on burning as many calories as possible. If you've never focused solely on performance, prepare to be amazed at the difference it makes in your attitude and physique.

Your only goal should be improving your performance each week; doing a *little* better each time. Don't worry about burning calories, achieving a high level of fatigue, or anything else – focus on what you *can do* and make it a goal to get better, slowly and consistently.

This can be accomplished by adding more weight to exercises, performing more reps with the same exercise, using a more challenging variation (e.g., progressing from traditional push-ups to a more challenging variation, such as close-grip or feet elevated push-ups), or decreasing rest periods between exercises. You'll see how to use these progressions in the accompanying workouts.

**Don't overly rely on cardio.** Many women think tons of cardio is the answer to losing fat and building a “toned” body, but it's not. Cardio can be helpful, but it pales in importance to eating well and strength training if you want to develop a “toned” appearance because muscle is what's responsible for that effect.

*The majority of your results will come from eating well, strength training, and consistently improving your performance.*

You may need to read that last sentence again.

That's why I use cardio to *supplement* your workout routine instead of using it as the main element. If you enjoy cardio or want some extra activity to boost fat loss or improve your health, you can't go wrong with going for a walk most days of the week, or on days you don't strength train. My preferred way to get in extra cardio work is simply to be active in ways I enjoy. This includes mountain biking, hiking, kayaking, and other physical activities.

More structured exercise isn't mandatory: find ways to move your body *that you enjoy*.

You can even include 5-15 minutes of cardio- or interval-based work at the end of your strength training sessions. I'll give you some examples of this in the next section.

Bottom line when it comes to cardio: find ways to move your body that are enjoyable to you. If that's not an option or you simply want a more direct guideline, go for a walk or engage in other physical activity for at least half an hour on days you don't strength train.

### **To recap the Beautiful Badass workout philosophy:**

Focus primarily on large, compound exercises and improve your performance whenever possible. (This applies to free weight workouts and bodyweight workouts alike.) That is what matters and will produce maximum results in minimum time.

And remember, you will *not* get big and bulky from strength training. If compound exercises and training for strength made women big and bulky, I would've been out of a job a loooong time ago. If lifting light weights for super high reps with pretty pastel colored dumbbells was the answer, then that's what I'd tell you to do.

My job is not to tell you what you want to hear; my job is to get you the best results possible in the least amount of time.

That's what this Mini Course will accomplish.

Up next: the sample Beautiful Badass Workout.

# The Beautiful Badass Workout Program

Now that you know how to eat and work out like a Beautiful Badass, it's time to get into the sample Beautiful Badass Workout Program.

*Disclaimer:* make sure you perform every exercise properly, with safe equipment, and a spotter if needed.

We'll begin with the workouts and follow it up with the instructions.

## Workout 1

- 1) Squat or goblet squat - 3x6-8, 1x10-12
- 2a) Chin-up (or [assisted chin-up](#)) or cable pull-down - 3x6-8, 1x10
- 2b) Standing one arm dumbbell overhead press - 3x6-8, 1x10
- 3a) Plank - 3 x as long as possible
- 3b) Swings (with kettlebell or dumbbell) - 3x12-15

## Workout 2

- 1a) Dumbbell reverse lunge - 3x6-8, 1x12 each leg
- 1b) \*Push-up - 3x6-8, 1x12
- 1c) \*\*Inverted row - 3x6-8, 1x12
- 2a) Ab wheel rollout or reverse crunches - 3 x as many as possible
- 2b) Back extension – 3x12-15
- 3) Jump rope or bike intervals – sprint for 15-20 seconds, rest 60 seconds; perform a total of 6-8 intervals

\*If you can perform more than 6-8 bodyweight push-ups, add resistance via resistance bands, weight vest, chains, or a weight plate, or perform a more challenging push-up variation such as close-grip or feet elevated push-ups. If you can't perform traditional push-ups, elevate your hands on a sturdy bench, box, or a barbell set securely in a power rack; the higher your hands, the easier it will be.

\*\*I recommend using rings or a suspension trainer; if you don't have one, use a barbell set securely in a power rack or the smith machine.

### **Workout 3**

- 1) Rack pull or trap bar deadlift - 3x5, 1x8
  
- 2a) One arm dumbbell row - 3x8, 1x10-12
- 2b) Dumbbell bench press - 3x8, 1x10-12
  
- 3a) Reverse crunch - 3 x as many as possible
- 3b) Single leg Romanian deadlift (RDL) - 3x10-12 each leg

**Note!** If you only have dumbbells available or don't tolerate heavy barbell exercises, you can substitute dumbbell exercises for barbell exercises (for example, goblet squats instead of barbell squats, dumbbell RDLs instead of rack pulls or trap bar deadlifts, etc).

