

A blue-tinted, semi-transparent portrait of the same woman from the top image, looking to the left, serving as a background for the title text.

How to Count Macros

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Jump Start Guide

I understand that you may be eager to skip the how's and why's and get straight to what's. Perhaps you already know how to figure out your own macros. Maybe you're working with a coach who's prescribed you numbers.

As much as I'd like you to read this manual in full, I've included for you here a jump start guide so that

you can hit the ground running with your macro counting.

This should be enough to give you, at bare minimum, a pretty solid start.

I do hope, however, that you come back later on to review everything I've written out for you here.

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Introduction



Dear reader,

I hope this introduction finds you well. I hope this finds you healthy, but more importantly, happy. I hope this finds you optimistic about where you are at this point in your life and simultaneously hungry for more.

To be fair, I don't know what stage in your fitness journey you're at. Maybe you've been at it for years—a veteran gym rat, up and at 'em bright and early at 6 a.m. every single morning. Maybe you've just discovered weight lifting after stumbling across an inspiring photo of a fitness model whose physique you admire. Maybe you've dabbled in the weight room here and there but never really got into it. Maybe you've run over a dozen marathons, but still don't know how to get rid of that spare tire around your waist.

Maybe you know everything there is to know about exercise, yet have not the first clue when it comes to nutrition.

And maybe, just maybe you've discovered the importance of proper nutrition in getting you to your physique goals. Maybe you're wondering how

to get started and how to eat the right foods in the right amounts.

That's the reason why I've put together this book for you. I've poured many, many hours into this project after realizing just how many people out there were looking for guidance as to how to count their macros. While I would love the opportunity to sit down for an hour with every single one of you individually to walk you through the process, I know that's simply not practical for either one of us.

Naturally, writing this guide was the next best thing, compiling all of the relevant information ready for you to peruse in the comfort of your own home, subway, or work setting at whatever time is convenient for you.

As you likely already know, in order to lean out, you need to be eating at

a caloric deficit which simply means consuming fewer calories than your body requires to maintain its current weight. And the best way to do this, in my opinion, is to eat as much as you can get away with while still making progress. The most efficient way to achieve this is to use the most precise method out there—macro tracking.

This how-to guide will teach you how to count your macronutrients. This is an effortless way to eat what you want and still shed fat without wondering if you ate too much or not enough.

My goal is to enlighten you, to teach you an invaluable skill that you will be able to utilize for the remainder of your days. If I can show you how to be independent with your food, to not have to rely on a coach forever, then I have done my job.

Let me be clear: macro counting is not necessary to become lean. Many individuals have experienced a tremendous degree of success by practicing simple portion control and being smart about their food choices. There are hundreds of thousands of lean people all over the world who have no idea what four ounces of chicken looks like, nor do they care. Look at the people of Thailand, Japan, or any country with a relatively healthy

average BMI really (never mind the inaccuracy of said marker as a measure of health for now). Do you think they were really concerned about how many grams of protein they were ingesting relative to their total bodyweight? Probably not. There are plenty of ways to live a perfectly healthy lifestyle without ever touching a food scale.

With that being said, there are a number of valid reasons to at least be familiar with this method, which will be covered in the coming pages. At best, this will free you from the mindset of eat-less-weigh-less, and you will no longer be tempted to starve yourself every time you want to lean out. At worst, this will open your eyes to the nutritional value of foods you've been eating your entire life. Some of what you will learn may come as a shock to you (have you looked at the nutritional value of a single Oreo?) but will ultimately do you a world of good in the long run.

Good luck, Godspeed, and happy macro counting!

Remember, I'm always here.

*Yours in health,
Sohee Lee*



1

Why Macro Counting Trumps Meal Plans

There seems to be this ongoing debate over the virtues of prescribing meal plans versus assigning macronutrient numbers to follow. My first prep coach had me on a meal plan, after all, and I lost a good number of inches. And that's the point, isn't it?

Not quite.

Meal plans are a means to an end.

I'll admit that once upon a time, I also handed out meal plans to my online clients—customized meal plans suited to their individual preferences and lifestyles, but meal plans nonetheless. They liked them, and really, I don't blame them. All you have to do as a client is to procure the foods listed on your meal plan, cook everything up, and follow everything meal by meal. It's easy because you don't have to think about anything or understand how many calories or macros are in what amount of food. There's zero knowing; merely doing. Receive a plan and execute for two weeks. Send in a check-in, receive an update, and then execute yet again.

And therein lies the problem.

There's nothing sustainable about following a meal plan.

What if you run out of eggs one morning? What if the thought of chugging down another protein shake makes you sick to your stomach? What if you have to go out for dinner with some friends? What are you going to do?

Most people don't know any other way except to doggedly stick to the program. Which is great from an adherence standpoint (here's a gold sticker for your superb effort!), but it fails miserably when it comes to being able to still enjoy your quality of life. I've squandered too many nights in the past turning down dinners and social outings with friends because I was afraid to eat anything besides chicken, broccoli, and almonds as my last meal of the day. I was too scared to let anything get in the way of my reaching my fitness goals and ultimately being happy—because oooobviously True Happiness lies waiting patiently in a pot of gold at the end of the Rainbow of Lean Bodies (that's totally not true, by the way). Family vacation? No thanks—I'd rather sit at home by myself and prepare my own meals everyday. Best friend's wedding? I'm so tempted to back out because

I don't know how to manage myself with all the wedding food around me.

Additionally, following a meal plan keeps you dependent on your coach. Why? Because you have to continue going back to her for a different meal plan each time you have a different goal. An irresponsible coach—or an incredibly money-hungry, business-savvy coach, depending on how you look at it—will push this on her clients because it means continued business. **Knowledge is power**, and she wants you to have none of it. So there's you, with no understanding of food or macronutrients or calories after months and months of being on this fitness program, and there's apparently no foreseeable end to your working relationship with your coach. She likes keeping you in the dark because it's easier for her. After all, going out and recruiting clients is hard work, and why would she want to do that?

Then comes the art of macro counting. (It's totally a skill, by the way.) The greatest benefit from learning how to count your macros is that it teaches you how to think for yourself. I know, I know—we all want the results without having to do any of the thinking, right? But your eating should not be a crutch. By learning what foods can substitute for what, how to fit your beloved treats

into your day, how to navigate your way around an evening meal out with your coworkers without messing up your entire day—by learning how to do all of this, the probability of your attaining your fitness goals and having them last becomes exponentially higher.

Fat loss in and of itself is not a complicated process, but it sure as hell isn't easy, either. So why should you make it harder than it needs to be by restricting yourself to a meal plan? Say, for example, you were preparing dinner and a handful of grapes jumped into your mouth. But meal 4 of the day calls for 150g brown rice and 5oz chicken. So, uhh... oops. You obviously didn't follow the rules. Might as well just call it a wash for the day and dip into that Haagen Daz for dinner, right?

You don't have to admit that you've done something similar; I know I certainly have. **When you fall off the wagon, it's hard to get back on.** I get that. And there's certainly appeal in the idea of starting over tomorrow—or next Monday, or next week, or next month, or even next year (what's up, New Year's Resolvers! Yeah, I know you're hiding). You want to start fresh with a clean slate and take perfect steps along the way.

