

AK COACHING



# HOW TO FLEXIBLE DIET...

THE RIGHT WAY!

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*Hi there*

# WELCOME TO FLEXIBLE DIETING... THE RIGHT WAY!



- Registered Nurse (Bachelor of Nursing)
- Health Scientist (Bachelor of Health Science)
- Sports Nutritionist
- Online Coach
- IFBB Wellness Athlete & former ICN sports model champion
- Novice powerlifter



- Head chef with over 9 years' experience
- Recipe inventor
- Sports Nutritionist
- Online Coach
- ICN physique athlete

We are both passionate athletes and coaches that have many years of training and nutritional experience before becoming coaches ourselves. This means that as coaches, we have all the do's and don'ts when it comes to training and nutrition. We have learnt from our past mistakes... so that you don't have to! We are both fully qualified sports nutritionists and personal trainers, with experience in the bodybuilding and powerlifting industry, and in-depth knowledge about the human physiology and biomechanics of the musculoskeletal system.

We wanted to create a comprehensive, yet easy to understand guide on how to flexible diet the right way, as we have noticed that many people tend to use flexible dieting as an excuse to fill their daily intake with as many "junk food" as possible and neglect the importance of a balanced, nutrient-dense diet.

# 01 UNDERSTANDING NUTRIENTS



# CALORIES

Calories are units of measurement for the energy value of food. All the complex processes that happen within our body 24/7 need energy, and therefore, the calories in food provide us with the energy needed to simply... survive! When we eat, foods are broken down to release energy that is to be used by the body either immediately or stored for later use (Patton 2019).

# MACRONUTRIENTS (MACROS)

Macros are compounds found in most foods. There are three macros: Protein, carbohydrates and fats. It is important to understand the three different macros, their importance, their functions within the body and their caloric content to create a healthy, well-balanced diet. Cutting out any one macronutrient puts you at risk for nutrient deficiencies and illness, so make sure you don't completely cut out a macronutrient from your diet.







# PROTEIN & ITS ROLE WITHIN THE BODY

## IMMUNE FUNCTION

Amino acids help regulate the body's defence mechanism, such as immune cells like macrophages and lymphocytes, against bacterial and viral infections. Without adequate amino acids, the production of immune cells can be reduced, which can affect immune response to viruses and infections.

## IMPORTANT NOTES ABOUT PROTEIN:

- They are made out of molecules called amino acids.
- There are two types of amino acids: essential amino acids (EAA) and non-essential amino acids.
- There are NINE essential amino acids that are not produced in the body, which **MUST BE ACQUIRED FROM FOOD.**
- Not all protein sources are made equal. Some protein-containing foods **DO NOT** have all nine EAA. Therefore, it is important that we get our protein from a variety of different food sources to ensure we acquire all nine EAA. This is especially important for plant-based diets.



# CARBS & ITS ROLE WITHIN THE BODY

## PROVIDE IMMEDIATE FUEL SOURCE

Carbohydrates are broken down into the most simple form (glucose) and utilised as energy for the body. It can be utilised as an immediate source of energy as soon as sugar enters the bloodstream. This is why carb timing can be beneficial for body composition goals.

## PROVIDE STORED ENERGY

When more carbohydrates are consumed than burned, excess carbohydrates are converted to fatty acids and stored as fat. This form of energy can be utilised at a later stage when no immediate supply of glucose is available. When fat is required for energy, fat is converted back to glucose- this process is called gluconeogenesis.

## ASSIST WITH DIGESTIVE HEALTH & DISEASE PREVENTION

The fibrous component of carbohydrates have many important roles, such as regulating blood sugar levels, optimising cholesterol levels, regulating bowel motions and feeding gut bacteria. We will talk about fibre shortly!



# SIMPLE VS. COMPLEX CARBS

There are two types of carbohydrates- simple and complex. The term "simple" and "complex" come from their chemical structures. The chemical structure of simple carbs, as the name implies, is simpler... which makes them easier to be digested and absorbed. This therefore provides a faster supply of immediate energy. Examples of simple carbohydrates are carbohydrate foods that have been processed or refined such as lollies, sugary cereals, honey and fruit juice.

