



F R E E D O M

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F L E X I B I L I T Y

**A S I M P L E G U I D E T O
F L E X I B L E D I E T I N G**

DISCLAIMER

All material included in this book is included for the sole purpose of providing general information. Material included in this book does not, and is not intended to, constitute specific individual advice or any statement on which reliance should be placed. Users should seek advice as appropriate from a professionally qualified dietitian or nutritionist on all specific situations and conditions of concern to them if deemed necessary .

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FLEXIBLE DIETING: WHAT IS IT?



If you've been paying attention to the diet and nutrition space on any level, flexible dieting has become quite popular across the health and fitness industry. Flexible dieting offers great benefits to allow more of a moderate approach to nutrition. Check out social media platforms like Instagram, Youtube, and Facebook to see how popular it is. Follow this hashtag #iifym (If It Fits Your Macros) to see all that's being said about flexible dieting including meals, snacks and even success stories..

You're probably getting pretty excited to learn more about flexible dieting and how you can use this easy concept to your advantage. I'll keep it simple and clear of any confusing science jargon so that you can implement this strategy immediately when you've finished reading this book.

Food is simply proteins, carbohydrates, and fats. Once you view your nutrition in their category rather than what society has labeled healthy or unhealthy, it becomes far easier to understand the flexible dieting approach. So when you look at a banana or a protein bar you can look at the nutrition label to educate yourself on which option may be best for you to consume.

When you understand the nutritional value of food you can then choose something of equal nutritional content that you prefer that provides the same benefits. So you may find that you discover instead of chicken and broccoli for the 10th time, you may be able to have a protein shake with some chocolate (portions will vary).

I pretty much love all foods. I also believe that moderation and variety is the spice of life. The main idea I'm trying to point out is about making everyday sustainable positive changes in your nutrition. First, change your view point from things being healthy vs unhealthy. Second, actually look at the nutrition label to see how this particular food choice affects your nutrition. Finally, you get to enjoy the food choices that you picked to eat in appropriate portions.

FLEXIBLE DIETING, DOES IT WORK?

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The simpler the better - flexible dieting works because there are 3 main fuel sources for the body. The macronutrients are proteins, carbohydrates, and fats. Each macronutrient has smaller components to it such as amino acids, glucose, and fatty acids.

Through the process of digestion, the macronutrients are broken down into their simplest form. Protein will break down into amino acids, carbohydrates into glucose, and fat into fatty acids. The main point of all of this is that through the process of digestion, the body only recognizes the simplest forms of the macronutrients. So it doesn't necessarily matter how society perceives the food to be healthy or unhealthy, it matters how the body views it.

The best part about this concept is that it is all interchangeable. This means that when you see chicken and broccoli and it has a macronutrient profile of 30g of carbohydrates, 20g proteins, and 10g fat - this can be equivalent to having a protein shake and an apple, a protein bar and some vegetables, or a pop tart and eggs. This assumes that each of these options has 30g of carbohydrates, 20g proteins, and 10g fat.



WHO IS FLEXIBLE DIETING FOR?

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This is perfect for everyone, but first let me explain... If you are focused on a calorie controlled nutrition plan, this is right for you. Have you ever followed a meal plan with specific measurements of each food to portion out? If so, then you are following a calorie and macronutrient controlled diet. For example, if you were to break down each food and portion into its macronutrient makeup then you can total out the number of protein, carbohydrates, and fats you are eating for that day. If you aren't following a calorie and macronutrient controlled diet for any reason other than a lack of interest, then maybe you should consider it. It's easier than you think.

Major benefits to flexible dieting that stand out are:

- No longer have to wait for cheat meals to enjoy your favorite foods.
- You will find that you don't need to overindulge on foods you feel you shouldn't have.
- No guilt or shame when you "mix" things up and have something off your diet plan.
- You don't have to feel socially awkward with your friends carrying Tupperware around filled with plain and boring food.
- If you aren't hungry, you can have a simple protein shake to get in some quick and light nutrition.
- If you get hungrier then you can have something more filling such as a steak/chicken and some filling carbohydrates.

Flexibility is based around your lifestyle.

Follow These Rules To Get The Results

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At this point it may seem that flexible dieting is a bit care free. Let's set up some ground rules to this concept so it doesn't seem like you just go through your day picking random foods to maintain your macronutrient intake.