But guess what? A little 200-Calorie oopsie is hardly going to put a dent into your progress; a 3,000-calorie eating bender, however, will surely set you back. All that hard work you put in over the past week? Yeah, that's gone now. One step forward, five steps back. Well done.

What I'm trying to say here is this: just because you slipped up a little bit doesn't mean that you've failed. And if you're counting your macros, you've hardly messed up; all you need to do, then, is adjust your food choices for the remainder of the day and you can still come in on target by day's end.

Would a meal plan allow you to do that? Nope.

Counting macros takes your needs into account.

How often are clients prescribed white fish and broccoli to eat day in and day out? After a (short) while, it's not uncommon to grow to hate said foods. You used to love seared halibut? Now the mere thought of it makes you gag (sort of like tequila, hmmm...) and you dread your meals.

And what about that incredible fit recipe you saw on a blog the other day? Protein flapjacks, physique-friendly grilled cheese, hamburger salad.... Does it really make sense to say no to these foods because "it's not on your meal plan"?

Look. There's nothing inherently magical about chicken and green beans. So if you want to try out a new food or a new recipe—go ahead. You're not going to wake up with an extra tire around your waist tomorrow. Have at it. Fit it into your macros. And don't you dare let yourself feel any guilt over it.

Fitness, remember, is not a temporary fix. Indeed, if you want lasting results—that is, leanness 365 days out of the year (yes, it's possible) and a body that will turn heads—you need to fully grasp the fact that fitness is for life, not just this week or this month.

If you think that meal plans are fine because you're not looking for a long-term solution, I regret to inform you that you're misunderstanding the point of fitness. Dieting down for a bikini show and letting your prep consume your life—that is not living. That's not worth whatever trophy or ripped abs you may or may not win.



2

What's
A Macro?

I get this question time and time again. What is this concept of “counting macros”? What are macros?

“Macros” is short for “macronutrients”. These macronutrients are comprised of protein, carbohydrates, and fats. These are nutrients that the body requires in large amounts. Macronutrients are not to be confused with micronutrients, which are vitamins and minerals such as iron, zinc, vitamin C, and vitamin D that are needed in minute quantities.

Protein is perhaps the most essential macronutrient and is king in any fitness nut’s book. Important for muscle repair and muscular hypertrophy, it also plays a crucial role in catalyzing biochemical reactions, DNA repair, maintaining the structural and functional integrity of cells, and much more.

Insufficient protein will yield muscle loss, especially when in a caloric deficit. It is therefore important to prioritize protein above all else, and it is not uncommon for some individuals to consume far more protein than carbohydrates or fats.

The primary sources of protein are animal-based—think meats, poultry, and eggs. As such, it is necessarily more difficult for vegetarians and vegans to get sufficient protein in their diet without resorting heavily to soy-based products.

Carbohydrates are the body’s main energy source and serve as a direct fuel source during activities that require energy expenditure. They are important in both physical as well as mental exercises. (In other words, the brain needs carbohydrates to function at optimal capacity!)

Carbs are often broken down into simple or complex forms. Simple carbs are easily broken down by the digestive system and provide quick-release energy: candy, juice, soda, and the like. Complex carbs, on the other hand, are more difficult to digest and consequently are broken down and released much more slowly into the bloodstream: think brown rice, sweet potatoes, and quinoa.

Fats, despite their reputation, are critical for the body to function properly. Important for quality skin and hair, they promote healthy cell function as well as provide cushioning for the body’s joints and organs.

Essential fatty acids (EFAs) cannot be synthesized by the human body and must therefore be ingested via food. Foods high in EFAs include fish, shellfish, walnuts, and sunflower seeds.

Finally, we come to **calories**. The technically correct term is kilocalories, or Calories with a capital “C”, though

for the sake of colloquial speak, we'll stick with the better recognized spelling. A kilocalorie is the amount of energy required to raise the temperature of one kilogram of water by one degree Celsius. When we measure the number of calories in a certain food, then we are attempting to ascertain how much energy it contains.

The three macronutrients by definition have a specific number of calories per gram.

Protein: 4 calories/gram
Carbohydrates: 4 calories/gram
Fats: 9 calories/gram

Then you also have things like **fiber**, which is a subset of carbohydrates, clocking in at approximately **2 calories/gram**. And even **alcohol**, in its own separate group as a sugar alcohol, contains **7 calories/gram**.

So if you consume 150g protein, 150g carbohydrates, and 50g fats on a given day, you have by definition consumed:

$$150(4) + 150(4) + 50(9) = 1650 \text{ calories}$$

To “count your macros,” then, means that you track the total number of grams of proteins, carbohydrates, and fats you ingest over the course of an entire day. Oftentimes, people will simply use the notation “150/180/50” as a shortcut to say that they have either consumed 150g protein, 180g carbs, and 50g fats, or that those are the numbers they have been prescribed. Macro counting is typically associated not with simply tracking your intake, but tracking them with the intention of meeting said prescribed numbers.

Now that we've got that covered, I've included for you a list of the more commonly consumed wholesome food items categorized by macronutrient. This is by no means comprehensive, but should at least give you a pretty good idea of what's what.