Complex carbohydrates, on the other hand, take longer to break down and digest. Because of this, complex carbohydrates have a slower release of glucose into the bloodstream. Complex carbohydrates are great with assisting with satiety and energy levels. Examples of complex carbohydrates are rice, sweet potato, pasta, pumpkin, beans and wholemeal bread.

TIP: Simple carbs are great for when you need a quick pick-me-up, such as 30 minutes before a workout. Studies also suggest that eating simple carbs, along with a source of protein after your workout results in glycogen resynthesis. Following a workout, your body is depleted of glycogen and glucose. Therefore, ensuring you consume enough carbohydrates after your workout is important so that our body could start using that available energy to start the tissue repair and growth process.



# CRAP, WHAT ABOUT FIBRE?

Dietary fibre is the indigestible part of plant foods which cannot be completely broken down by the human body. There are two types of fibre- soluble and insoluble. They are both essential for optimal health due to the reasons outlined below:

- Increases satiety (fullness): Non-digestible material fills the stomach, therefore helps with fullness.
- Adds bulk to bowel motions: Insoluble fibre adds bulk to bowel motions which assist in the passing of regular bowel motions.
- Absorbs water into bowel motions: Soluble fibre absorbs water into the bowel motions, making them softer and easier to pass.
- Food source for beneficial bacteria: Beneficial gut bacteria in the large intestines feed off fibre, therefore maintaining adequate amount of fibre in your diet is important for optimal health of beneficial bacteria.
- Slows the release of glucose into the bloodstream: Complex carbohydrates take longer to break down, therefore the rate in which glucose is released into the bloodstream is slower. This is beneficial for stabilising energy and hunger levels.
- Promotes heart health: Dietary fibre helps to remove the build-up of unwanted cholesterol in the blood.

# CRAP, WHAT ABOUT FIBRE?

TIP: The recommended fibre intake for men is no less than 30g per day, and no less than 25g per day for women. However, this is completely individual and most of us have a "sweet spot" with fibre intake. Below are some examples of high fibre containing foods. Below are examples of some high-fibre containing foods:

Food	Serving size	Fibre (g)
Apple	150g	4.8g
Avocado	170g	12g
Carrot	100g	3.9
Peas	100g	5.7
Beans	100g	7g
Nuts	100g	7g
Rye bread	30g	2.4g
Kellog's sultana bran cereal	45g	6.8g

# FATS & ITS ROLE WITHIN THE BODY

Dietary fats are essential in the human diet. This means that our bodies literally need fats for optimal functioning. All living tissues contain fat (scientifically called lipids) in some form. The primary roles of fat relate to the structural functions of cells. However, they also have many other important roles such as:

- Helps regulates hunger
- Supports normal nerve function, brain function and brain development
- Provides the body with energy and stored energy
- Stores fat-soluble vitamins
- Maintains healthy cholesterol levels and reduces risk of cardiovascular diseases
- Improves blood vessel elasticity
- Improves efficiency and effectiveness of blood clotting when required
- Helps maintain healthy skin, hair and strong nails
- Assists in reducing inflammation and increasing immunity

As you can see, dietary fats are so important for our health, yet many people still negatively associate dietary fat with body fat, and therefore avoiding them in their day-to-day diet.



# FATS & ITS ROLE WITHIN THE BODY

A diet lacking in dietary fats can lead to:

- Vitamin deficiencies
- Hormone imbalances
- Increased hunger
- Skin problems

## VITAMIN STORAGE

The vitamins A, D, E and K are fat-soluble, meaning that they can only be absorbed, transported and stored in fats in the body. A low-fat diet increases the risks of developing the vitamin deficiencies below:

- Vitamin A: Immune function and eye health.
- Vitamin D: Calcium absorption.
- Vitamin E: Healthy functions of organs.
- Vitamin K: Normal blood clotting.



# FATS & ITS ROLE WITHIN THE BODY

## MAINTAINING HEALTHY CHOLESTEROL LEVELS

Cholesterol is a form of fat which is used for three main roles in the body:

- Production of sex hormones
- Production of human tissues such as cell membranes
- Bile production in the liver.

Some hormones are made from fats in the form of cholesterol. Dietary fats are essential for the production of these hormones.