Micronutrients haven't been brought up yet and now is an excellent time to talk about their importance to your health and nutrition plan. They are the vitamins and minerals that are essential for optimal healthy functioning in your body. They are mostly found in unprocessed whole foods such as fruits and vegetables. Although it is fun to include pop tarts into your daily food intake, it's important that you eat a fair amount of micronutrient dense foods each and every day. The guidelines for this are **1-2 servings of fruit per day** and **2-3 servings of vegetables**. A high quality multivitamin supplement should be considered to help fill in any gaps in your nutrition on any particular day.

Fiber intake is another important factor to consider. The basic number around total fiber intake for the day is 14g for every 1,000 calories you eat. I always like to round up and error on eating more. Now consider that drinking protein shakes and eating doughnuts all day won't truly allow you to meet daily requirements. On an important note, foods that are higher in fiber are also typically loaded with micronutrients, which makes it quite easy to meet your daily goals.



After eating my typical fruit and vegetable intake, I'll add in some oatmeal. This choice helps keep me full feeling and add plenty of fiber to my day. If I skip oatmeal, I'll arrange my day to be full of another quality starch and vegetables to help meet my requirements. If I am unable to reach my macronutrient numbers that I need by the end of the day, I'll eat more food.

Don't forget to have a healthy balance of food sources that will ensure that you have adequate micronutrients and fiber each day. Most important, having a variety of quality food sources allows for a healthy relationship with food. Obsessing over what you are planning to eat day in and day out isn't the objective here and is rather cumbersome to maintain. On the other hand, having a strict meal plan to live by day in and day out serves no one long term.

In general, most people eat the same way day in and day out. It's best to find the best way to properly portion. Follow a specific meal plan for a few days and then you can rotate into another set of meals that you have specifically planned out with your own personalized food options. Have variety, but keep it simple.



THE SMART CHOICES YOU SHOULD MAKE

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One of the issues that you have to watch out for in flexible dieting is how this concept has become an excuse to eat junk food all day because of the concept IIFYM (If It Fits Your Macros). The terminology behind this approach is basically the same thing as flexible dieting. What happens is that too much focus is brought on eating processed and micronutrient poor foods. IIFYM still requires the majority of your food selection to come from unprocessed whole foods to make sure that you have sufficient intake of micronutrients and fiber. Even though IIFYM and flexible dieting are the same, flexible dieting tends towards the healthier side of the wellness spectrum especially when viewed in social media.

When you generally eat healthier foods, you feel better about yourself. But, when you are eating pop tarts and twinkies all day and bragging about your flexible dieting approach, people will question you. When you eat super clean meals such as chicken and broccoli all day, people will question you. If you even simply do things a little differently from anyone else, they will question you. Don't be fooled. Flexible dieting should not be about eating as much processed sugary foods as possible, strict clean eating should not be about eating plain, boring, and repetitive meals either. You should always seek out the most simple and effective meals rather than the crazy combinations of sweets and treats just because it fits your macros.

On the next page you'll see a variety of different sources of protein, carbohydrates, and fat. Listed next to the macronutrients will be the benefits that each hold for your body. There will be another list that will show foods that benefit you very little.



PROTEIN

EXCELLENT SOURCES: chicken, eggs, fish, lean beef, turkey, whey protein powder

POOR SOURCES: fatty meat, pork, soy



CARBOHYDRATES

EXCELLENT SOURCES: fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes

POOR SOURCES: pop, white - processed grains, sugary foods(kids cereal, baked goods, ice cream)



FATS

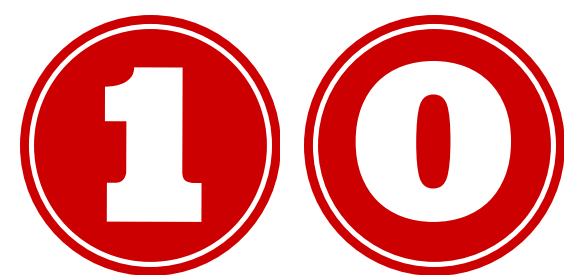
EXCELLENT SOURCES: nuts, seeds, oil (olive, flaxseed, coconut) avocado, fish oil

POOR SOURCES: trans fat (found in highly processed foods that have been deep fried)



Moderation is the name of the flexible dieting game. Consider this concept to be the key to long term success. When looking at your food choices, find a healthy blend of foods that society deems good for you with a reasonable amount of processed foods, desserts, and treats that you can enjoy from time to time. If you have followed the flexible dieting approach for any amount of time, you understand that you need to meet your micronutrient and fiber requirements for the day.