Protein

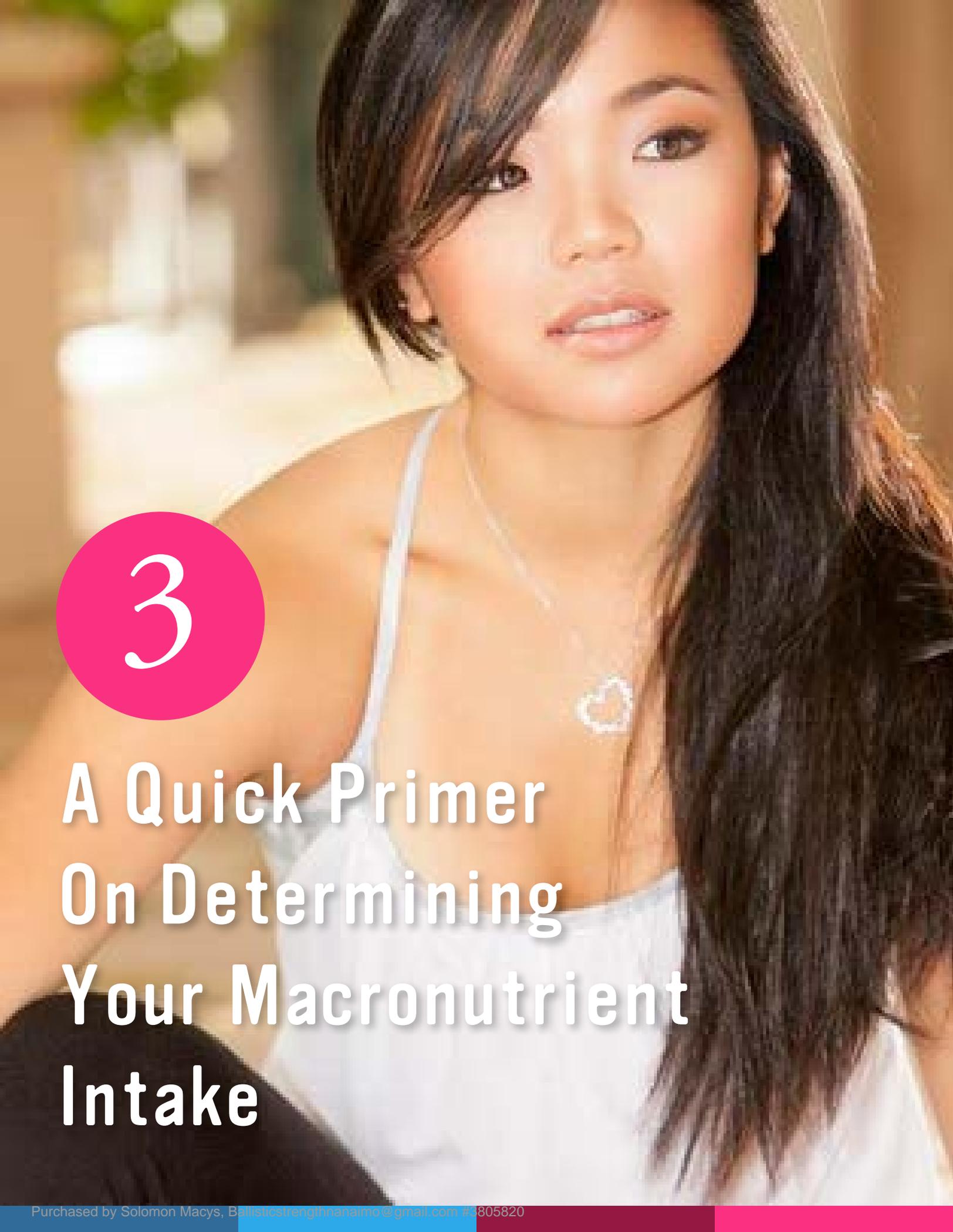
- » Egg whites
- » Whole eggs
- » Greek yogurt
- » Chicken breast
- » Turkey breast
- » Pork tenderloin
- » Canned tuna
- » Cottage cheese
- » Extra lean ground beef
- » Top round steak
- » Top sirloin steak
- » Flank steak
- » White fish (cod, halibut, haddock, mahi mahi, tilapia, etc.)
- » Salmon
- » Protein powder

Carbohydrates

- » Old-fashioned oatmeal
- » Brown rice
- » Jasmine rice
- » Couscous
- » Quinoa
- » Ezekiel bread
- » Sweet potatoes/yams
- » Squash (all varieties)
- » White/Russet potatoes
- » Fibrous vegetables
- » Fruit

Fat

- » Extra virgin olive oil
- » Extra virgin coconut oil
- » Fish oil
- » Ghee
- » Grass-fed butter
- » Natural almond butter
- » Natural cashew butter
- » Natural peanut butter
- » Natural coconut butter
- » Mixed nuts (almonds, walnuts, pecans, brazil nuts, cashews, etc.)
- » Cheese (full fat varieties only)
- » Avocado
- » Coconut milk



3

A Quick Primer On Determining Your Macronutrient Intake

You may or may not have your macros figured out already. If you've got a coach of your own providing you with numbers, that's great. You can skip this part. Otherwise, if you're navigating the waters on your own, you might find this section useful. I've adapted the following—from an article originally published on my website—to suit your needs.

You're frustrated as all hell because there's so much conflicting information out there. Never eat more than 1,000 calories; carbs are the devil; absolutely no dairy or fruit; switch up your foods every day to confuse your body; never, ever let any food pass your lips after 6p.m. (thanks for that one, Oprah).

I find macronutrient percentages to be useless, to be frank, especially when provided without any context. I've had people ask me for my opinion on their diet that was a "40/30/30" p/c/f split. Well, buddy, I'd love to help you out there, but you're really not telling me anything. For example, how many total calories are you consuming? If you're only getting in 100g total, that's 40g protein, 30g carbs, and 30g fat. Not enough. Or if you're consuming 3000 calories—alright, but relative to your bodyweight, what is that...?

There are a number of ways to do this,

but below is the approach that I've been using for some years. I've done my research, I've applied the knowledge to myself and with my clients, and it works.

Here's my way to skin the fat loss cat.

Determining Your Dieting Calories

My overarching principle with dieting is this: consume as many calories as you can while still making progress. In other words, if you can lose fat on 1600 calories, why would you jump to 1200 calories from the get-go? That leaves very little room to cut calories from as progress inevitably slows down. I know you want the results yesterday, but you need to think of your long-term vision. Generally, the slower the progress, the more lasting the results will be. So be patient. The time will pass anyway.

Take your bodyweight (bw for short) in pounds and multiply by anywhere between 12-14. If you are extremely active in your day-to-day-life (e.g. your job involves you lifting heavy things for several hours a day), then start at the top end. If you're pretty much sedentary save for the time you spend in the gym, you'll want to begin at 12x. The number you get will be the total number of calories you are to consume per day,

on average. While I was first taught that the dieting range should begin at 12xbw for all individuals, I've since learned that our bodies can actually get away with eating a bit more than that.

Let's use the example of Jane Doe. Hypothetical Doe is 31 years old, 5'4", 140lbs, and would like to get rid of her muffin top. She is a school teacher, which means she spends a couple of hours standing and walking throughout the day. Moderately active, we'll say. She's got no health complications, stress levels are normal, and she weight trains four days a week. She's made an effort to eat whole foods most of the time, but hasn't been tracking her food intake

at all. She drinks wine a few nights a week and consumes a junk food meal three or four days a week. Judging by her (hypothetical) pictures, she is a mesomorph—meaning she's got broad shoulders, fat distributed more or less evenly throughout her body (i.e. she's not apple or pear-shaped), and has a good amount of muscle mass. She's also notified that historically she's been able to build muscle fairly well, but can just as easily pile on fat if she's not careful.

Given the above information, I would start her off as 13xbw. That would put her at 1,820 calories to start out.

Name	Height / Weight	Activity Level / Body Type	Total # Calories
Jane Doe	5'4" / 140lbs	Moderately active / Mesomorph	140lbs x 13 = 1,820 Calories

Determining Your Macronutrients

Before I continue, let's remember:

Protein: 4 calories/gram
Carbohydrates: 4 calories/gram
Fats: 9 calories/gram

For the sake of convenience (and everyone's familiarity), I'm referring to kilocalories (or Calories) simply as "calories," even though technically it's not the correct definition. This is simply the term that is tossed around colloquially.

Protein will be your most important macronutrient. In general, a minimum of 1.0g protein/lb of bodyweight is a solid starting point. I personally like

to go a bit higher than that—up to 1.5g/lb bodyweight if I can—for the sake of maintaining my hard-earned muscle mass. The harder you diet (i.e. the greater your calorie deficit), the more crucial protein becomes and the more weight you'll want to give it.

At a current bodyweight of 140lbs, then Jane Joe's protein intake would be set at 140g.

You'll hear different opinions about what intake of carbohydrates is optimal. Your carbohydrate number here will depend on a multitude of factors, including how well your body tolerates carbs, how much you like carbohydrates relative to fats, your body type, and how physically active you are. The more exercise you're doing, the more carbs you're going to need.