There's a chance you looked at the workouts above and thought, "That's *all* I'm supposed to do?" You're probably used to performing many more exercises in each workout and performing higher reps as well. **Your workouts shouldn't be about achieving a high state of fatigue.** In fact, you should finish the majority of your workouts feeling better and more energized than when you started.

Being tired doesn't mean you had a productive workout. What matters is that you worked hard on the basic exercises that produce the majority of the results and improve your performance over time.

Just remember . . .

### **The Best Exercises + Improved Performance + Consistency = Amazing Results**

If you want shapely legs, a nice butt, and an overall amazing looking body, then using workout programs like the one above will allow you to achieve those goals. Trust me, if this didn't work, I wouldn't tell you to do it.

And think of it this way: if this Sample Workout didn't produce awesome results, you'd never listen to me again. And I don't want that. ;) )

Keeping things simple and focusing on a few main exercises is the best way to build the body you truly want. That workout program may not look "sexy" or "innovative," but it works, and it works dang well.

Start today and you'll soon be a believer, too.

Now let's go over the specific workout instructions.

## Workout Instructions:

Perform each workout above once per week on nonconsecutive days. Something like Monday, Wednesday, and Friday works well if you want the weekends off.

In addition to performing the three workouts each week, apply the nutrition information on page 5 and you'll do incredibly well.

*If you don't get results and notice changes in your body, I'll completely eat my words.*

Seriously, if you apply all of the information in this Mini Course and don't achieve great results, you can call me a liar and fraud. I'm that confident in this information because I've used it with clients, and myself, for over 10 years.

### Here are the guidelines for the workouts:

- Perform each workout once per week, on nonconsecutive days (Workout 1 on Monday, Workout 2 on Wednesday, Workout 3 on Friday, for example)
- 3x6 and 1x12 means to perform 3 sets of 6 repetitions and to perform 1 set of 12 repetitions. Perform the 3x6 first and then finish up with 1x12
- Use the same weight for all 3 work sets for the 3x6
- Use a lighter weight for the 1x12
- For exercises that have a number beside them (1, 2, etc) do all the sets for that exercise before moving to the next one. For exercises with a number + letter (1a, 1b, etc) perform those exercises as a *superset*. Meaning, do a set of 1a, rest as needed, then do a set of 1b. Perform those exercises back-to-back until you complete the allotted number of sets.
- **Work hard and smart.** *You must use a challenging weight for each set of every exercise.* Meaning, you should have to focus completely on what you're doing and use a weight that allows you to perform two or three more reps than prescribed. For example, for exercises that have 3x6, use a weight that allows you to perform about 8 perfect reps, but no more. For a set of 12 reps, use a weight you could perform for approximately 14-15 reps.

And never, *ever*, sacrifice exercise form for more weight.

- **How to progress (remember, it's all about *improving your performance*):** most exercises in the workouts above have a rep range, for example 3x6-8 (3 sets, 6-8 reps). Use a challenging weight and begin at the *low* end of the rep range (6 reps, in this example). Stick with that weight until you can

perform the high end of the rep range (8, in this example). The next time you repeat the workout, increase the weight slightly and start over with 3x6, and repeat the process.

The most important thing is that you improve your performance whenever possible. Either perform more reps with the same weight (as just demonstrated in the previous example) or add more weight and perform the same number of reps as last time.

- **Start easy if necessary!** If you haven't strength trained before or are coming back after taking time off, start easy. You don't want to get brutally sore. The best thing to do is start by performing one or two sets for each exercise the first week. Then, if you didn't get too sore, you can add an extra set each week until you're performing the workouts as written. This is a great way to ease into the program.

Now that you know how to eat and work out like a Beautiful Badass, let's wrap up this Mini Course so you can get to work!

### **But wait! Want more workout options?**

If you can only perform two workouts per week or are more interested in workouts you can do at home with just your bodyweight and a suspension trainer, give these sample programs a try:

[Two Day Per Week Strength Training Program](#)

[Triple-Exercise Total Body Workouts](#)

[7 of The Best Bodyweight Exercises You Should be Doing](#)

# THE Most Important Thing

It all comes down to a single word - *action*.

All of the amazing information you've received in this Mini Course and additional recommended articles won't do a thing for your physique and overall health if you don't take action.

Why do most people fail?

*Because they don't apply what they learn.*

You can only succeed if you *take action*. And you know what to do because you got it all in this Mini Course. Oh, and you should take action *today*. Not tomorrow. Not on Monday. Not the beginning of next month. Not the New Year.

Start taking action *today*.

You have absolutely no excuses - the information is simple and stress-free. It's up to you to apply it. If you must, go back and re-read everything so you're comfortable with the information. And then DO it!