HOW TO READ NUTRITION LABELS



When was the last time you looked at a nutrition label? Do you know how to read it? This label lists some important information about what's in the food you will be eating.

Read below for 6 important parts to reading a nutrition label.



Start by checking the serving size and servings per container.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT: The serving size will determine how large your portion of food should be for your meal.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 2/3 cup (55g) Servings Per Container About 8	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 230	Calories from Fat 40
<hr/>	
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 8g	12%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	12%
Dietary Fiber 4g	16%
Sugars 1g	
Protein 3g	
<hr/>	
Vitamin A	10%
Vitamin C	8%
Calcium	20%
Iron	45%
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily value may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.	
	Calories: 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g 80g
Sat Fat	Less than 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g



Know the labeling loopholes.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT: If there's 0.5g or less of trans fat per serving, manufacturers don't have to list it on the label.



Know what to minimize.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT: Loading up on sugar and sodium is a sure fire way to increase your blood sugar levels, meaning you are more likely to store fat. Sodium increases water retention.



Know what you want to maximize.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT: Understanding your intake of protein and fiber are the easiest ways to stay accountable to getting the results you want.



Watch out for allergens.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT: Some manufacturing plants process a variety of different foods on the same machines. Soy, nuts, and wheat could all have been processed in the same plant,



Read the ingredients list and look out for hydrogenated oils, high fructose corn syrup, artificial ingredients, MSG, and nitrates.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT: These ingredients are highly processed and don't help the body function properly at all.

HOW TO TRACK YOUR FOOD INTAKE



It's the 21st century and pretty much everyone has a smart phone. Hence you have access to a lot of free technology that you should be using. Since we are in this day and age, we could be beyond reading nutrition labels and that's ok.

MyFitnessPal is one of the best apps to track your intake of nutrients and be able to easily read nutritional information for the foods you enjoy. MyFitnessPal will enable you to be accurate with the tracking of your macronutrients and micronutrients. Being accurate will allow you to hit the numbers of proteins, carbohydrates, and fats that you've set for yourself (more on that later). You can also save meal plans and personal recipes as are easily recorded that you able to enjoy .

One of the huge perks to MyFitnessPal is that it allows you to plan out your nutrition for the day. Change your mind, no problem, simply replace the current selections with the foods you want.

One convent feature is a barcode scanner that allows you to take a picture of the barcode on the box of the food. It automatically inputs the nutrients into the app. Simply select the right portion size to meet how much food you eat..

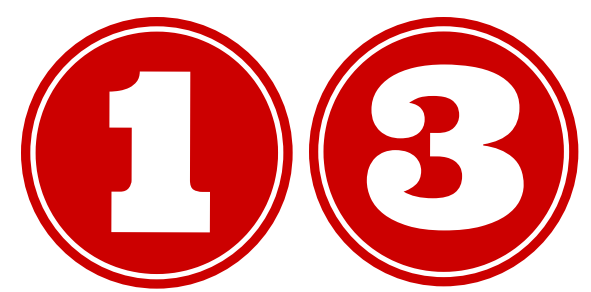
As you search for specific foods, you will want to look for the green check mark. This check mark means that it is a verified food that has been officially entered into MyFitnessPal.

When you want to review your total macronutrients for your day, simply select the "Nutrition" tab then select the "Nutrients" tab to view the total carbohydrates, protein, and fats.

Just as a carpenter uses a tape measure to build a table, My Fitness Pal is your measuring tool to help you build a better you.



FIRST TIME SETTING UP YOUR MACROS



If this is your first time, I'm going to make it easy on you. Below are some examples for you to get the correct numbers for protein, carbohydrates, and fats. The challenging parts for most are the consistency of tracking, accurately measuring the foods and having flexibility in your food choices. If you have trouble getting set up, you could invest in a Personalized Nutrition Program, a service that I offer. It is structured around your individual needs based off activity levels, preferred food sources and a few other considerations.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

A general idea of how many calories you actually need can be done by a simple multiplier. Using this multiplier of 10-15x your body weight in pounds will help determine the base number of calories, 10 being the lowest and 15 the highest activity level. If you feel that you have a fairly active lifestyle, try 12 to start out with. If you have a super active job and are active then 14/15 may be your multiplier. Quick example... Female at 135lbs x 12 = 1620 calories or Male at 190 x 12 = 2,280 calories.