So, you can have linear carbs, in which case I'd recommend anywhere between 1.0 – 1.3g carbohydrates/lb of bodyweight. Otherwise if you're carb-cycling, you can go as high as 2.0g/lb of bodyweight with trace carbs on your off days.

Jane Doe isn't doing anything crazy in the gym—just the basic heavy lifting plus a few shorter metabolic sessions thrown in here and there—so I would go ahead and give her 1.1xbw grams of

carbohydrates for her training days.

$$140 \times 1.1 = 154\text{g carbohydrates}$$

Last is fats (though no less important). Try to stick mostly to full-fat sources: nuts, nut butters, extra virgin olive oil, full-fat cheese, avocados, etc. The number of grams of fat you consume will simply be whatever remaining calories you have divided by 9. The way it works out, you'll likely have more fats on days you're not lifting.

For Jane Doe, her math would yield the following:

Total calories

1,820

Calories from protein

$$140 \times 4 = 560$$

Calories from carbs

$$154 \times 4 = 616$$

Remaining calories

$$\text{calories from fats} = 1,820 - 560 - 616 = 644$$

And 644 calories worth of fats is the equivalent of 71.6g. This means that her overall training day macros are:

140g protein
154g carbs
72g fats
1,820 calories

Note that I refer to a training day as strictly a day in which heavy strength training is performed. This does not include intervals or steady-state cardio days.

For Jane Doe's off days, then I want to keep her carbohydrate intake from dropping too low still since she is not working a sedentary job (i.e. her body could use the carbs even on days when she's not training), so I'll set her carbs at $0.8 \times \text{bw}$ or so.

Using the same math above and using an isocaloric approach, her off day macros would be:

140g protein
112g carbs
90g fats
1,820 calories

Adjusting and Tweaking

If you're not keeping track of your progress, your dieting efforts will be for naught. Whether it be using the mirror, your bodyweight (in combination with body measurements, especially the waist), body fat calipers (which are by and large inaccurate for the most part, by the way), or that dress you wore at prom all those years ago, find some way to assess how you're trucking along. I very strongly urge you to take progress pictures at least every month—this will keep you honest.

As much as I wish this were the case, the calculations above will likely not be perfect for you. You'll probably either overestimate or underestimate your calorie needs in the first few weeks, and that's okay. This will depend largely on a number of factors, including but not limited to: your dieting history, blood work, genetics, and activity level. Before you flip out and change your macronutrient numbers every other day, give it a solid two weeks. If you want to get on the scale daily, then by all means go ahead—just as long as you don't have an emotional attachment to whatever number is coughed up.

Some of you will be genetic freaks and will find that you drop weight surprisingly easily. If this is so, then you may need to bump up your

intake by a couple hundred calories. The less fortunate will have to shave off more calories than the average individual to see the scale budge.

A good rate of fat loss is 0.5-2.0lbs/week. The leaner you are, the slower you want to diet lest you lose some muscle mass. For heavier, obese folks, a slightly faster rate is fine. But if you're dropping something insane like 10lbs a week, you're probably not eating enough and chances are, you've lost some precious muscle. This isn't The Biggest Loser; this is real life. We want to establish healthy, sustainable lifestyle habits.

If, after two weeks, you've made solid progress, then don't bother changing your numbers just yet. There's no point in decreasing your calories further if they're working for you. Once you find that your progress has slowed a bit, that's when you can go back to the drawing board and adjust. Take the calories (anywhere from 100-300) away from either your carbohydrates or fats; leave your protein intact or even increase it ever so slightly.

I don't like getting anywhere lower than 10xbw for dieting calories, and for most individuals, I don't think anyone will ever need to get to that point. If you're past the point of "pretty lean,"

however (and by this I mean easily visible abs for men and a nice ab outline for women), you'll want to incorporate some re-feeds into your plan to up-regulate some hormones that have gone wonky from the chronic low calories.

...and Everything Else

There's nothing wrong with some dairy in and of itself, and nobody ever got fat from eating fruit. Hell, one of my favorite meals as of late has been 500g of thawed berries mixed with 1 scoop vanilla casein powder.

The meal timing myth is bogus. Simply focus on consuming most of your calories in the post-workout window (especially your carbs). If you're training fasted, as many of you intermittent fasting folks are wont to do (myself included), then be sure to get in some BCAAs.

Eat the damn egg yolk. Whole milk is great. Some simple sugars are fine, too.

Keep it simple, sucka! There's no need to overcomplicate the process. The simpler you choose to make dieting be for yourself, the smoother the ride will be.



The Macro-Counting Details

Determining Your Meal Frequency

Here's where things can get a little, uhh, feisty. As recently as 10 years ago, we (meaning all of us in the fitness world) were all about consuming five to six small meals a day to “stoke the metabolic fire.” Every time we ate, we believed our bodies burned calories to process and digest that food—so naturally, the more frequently we ate, the more calories we'd burn, and ultimately the leaner we'd become. Bodybuilders and regular fitness enthusiasts alike proudly toted around coolers filled with Tupperware and plastic utensils. Never mind the inconvenience of it all; the truly dedicated let no obstacle stand in the way of their fitness goals. We turned our noses up at the “ignorant” who stuck to three square meals. In our eyes, they were deemed lazy, stupid, and so obviously doomed to failure with their sluggish metabolisms. We pitied those fools. They were destined to stay unfit and never know what it would be like to be chiseled; we, on the other hand, were on top of the world. Even though we were oftentimes left feeling unsatisfied at the end of each bite-sized meal. Even though taking a break from life's activities six times a day really used up a lot of precious time and made us crabby. Even though we missed the sensation of feeling full, we

knew that this is what it took to realize our fitness hopes and aspirations.

In fact, many of us were so dogmatic in our beliefs that we went so far as to furiously bang away at our keyboards at whomever tried to tell us we were wrong. We, the mighty Keyboard Warriors, wielded our virtual swords when anyone would question the validity of the six-meals claim. How brave and valiant we were.

Then came the intermittent fasting (IF) craze. Brad Pilon pioneered the way into the world of intermittent fasting with his book, *Eat Stop Eat*. Martin Berkhan, Daniel Kiefer, and others shortly followed suit. All touted their best methods of intermittent fasting, and all had varying degrees of success.

And while I could delve into the pros and cons of intermittent fasting and tell you all about it, that's not the point of why you're here, is it? But anyway, if you're interested, I've whipped something up for you over here. Then you can find out if intermittent fasting is for you by checking out this piece.

So back to what I was saying. At one extreme, we still have individuals who are die-hard breakfast aficionados and prefer to distribute their meals evenly all throughout the day. Then

there are those who get pissed off at the mere thought of tiny snacks. (I happen to fall into the latter category, if you must know.) And yes, while there are benefits and drawbacks to either method, we could waste a lot of time splicing up the scientific evidence supporting this and that theory.

To be honest with you, however, I don't think any of us are here right now because we want to comb through research findings. And to be even more frank, it is my humble opinion that the science isn't quite as important as the function of practicality. That is, which way of eating is going to be most practical for my lifestyle and my personal needs? Which method is going to put me on the path of least resistance?