- Testosterone
- Progesterone
- Cortisol
- Aldosterone
- Vitamin D

TIP: There are four types of dietary fats: saturated fats, trans fats, monounsaturated fats and polyunsaturated fats. It is best to consume majority of fats in the form of monounsaturated fats and polyunsaturated fats and keep saturated fats and trans fats (mainly found in processed foods) to a minimum.





# PUTTING IT TOGETHER

Okay, let's review what we know so far and put it all together. We know that:

- A calorie is a unit of energy measurement for the energy value of food.
- Protein is SO important for optimal body functioning.
- Carbs are the body's preferred source of energy and that carb timing can be beneficial for body composition goals.
- Fats are an essential nutrient and has MANY roles within the body, including production of sex hormones.

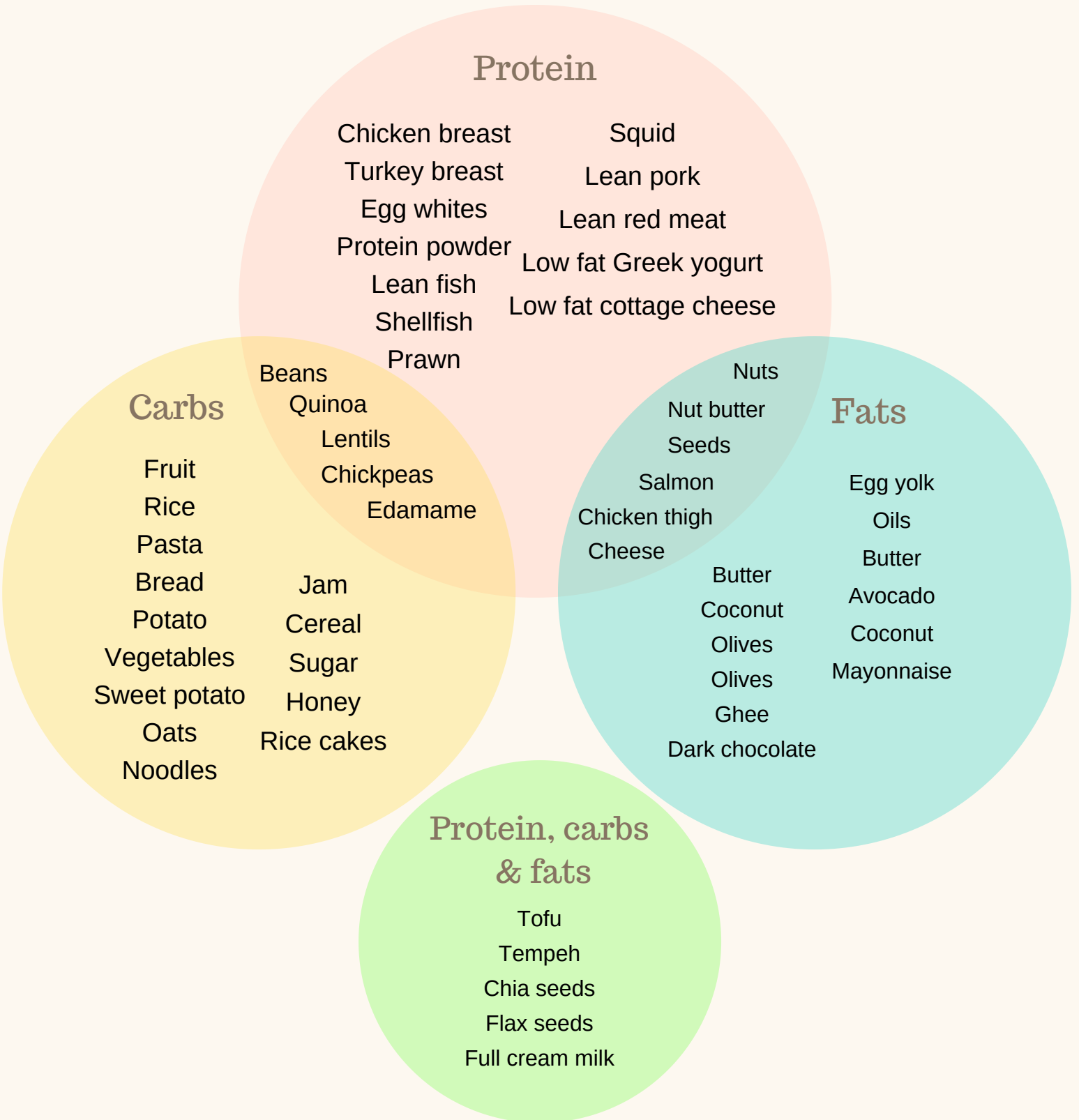
Now, let's move on to how many calories each of these macros have per gram.