Since we have come up with a simple equation for calories, let's cover fat intake. In general, fat is determined on your overall calories rather than your body weight. A healthy intake of fat should range from 20-35% of your total calories. Fat levels can range from a lower calorie diet getting a higher fat percentage and a higher calorie diet with a lower fat percentage. With flexible dieting, you can decide which is best for you. An example would be: Female example with 25% fat intake of total diet- $1620 \times 0.25 = 405$ calories = 45g of fat. Male example with 25% fat intake- $2,280 \times 0.25 = 570$ calories = 63g of fat.

Protein is based around total body weight, but make sure that you take into consideration your lean body mass. It's commonly known that you should have between 1.0-1.5g of protein per pound of body weight. An example would be for the Female is $135 \times 1.1 = 148$ g of protein, a Male example is $190 \times 1.1 = 209$ g of protein. If you are overweight, say by 40+lbs, you may need to reduce your protein intake slightly. Account for total lean body mass when finding this number.

Carbohydrates are the last macronutrient to be considered when calculating your macronutrients. They are a non-essential energy source so it gets the remaining calories that are not allocated to fat or protein.
 $1,620 - 400(\text{fat}) = 1,220 - 592(\text{protein}) = 628$ calories of carbohydrates or 157g.
 $2,280 - 570(\text{fat}) = 1,710 - 948(\text{protein}) = 762$ calories of carbohydrates or 190g.

Fiber intake is the last piece of this puzzle. There should be about 15-20% of total calorie intake from carbohydrates. An example is $190 \times 0.15 = 28\text{g}$ or $157 \times 0.15 = 23\text{g}$ of fiber.

CALORIE **CARBOHYDRATE: 1G = 4 CALORIES**
CONTENT **PROTEIN: 1G = 4 CALORIES**
PER **FAT: 1G = 9 CALORIES**
MACRONUTRIENT

A balanced diet for any individual is far better than quick fixes and extreme sacrifices. Following general nutritional guidelines provides a path to allow for lasting results. Nothing is worse than seeing someone in great shape after a quick fix fad diet, then only 6 months later, they find themselves even worse off than where they started.

in recent years, the main solution to "dieting" has been to remove one macronutrient from your food choices such as carbohydrates. Other diets can be very rigid and restrictive. The worst part of dieting is that it is unrealistic for long term success as it only lasts as long as you maintain the strict restrictions.

Think of extreme dieting as a pendulum... the farther you pull it into extreme restriction- the farther it swings back towards regaining the weight. This simply means that the more restrictive you become to lose weight, the harder the weight gain swings back.

Yo-yo dieting has been proven to actually cause higher body fat percentage over time. The extreme methods you once used to drop weight don't work after the 5th attempt to lose those "same 15 pounds". A basic explanation for this is the fact that each extreme dieting effort burns off quite a bit of lean metabolically active muscle tissue. So when you are down those "15 pounds", a good majority of that could be muscle. With less muscle, this then creates trouble for your metabolism and leaves you feeling like no amount of restriction or cardio will ever work to regain the body you desire.

The best way to have consistent progression towards reaching your ideal nutritional goals is to choose a balanced diet that's based on your individual needs. When you are in control of the foods that you eat, it makes this process much more exciting and easy.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Is There A Certain Number Of Meals I Should Eat In A Day?

Overall, how many meals you eat in a day is insignificant. If you are following a flexible dieting approach and tracking your macronutrients, the main point is to hit your daily goals. Three-five meals per day typically fit most people's schedule. At the most you would ever find yourself eating would be 6 meals. Once above this many meals, you become heavily food focused by eating constantly throughout your day.

2. Should I Be Eating A Certain Type Of Food?

When selecting foods to eat, before you prepare the meals, it is important to consider having protein at every meal. Building your meals around protein ensures you are meeting your daily intake. Ideally, you want to consume the majority of your carbohydrates around your workout. This will help fuel your body to perform. Consuming carbohydrates at night isn't a big problem if they aren't simple or processed. Healthy fats are essential to your diet, but know that they can add up quickly.

3. I Don't Have A Smartphone, How Do I Track My Macros?

For those without access to a smartphone or if you prefer working on a desktop, simply log on to www.myfitnesspal.com. Sign up and record your information there.