After all, as I mentioned before, dieting is not an easy process. And while there are the fundamentals of fat loss that must be respected, there are certainly multiple ways to skin a cat.

What does this mean? This means that you should eat however many number of meals you deem as most appropriate for you.

I know, I know—you were hoping I'd give you a hard and fast answer. But which way is best, you ask.

Going back to science for a second here, I'll tell you what the research findings show.

In terms of protein intake, there's the question of how many grams per sitting is optimal (i.e. what will yield the highest benefit) for muscle building. Despite what you may have read or heard about the body only being able to process X grams of protein at a time, there is no truth to this.

Here is a summary of Dr. Layne Norton's research:

- Protein should be distributed equally across four or five meals separated by between four to six hours each in order to maximize the muscle protein synthesis (MPS) response
- Consumption of a leucine (amino acid) supplement in between meals may aid in MPS optimization
- Each meal should contain between 30 to 45g protein to maximize anabolism as well as 3 to 4g leucine

With all of that said, however, some of you may find that you're experiencing a lot of resistance with the above meal frequency. If that's the case, then that's okay. Eat three meals a day. Or six. Or two meals and two smaller snacks. Just keep it consistent.

What I mean by this is that if you've decided to have four meals a day, then stick with that everyday. Do your best to eat at approximately the same times everyday as well. Doing otherwise can wreak havoc on your metabolism—more so than any specific meal frequency.

What You Need

Food scale

I used to be one of those people, too: rolling my eyes at people who used a food scale at home, thinking they were neurotic and going unnecessarily too far with their diet. I thought I was just fine with measuring cups. After all, if the back of the box said a half cup of oats was 150 calories, then I could pile on as many oats onto the measuring cup as I possibly could and all of that would constitute 150 calories, wouldn't it? But no. You may be able to get away with a lot by measuring your food by volume, but you'd only be shortchanging yourself. Take the extra little step to get a hold of a food scale and be as precise as you can about what you're consuming.

And don't forget that weighing your food keeps you honest. If you're particularly hungry one day, for example, are you

more likely to be tempted to give yourself an overly generous “half cup” of oats that morning? Or perhaps you'll go so far as to insist that “one tablespoon” of peanut butter means carefully balancing half the jar on the biggest spoon you can find in your kitchen. Absolutely.

Protein Distribution

This has been covered before, but it's worth bringing up again. For simplicity's sake—also, science tells us so—it's recommended you take your total protein intake for the day and divide it by however many meals you'll be consuming.

It doesn't have to be exact, of course; there will necessarily be fluctuations from meal to meal, and attempting to get everything down to the very gram will make you neurotic.

If you have 25g of protein for lunch and then 40g of protein for dinner, don't sweat it too much.

And again, sipping on BCAAs in between meals can aid in the anabolic process.

Carbs & Fats

Different fitness professionals will tell you different things here, but here is my recommendation: consume your carbs around your workouts. That means your pre- and post-workout meals should contain the majority of your carbs for the day. If you're training in the evening, for example, and you're eating four meals a day, most of your carbs should fall in the last two meals.

By default, then, your fats should be spread out through the remaining, non-peri-workout meals.

To make it even clearer, if you don't get to the gym until 6p.m., a typical day for you might look like the following:

8:00am: protein + fats
 12:00pm: protein + fats
 4:00p.m.: protein + carbs
 (6:00-7:00p.m.: training)
 7:30pm: protein + carbs

Some of you may be under the assumption that a protein and carb meal means zero grams of fats—absolutely none. That is not the case, and will be virtually impossible to accomplish. Please don't take me literally. You'll rip your hair out trying to achieve this, which defeats the purpose of counting macros in the first place.

Remember, *these are loose guidelines*, not strict black-and-white rules. You're not a failure if you deviate from these fundamentals from day to day. You're allowed to be flexible—and in fact, I encourage you to bend the rules. More on this in a bit.

Flexible Macro Counting

I understand that the thought of counting your macros everyday into the indefinite future can seem daunting. At first glance, you may think it's restrictive. But I promise you that once you truly grasp the whole premise of counting macronutrients, you'll realize that it's far from restrictive. On the contrary, it's incredibly freeing.

First, a food scale costs \$20 bucks. If you find a good brand (I recommend [this one](#)), it'll last you for a solid number of years.



Second, weighing food takes only a couple of extra seconds. If you're smart about your food planning and you can prep your meals ahead of time, even better. I know that it can feel awkward and neurotic in the beginning, but trust me when I say that soon enough, you won't even be thinking twice about whipping out that food scale.

From a practical standpoint, however, it can get tricky. No one eats every single meal at home. Especially if you're a busy working professional, chances are good that you eat out more often than not. But before your heart drops at the thought of having to pull your food scale out of a purse in the middle

of an elaborate business dinner and interrogate the waiter on the exact ingredients in your dish, fear not.

Enter flexible dieting.

The good thing about repeating a pattern of behavior over and over is that once you execute it enough times, it becomes habit. Now, this could be anything from stepping out of the shower with your right foot first to biting your nails, but for this example, let's say we're weighing out some grilled chicken breast; 85 grams worth, to be exact.

Eighty-five grams of chicken is the equivalent of 3oz. You may or may not use this as your standard serving size of chicken. But the point is this: you'll weigh your 85 grams of chicken time and time again, until soon, you'll be able to eyeball your portion and get it almost exactly right.

The same goes for just about any other food you eat regularly. If you weigh something enough times, there will come a point when it'll be second nature.

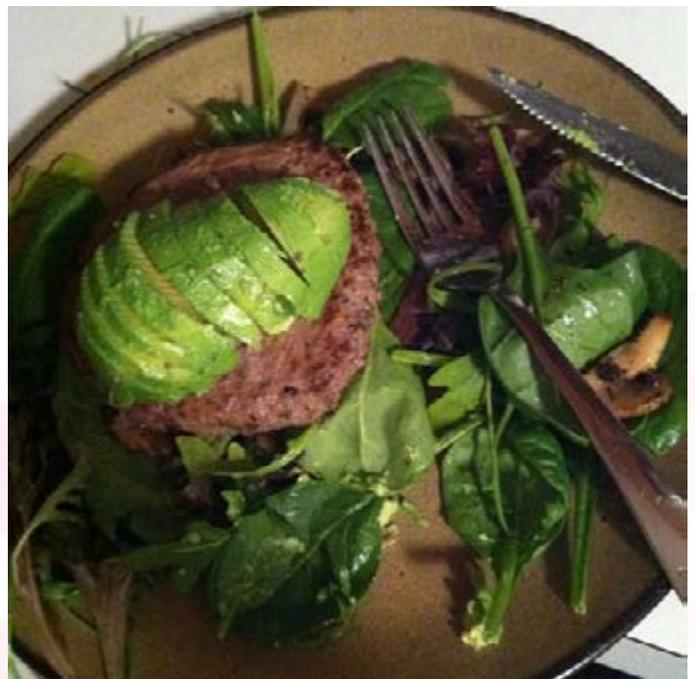
What If I'm Going Out?