I can almost guarantee it's far easier and much more enjoyable than anything else you've tried before. Here's quick recap again of what you need to do:

- Eat simple and smart, as shown on page 5
- Strength train with the best exercises, as used in the sample workouts
- Improve your performance whenever possible, as shown in the workouts
- Make the goal to become the strongest, most awesome version of yourself

Do those four things, consistently, and you'll achieve phenomenal results and even have some fun along the way.

**So the question remains** - are you going to take *action*?

Your Beautiful Badass journey begins now. Welcome!

## Highly Recommended Articles

I truly hope you've enjoyed the Beautiful Badass Mini Course!

Please find below some additional articles on my website you should read. They'll provide you with additional insight on how you can achieve the results you want in the sanest and simplest way possible.

Please read these as soon as you get a chance.

[Exercise is Not Punishment And You Do Not Have to Earn Your Food](#) - The title says it all. If you've ever punished yourself with an extra workout because you overindulged, please read this.

[13 Ways Women Can be MORE, Not Less](#) - Health and fitness is not about striving relentlessly to weigh less, eat less, and just *be* less. Be more. Here you'll get 13 ways to do just that.

[Numbers Don't Define You](#) - I strongly believe every woman should read this article. It's a short read, so please check it out.

[Working Out Shouldn't Hurt And Your Diet Shouldn't be Miserable](#) - Misery and deprivation are not badges of honor and don't mean you're super dedicated. Being in pain or performing workouts that hurt is not a sign of "being hardcore." Those things are stupid.

[Stop Binge Eating – 33 Ways to Break Free](#) - Unfortunately, many people struggle with binge eating. Oftentimes this struggle was brought about from a diet that was very restrictive. If you battle binge eating, this article will, hopefully, help you.



## Want to Connect Further?

If you'd like to connect, ask questions, or share your Beautiful Badass journey, I'd love to connect! You can reach me at the following places online:

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

## The Lift Like a Girl Store

If you enjoyed the information in this Mini Course and the recommended articles, then you may want to check out the guides, workout programs, and books offered in the Lift Like a Girl Store.

There you'll find done-for-you programs that include exercise demonstration videos (so you know exactly how to properly perform every exercise) and much more so you can reach your goals.

Here are just a few of the most popular:

**The Lift Like a Girl Fat Loss Program** - This is not your typical fat loss program. There's no dieting or a long list of foods to avoid. In fact, when it comes to fat loss nutrition, you make just *one simple change* every four weeks, and you get to choose from a list of options. There's also a 3-phase workout program (includes exercise demonstration videos, printable workout logs, and more), a Success Guide, and everything you need to lose fat, and keep it off. Get ready to discover the empowering and, yes, *enjoyable* side of fat loss.

*"I own all of your training programs...I'm not exaggerating when I say it's changed my life...I've been doing your programs for the last 1.5 + years and have seen more progress in that time than any other." -Kerry K*

[Click here to get the Fat Loss Program details.](#)

**Train to be Awesome Guide** - This is the guide that started it all: working out is not punishment and isn't just about burning calories. It's about discovering what you're capable of doing, *and then doing more*. It's about becoming the strongest, most awesome version of yourself. This guide includes 40 weeks of workouts (8 Week Blast-Off Program, 16 Week Train to be Awesome Program, and 16 Week Advanced be Even MORE Awesome Program) and the Train to be Awesome Manual.

*"I just wanted to say a huge THANK YOU to Nia. I can't even put into words how grateful I am to her. The entire Lift Like A Girl program & info has saved me...I just wanted her to know she has changed my life and I've never been happier, healthier and more comfortable in my own skin." -Katherine*

[Click here to check out the Train to be Awesome Guide.](#)

**Better Body by Minimalism** - This was created for those who want to spend the least amount of time working out and thinking about nutrition, but don't want to sacrifice results. There are four done-for-you workout programs, the bare essentials of nutrition, and more. If you want to know what you *have to do*, and nothing else (no filler, no fluff), this is for you.

*"This fits my life ... This is what I needed to save my sanity."* -Sara E.

[Click here for additional details about Better Body by Minimalism.](#)

**Beautiful Badass Bodyweight Workout Guide** - This guide is all about achieving amazing results with bodyweight workouts. Whether you want to work out at home with minimum equipment, want a break or change of pace from weight lifting, or you need workouts you can do anywhere (when traveling or on vacation, for example) this is what you need.

*"I've been blown away by the way my body has changed in the last 7 weeks, and I'm excited to see how it will morph in the next 15 ... I am HOOKED!!!"* -Andriana S.

[Click here for a closer look at the Beautiful Badass Bodyweight Guide.](#)