4. Am I Always Tracking All The Time?

If you were a machine, this process would be super simple, but you're human. Throughout a typical day, there will be instances where accuracy is hard to measure, for example going out to a restaurant or attending a social events. If you have been tracking for awhile, you'll at least be equipped with the ability to estimate the portion of food that you are eating or drinking. When going out to eat, it can be challenging to know what is on your plate. I estimate the amounts of food I am eating ala carte and input the data into My Fitness Pal. This way I can account for the food and then move on to the next meal. This helps keep me accountable to my set macronutrients.

5. How Do I Learn More About Flexible Dieting?

This is a basic overview of flexible dieting. The concepts shared in this ebook allow you to eat within your caloric limits while having a treat here and there. If you are looking for a more in-depth scientific view of how flexible dieting works, check out these guys - Alan Aragon, Eric Helms, Layne Norton, and Lyle McDonald as they are experts in the field of nutrition science.

6. What Happens If I Run Out Of Macros Too Early?

This can be a beginner move or sometimes can happen when you overextend yourself at a social event with poor planning. If you end up running out of macronutrients early in the day and find yourself hungry, then simply have another meal. You can modify it as much as possible so that you don't overextend yourself. The main point of all of this is maintaining your energy balance needs, not necessarily over the course of a day, but over the course of a week. You'll learn how to navigate this problem by simply adjust your food intake over the course of the next day. Lesson learned, try to spread out your macronutrients instead of eating them all at once.

7. When Should I Stop Using Flexible Dieting?

When you consider the concept of flexible dieting, it really isn't a fad diet or restrictive in any way. This lifestyle of eating is simple and effective. You'll be able to track your food with ease and allow adjustments through the day based around your food choices. Whatever your goals are, you are able to tweak your intake to match the needs to meet them.

THE IMPORTANT STUFF

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- When looking at food, view it as nutrients rather than what society says is "healthy" or "unhealthy".
- Set realistic macronutrient goals.
- Track daily macronutrient intake.
- Get as many vitamins and minerals through whole foods.
- Keep track of fiber intake.
- Use MyFitnessPal.
- Eat a wide variety of food.
- Get your meals to fit your schedule, not schedule to fit in your meals.
- A balanced nutrition plan that allows for moderation is highly beneficial.



SETTING UP MYFITNESSPAL

So you are ready to download MyFitnessPal. Once you have the app on your phone, it will take you through a setup process. It will ask you questions to determine things such as height, weight, activity levels and age to set your caloric and macronutrient intake allowing you to reach your goal.

It's important to note that the intakes of the macronutrients have been formed based off of an old food pyramid that was used awhile ago. Basically, if you are looking to add lean body tissue and lose body fat, the calculations aren't correct. Look back to page 13, There you can determine what macronutrients will best suit the goals you are looking to reach.

Going through the "Goals" tab in the app allows you to set your specific macronutrients. You can change the macronutrients to meet your specific goals. To see your day or week's overview, check under the "Nutrition" tab - search for "Nutrients".

	Total	Goal	Left
Protein	148	143	-5g
Carbohydrates	167	143	-24g
Fiber	35	30	-5g
Sugar	29	50	21g
Fat	59	54	-5g
Saturated Fat	12	18	6g
Polyunsaturated Fat	8	N/A	-8g
Monounsaturated Fat	14	N/A	-14g
Trans Fat	0	0	0g
Cholesterol	502	300	-202mg

FINALE

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Once you are all set up with MyFitnessPal, it will be pretty exciting to get on your way to a flexible way of eating. Put in all of your measurements and off you go.

Helping people achieve their personal health and fitness goals has been a passion of mine since 1999. The old adage is that nutrition is 80% of the equation. Once you figure out what you put in your mouth really dictates how you look and feel, it becomes a no brainer to find the easiest and most sustainable way for you to meet your nutritional needs.

When you look back into the 90's and before, the main thought was "clean eating." You would see bodybuilders eating chicken, broccoli, and sweet potato day in and day out. Most people can't consistently eat the same thing over and over again. It often leads to binge eating and poor emotional associations with food. We definitely want to avoid an obsessed food focused relationship with food. Do realize that you don't have to track macronutrients forever. Understand how your body works and learn what you can and can't eat to get your desired results.

Once you understand that millions of people eat a million different ways, you then have to find the proper portion sizes for you with the foods you enjoy most. Do realize that the majority of foods should be micronutrient dense to feed your body the nutrition it needs to feel its best.

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momentum

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