The anxiety can get overwhelming sometimes—this much I know. The thought that you won't be able to control what and how much food is put on your plate can be paralyzing. There's an odd sort of comfort in knowing exactly how many grams of food you've consumed yesterday, how much you've eaten so far today, and what's on the menu tomorrow. You feel large and in charge of your behavior, and nothing's going to stand in the way of you and your goal.

So when your friends invite you out for a Friday night wine and cheese tasting, you fumble for an excuse to stay in. When your annual family vacation rolls around, you consider dropping out at the last minute to steer clear of all the desserts (and bread!). When you find yourself out of the house longer than planned and you have no food on hand, you panic.

Except it doesn't have to be that way—nor should it.

Again, flexible dieting comes to the rescue. Nowadays, I don't often turn down lunch or dinner plans with friends—and if I do, it's because I've already made prior commitments, not because I'm being a stickler about my diet. It's taken me a long time to get to this point, and it is my hope



that I can save you the years of pain that I went through so you can live a happy, fulfilling life—now.

Use the following pointers as you charge ahead:

Save up your macros.

Let's say you're going out for dinner tonight, but you'll be able to eat your own meals in the morning and afternoon. Are you going out to a restaurant you're particularly fond of that serves amazing bread that can't be passed up? Or maybe you have no idea what kind of food will be available. Save up your "fun" macros—meaning your carbs and fats—for your evening meal, and stick to mostly protein throughout the day. Chances are good that your dinner will consist of way more carbs and fats and way less protein than

normal, so this will be a solid way to balance out your macros. I typically like to save around 100g carbs and 40g fats. Most times I don't use up all the numbers, though, which is great because once I get home I can easily catch up on my macros.

Always think protein first.

Approximately 20-45 grams of protein should be the primary component of every meal. Whether it's 3 (or more) eggs, 4oz of chicken breast, or a scoop of protein powder, don't miss this. If you need to ask for double meat on your salad, go right ahead. Just be polite about it. If you're itching for a fattier cut of meat, that's fine as long as you have the macro allotment to fit it in. This will typically mean you should stay away from pasta, pizza, etc. dishes in which carbs or fats are by definition the primary component of the meal.

Stick to foods you know.

It's a good idea to err on the side of caution and order foods that make a regular appearance in your diet. Variety may be the spice of life, but routine is good,

too. Routine is dependable; routine is reliable. And when you're in an unfamiliar environment, you should control what you can. Chicken, steak, fish—all good things. Rice, potatoes, fibrous veggies—great.

Overestimate portion sizes.

Unless you're deep into contest prep and you have absolutely no wiggle room, I wouldn't recommend carrying a food scale around with you. You're human; you're allowed to have a life outside of the kitchen and the gym. Really. With that said, if you get an order of salmon and jasmine rice, eyeball your portions. By now, you should have had enough practice at home to be able to roughly guesstimate portion sizes. And when in doubt, overestimate the amount of everything that's on your plate. Does that chicken look like it could be 4 or 5oz? Go with 5. And that rice—maybe $\frac{3}{4}$ cup? Just say 1 cup.





Planning the Next Day's Meals

Now that we've got the basics out of the way, let's get into the meat of things. This is perhaps the most important section of this book, as it is here you will learn how to properly track your macros.

First and foremost: you must absolutely plan ahead. Whether it be the night before or the Sunday before (if you prefer to have the entire week mapped out), planning will ensure that by the time you chomp down on the last bite of your last meal of the day, you'll be spot on with your macros. In other words, you won't be left 30g over on carbs and wondering how you'll fix it (answer: you can't, so just move on). Or perhaps worse, you won't be caught 80g under on protein and faced with choking down three protein shakes just to meet your quota.

Imagine you've been invited over to a friend's house and she's given you her home address. You've never been to her part of town, and quite frankly, you have no idea where it is relative to your own humble abode. Ah well, you tell yourself. I'll just figure it out along the way and hope I'm right. So you strap on your seatbelt and drive around—an arbitrary left turn over here, maybe a right turn at that traffic light ahead, and then a U-turn half a mile down the road... just because. After a solid hour of driving around, you finally pull over on the side of the road and pull out your

GPS. You plug in her address and brace yourself as the navigator loads. And....

...Oops, you are now two hours away. A quick calculation reveals that had you used the GPS from the get-go, the commute would have been less a mere half hour away.

Oh.

But now, with rush hour hitting, the dinner will be long over by the time you make it there. Now you have no choice but to call her and share the bad news before making your pathetic way back home. What a waste of an evening.

Oh.

Better to map out your route beforehand before zipping down the freeway in any old direction.

So back to what we were saying.

Your name is Jane Doe (remember her from earlier?). You're lying down on your couch, iPhone in hand. You typically eat four meals a day; tomorrow will be no different. You think about what foods you have readily available, what foods you want to eat tomorrow, and what your schedule will look like (remember you're a schoolteacher and you don't train until 6p.m.).

140g protein
154g carbs
72g fats

Going back to our guidelines from above, we're going to want more or less the same amount of protein in each meal, which gives us 35g each. Let's say 30-40g as a reasonable target range.

Next we have our carbs. We want our carbs consumed primarily around our workouts, so maybe 50g in Meal

3, 50g in Meal 4 (that'll be the post-workout meal), and the remaining 54g spread over Meal 1 and Meal 2.

Finally we have our fats. We want to keep fat intake low around our workout so as not to interfere with nutrient absorption, so let's keep it at 5-8g maximum in those meals. That leaves us with about 65 grams of fats to split over Meals 1 and Meals 2.

To summarize a rough meal-by-meal target, then, we have:

Meal 1	Meal 2	Meal 3	Meal 4
30-40g protein	30-40g protein	30-40g protein	30-40g protein
25g carbs	25g carbs	50g carbs	50g carbs
33g fats	33g fats	5-8g fats	5-8g fats



Now, before I move on, I want to emphasize that there are multiple ways of going about this. You can track protein first, you can plan one whole meal before moving on to the next, you can piece everything together like a puzzle.

Below I'm going to outline my way of the step-by-step process.

- 1) One meal at a time.
- 2) Protein first.
- 3) Then "fun" treats.
- 4) Fill in the rest of the macros.

For sanity's sake, we'll consider +/-5g for each macronutrient to be on plan. That gives us some wiggle room to work with without veering too far off the path.

Meal 1, more commonly known as breakfast, is the hardest meal for you because you never have an appetite that early in the morning. The best you can stomach is something quick and easy, which means you typically opt for a Quest bar (20g protein) and a mini protein shake (17g) made with water and half a scoop of protein

powder to help you wash down your morning supplements. Weird, perhaps, but it works for you.

You also use half & half in your coffee without fail. Let's say 2tbsp just to be conservative. And fish oil because if you don't pop them first thing, you're likely to forget later on.

So far, here's what you've got for Meal 1, as well as the running totals compared to the target numbers:

Meal 1 Foods	Current Numbers	Target Numbers
1 Quest bar	35g protein	30-40g protein
½ serving protein powder	23g carbs	25g carbs
1tbsp half & half creamer	17g fats	33g fats
6 fish oil capsules		

Not bad. You're a little under on fats, though, so you toss in some almonds (a quality fat source) to obtain the following numbers:

Meal 1 Foods	Current Numbers	Target Numbers
1 Quest bar	39g protein	30-40g protein
½ serving protein powder	27g carbs	25g carbs
1tbsp half & half creamer	27g fats	33g fats
20g almonds		
6 fish oil capsules		

Looks better. Let's move on.

Meal 2 will have to be a quick one, something you can easily chomp down on in between classes. With your macro allotment for that meal, you see that a salad of some sort will be perfect for this time. You choose chicken breast as your protein of choice. For fats, maybe half an avocado and some bacon if you can afford it. Your carbs will consist of a plethora of colorful veggies—yum!

You play around on your food app for a few seconds and learn that 100g chicken breast makes up about 30g of protein, which is about where you want to be. From there, you add in half an avocado and one slice of bacon (remember, you're just guessing here) and for veggies, you peek into your fridge and add in a mix of whatever you have handy: butter lettuce (your favorite!), bell peppers, shredded carrots, and shredded beets. You love your veggies, so you don't hold back.

Meal 2 Foods	Current Numbers	Target Numbers
100g chicken breast	44g protein	30-40g protein
½ avocado	20g carbs	25g carbs
2 slices bacon	25g fats	33g fats
2 cups butter lettuce		
2 cups assorted fibrous veggies		

Not perfect, but not too shabby either. You decide to leave the numbers as is for now and return to tweak this meal later if you have to.

Now on to your pre-workout meal. This one's going to be primarily protein and carbs. Pulled pork tenderloin and jasmine rice. Easy.

Meal 3 Foods	Current Numbers	Target Numbers
115g pork tenderloin	37g protein	30-40g protein
200g jasmine rice	44g carbs	50g carbs
	8g fats	5-8g fats

So far so good. And for your post-workout meal, you know you'll want something quick but also sweet, as that's when your sweet tooth tends to kick in.

A scoop of whey protein will go well here alongside your post-workout (PWO) treat of choice: Lucky Charms cereal.

Meal 4 Foods	Current Numbers	Target Numbers
1 scoop whey protein	31g protein	30-40g protein
54g Lucky Charms cereal, dry measure	47g carbs	50g carbs
	5g fats	5-8g fats

That wraps up the rough draft of your four meals for tomorrow, and it's taken you all of two minutes. You know you're off by a couple of grams for each macronutrient, and you want to be within 5g of each, so you go back and look at your totals for the day.

Current Total Numbers	Target Total Numbers
151g protein	140g protein
138g carbs	154g carbs
65g fats	72g fats

Looks like you're a little over on protein, a little under a carbs, and just a smidge low on fats. You've done a pretty good job, and you know this will be a simple fix.

To tweak your protein numbers, all you have to do is manipulate one of your primary protein sources. Since Meal 2 contains the most amount of protein at 44g, you decide to bump down the

chicken breast amount. You only need to decrease your protein consumption by around 10g, so you play around with the number until you're satisfied.

Meal 2 (revised) Foods	Current Numbers	Target Numbers
80g chicken breast	38g protein	30-40g protein
½ avocado	20g carbs	25g carbs
2 slices bacon	25g fats	33g fats
2 cups butter lettuce		
2 cups assorted fibrous veggies		

Now your day's totals look like this:

Current Total Numbers	Target Total Numbers
145g protein	140g protein
138g carbs	154g carbs
65g fats	72g fats

You're pushing it on the protein, but you decide to leave it for now.

Next, you want to increase your carb intake by at least 10g. What the hell, more Lucky Charms!

Meal 4 (revised) Foods	Current Numbers	Target Numbers
1 scoop whey protein	32g protein	30-40g protein
68g Lucky Charms cereal, dry measure	58g carbs	50g carbs
	5g fats	5-8g fats

Now you're here for the day:

Current Total Numbers	Target Total Numbers
146g protein	140g protein
149g carbs	154g carbs
65g fats	72g fats



Lastly is fats. The easiest meal to manipulate with fats looks like Meal 2, which is your hodgepodge salad. You think back to your food list and decide

that walnuts would be a good fat source that would add some crunch to your salad. Just 5-7 grams worth will suffice.

Meal 2 (revised again) Foods	Current Numbers	Target Numbers
80g chicken breast	40g protein	30-40g protein
½ avocado	22g carbs	25g carbs
2 slices bacon	31g fats	33g fats
10g chopped walnuts		
2 cups butter lettuce		
2 cups assorted fibrous veggies		

And now you're here:

Current Total Numbers	Target Total Numbers
148g protein	140g protein
151g carbs	154g carbs
71g fats	72g fats

So close! Let's just bring down the protein a little bit. You'll do this by taking away some pork tenderloin

in Meal 3—because again, it's the easiest to manipulate.

Meal 3 (revised) Foods	Current Numbers	Target Numbers
100g pork tenderloin	33g protein	30-40g protein
200g jasmine rice	44g carbs	50g carbs
	6g fats	5-8g fats

Current Total Numbers	Target Total Numbers
144g protein	140g protein
151g carbs	154g carbs
69g fats	72g fats

Voila! You've spent a mere five minutes planning tomorrow's meals, and now you've successfully landed yourself within +/-5g for each macronutrient for the day.

That's it, that's all.

Simple!



Tricks & Tools Of The Trade

Food Tracking

Traditionally the old pen and paper method was the norm, however time-consuming and painstaking. If you need the physical feel of the ink in your hand, then you can absolutely go right ahead and continue in this manner. I'd recommend creating a table with columns for time, food items, and macro breakdown for each day. It will necessarily take more time to hunt down the nutritional information of everything you eat and bust out your calculator to figure out the macro content of what's on your plate, but there's certainly nothing wrong with this approach.

For those of you with smartphones (which should be most of you), I'd recommend downloading an app so you can have a handy food tracker at hand. The more popular ones nowadays are MyFitnessPal, Spark People, and Lose It. I'll admit that I've only ever had experience with the first, and it appears that the majority of folks in the fitness community are also MyFitnessPal users.

If I had to pick one app for all my clients to use, however, I'd single out My Macros+. Created by bodybuilder Jason Loewy, this is an incredibly user-friendly app that I've found does not have the issues that other food tracking apps have. Among the many perks

include: neatly categorized food items, consistent nutrition information, and macro breakdown by day and also by meal. You can also custom-enter your target macros, and the app will tell you how many remaining macros you have left as you plug along. Visually, it's incredibly minimalist as well, which means there are no distractions and clutter to confuse you. Currently only available for iPhone users (sorry, guys!).

Whatever app you choose, it's worth sitting down and spending some time in the beginning figuring out to navigate your way around the meal planning and macro-tweaking.

Eating Out

The whole point of learning how to track your macros is to provide you with freedom, so of course it wouldn't make sense if I were to discourage you from eating out. I'm a proponent of socializing with food involved on occasion, be it dinner, wine, or tapas. Unless you're just a few weeks out from a photo shoot, competition, or other big event, I really wouldn't worry about bringing your food scale with you.

The key to eating out while staying on plan is to plan your meal's macros ahead of time as accurately as you can.

If the restaurant you're going to has a menu available online, it might be a good idea to peruse their offerings prior to showing up. Nutritional information is a bonus, as it'll take the guesswork out of everything for you. Unfortunately not all restaurants are that generous, though, which means that you can resort to a few options:

1. Call ahead of time and ask about their menu items. I wouldn't really encourage this, as it can border on neurotic, but if you have any doubts about whether they offer any kind of protein meal, then this might be a good idea.
2. When looking over the menu, stick to something familiar, or at least a meat, poultry, or fish-based meal.
3. When at the restaurant, politely ask the waiter about the ingredients in your chosen meal.
4. Don't be afraid to ask for substitutions. Maybe you want to swap out the mashed potatoes for, say, steamed russet potatoes or a side of jasmine rice instead.

You'll exercise eyeballing portions during this time, and again, overestimate if you need to.

As far as macro tracking, save up a good portion of your carbs and fats for this meal.

And most importantly, don't sweat it. The whole point of counting macros is to learn how to enjoy your life more without being controlled by food, so take advantage of this time to relish the company you're with and not stress over every bite that you do or don't eat.

Trying Out New Recipes

Let's face it: scouring fitness recipe blogs is fun and a fantastic use of downtime. There are a multitude of scrumptious recipes that likely tickle your fancy, and the good news is that the flexibility of macro counting fully permits this kind of freedom.

The trick with this is to plug in the recipe's macros first before figuring out the rest of the day's foods. Since the macro breakdown of these meals is mostly fixed, you'll want to work everything else around it.

Your macro distribution may become a little skewed, but don't sweat it. As I like to say, overall dietary adherence at the end of the day will always trump nutrient timing or macro distribution. And I can guarantee that if you're enjoying the

fitness journey ten times more because you can try out a bunch of delicious recipes while still staying on plan, then your chances of success will skyrocket.

Planned Indulgences

Please don't fall victim to the idea that "cleaner" is better. I've seen way too many instances of people trying to be too "good" with their food choices during the day, only to have their willpower run out by dinnertime, resulting in a giant cheat meal or even a binge.

Sometimes, good enough has to be good enough, and in this case, the idea of "perfect" eating is an unrealistic illusion.

With that said, I encourage small, frequent indulgences intentionally incorporated into your diet. This will help mitigate any cravings you have and will get rid of the all-or-nothing mindset, which I am not a fan of.

If you really like chocolate, perhaps a few squares at the end of the day will leave you satisfied. Or perhaps a bowl of frozen yogurt twice a week. Creamer in your morning cup o' joe, a biscotti from Starbucks after a training session, a small handful of gummy bears. Different treats will obviously satisfy different people, and I encourage you to gravitate

toward your flavor of the moment.

"Catching Up" on Macros

Macro "catch up" is a brilliant idea and one that I would urge everyone to utilize, especially during days when there are unknown variables as far as food choices and options.

It's much easier to meet your macros when you play it safe during the day and leave some extra macros for your last meal. If, for example, you consume fewer fats than you initially planned, then you'll have more wiggle room come evening time.

One of my clients came up with the idea of creating a "catch up" concoction every evening consisting of a hodgepodge of goodies to nail her macros. She does this by sticking to fun foods that would go well when mixed together. She'll use a base of, say, Greek yogurt or cottage cheese and then top it with things like nuts, sugary cereal, coconut flakes, and even chocolate fudge.

There are a thousand and one ways to get creative with this concept. Dig through your kitchen cabinet to find what you have on hand, or perhaps head to the grocery store or even www.nuts.com or Amazon to stock up on catch-up goodies :)



Closing Notes

Where do we go from here? Do I expect you to count your macros every day for the rest of your life? Absolutely not.

Macro counting is a sustainable approach, but only up to a certain point. There may come a time in your life when you decide that tracking every gram of protein, carbs, and fats you consume is no longer a priority to you. After a while, you'll find that you have a pretty good idea of what and how much to eat to maintain your weight and level of leanness. Getting to this place will require exercising a good dose of patience, introspection, and mindfulness. It is a big deal to reach that point, as many may never get there.

By the time you're ready to part ways with macro counting, you will have established sound eating habits: the right amount of protein at each meal, the correct nutrient distribution, the flexibility with your food choices. Your body will know by this point how much food is appropriate for you and

will signal to you when you should eat and when you should stop. Too, you'll have mastered the art of indulging in delightful food and then getting right back on track without any of the guilt or compensatory behavior involved.

Whatever you decide to do, I would strongly suggest that you keep tabs on your progress. This can be in the form of bodyweight, waist measurement, the fit of your favorite pair of jeans, and/or what you see in the mirror. After all, you can't measure what you don't manage. Keeping a close eye on how you're doing will let you know when you should perhaps pull back the reins on the sweet treats a little bit, or if maybe you need to consume more carbs to maintain your gains.

You can always decide to pick up My Macros+ again after a hiatus to get yourself back on track.

Macro counting isn't going anywhere.



FAQ

Q: Can I fit alcohol into my macros? If so, how often and what kind?

A: Technically no food is considered off-limits, so yes. That doesn't mean I condone slugging through a bottle of wine every night, however. One evening a week is a moderate, realistic expectation. Stick to wine or hard liquor when possible, and keep the mixed drinks to a minimum.

Q: How do I track cheat meals?

A: The purpose of a cheat meal is to give you a psychological break from counting macros and perhaps from eating at a calorie deficit. Given that you don't have your cheat meals too frequently (best to stick to one a week, or two small cheats a week), don't worry about tracking it. Enjoy the meal, lick your fingers, and then get right back on track the next day.

Q: My food tracker doesn't give me the correct calorie totals when I plug in my macros. Why is this? Am I doing something wrong?

A: No, that's a technical error on the part of the app developers. There may also be user error because different users may be allowed to add food to the database and incorrectly enter nutritional information. If you're using this kind of app, I would suggest ignoring the calorie count and sticking to the macro numbers instead.

Q: What about micronutrients?

A: As long as you're taking your base supplements and varying your food choices every once in a while, you should be perfectly fine. Remember, the multivitamin is there to fill in any nutritional gaps (though it's by no means superior to real, whole foods).

Q: What should my fiber target be?

A: I would shoot for no less than 25g a day. Definitely don't go overboard and try to consume all fibrous veggies to fill up your entire carb allotment for the day, as too much fiber can be worse than not enough fiber. A few cups worth of veggies a day will suffice.

Q: How low is too low for my fat intake? I really like carbs and am willing to sacrifice some fats to eat more jasmine rice.

A: Your body needs dietary fat to function. Shoot for 30g at the absolute minimum; preferably more.

Q: I'm trying to gain weight and my target macros are pretty high. I don't know if I could get in all my food in 5 meals. Is it okay if I spread it out over 6 or 7 meals?

A: Absolutely, yes. Do whatever will make the process easiest for you. We want to remove as many roadblocks as possible, and if 7 meals a day is what it's going to take for you to meet your macros, then by all means go for it.

A photograph of a woman with long dark hair, wearing a blue athletic top, looking off to the side. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. Below the image is a horizontal bar with four colored segments: dark blue, light blue, dark red, and bright pink.

How to Count Macros

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