- 1g of protein= 4 calories
- 1g of carbohydrate= 4 calories
- 1g of fat= 9 calories

Therefore, a meal containing that has 10g protein, 10g of fat, 10g of carb will have 170 calories  $(10 \times 4) + (10 \times 4) + (10 \times 9) = 170$  calories. Now don't worry, you don't have to count everything manually as we will use MyFitnessPal to track this for us!



# MACROS CHEAT SHEET



## 02 CALCUALTING YOUR MACRO REQUIREMENTS



# HOW TO CALCULATE YOUR CALORIC REQUIREMENT

To determine your total daily energy expenditure (TDEE), you need to first calculate your:

- Basal Metabolic Rate (BMR): The total energy required for your body to perform life-sustaining functions like breathing, pumping blood etc.
- Physical Activity Level (PAL): The level of physical activity (sedentary, active, moderately active, extremely active)

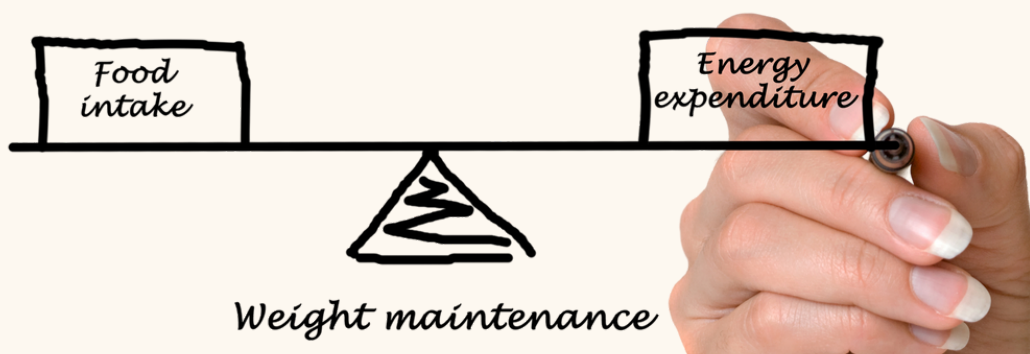
You can manually calculate this using many formulas such as the **Harris Benedict equation**, however there are many resources and calculators available online that allow you to work out your TDEE. Please keep in mind that these are simply recommended guidelines only.

Once you have determined your TDEE, you then need to determine what your daily caloric intake should be based on your goals.

Maintenance calories= Maintain current bodyweight (maintaining)

Calorie deficit= Lose body weight (cutting)

Calorie surplus= Increase body weight (building)



# HOW TO CALCULATE YOUR MACROS

Once you have calculated your caloric requirements based on your goals, you can now determine your macro breakdown. Our recommendations are as follows:

- Protein: 1.6-2.2 grams per kg of bodyweight
- Fats: 0.7-1.0 gram per kg of bodyweight
- Carbohydrates: Remainder of calories
- Fibre: Under 100kg= 25-30g per day, Over 100kg= 35-40g per day

Please note that this is not one size fits all and it is therefore important to identify what works best for you or seek help from a qualified professional. It is also important to note that vegetarians and vegans also often have different macro requirements. Therefore, the recommendations above may not apply to those who follow plant-based diets.

Your energy requirements will also change over time, and therefore will require frequent adjustments. In order to continually make progress, you must make frequent assessments (i.e. check-ins) to determine the appropriate adjustments. This is where having a coach may help fast track your results!



# 03 SETTING UP MY FITNESS PAL



# LET'S BEGIN!

## STEP ONE: DOWNLOAD MY FITNESS PAL



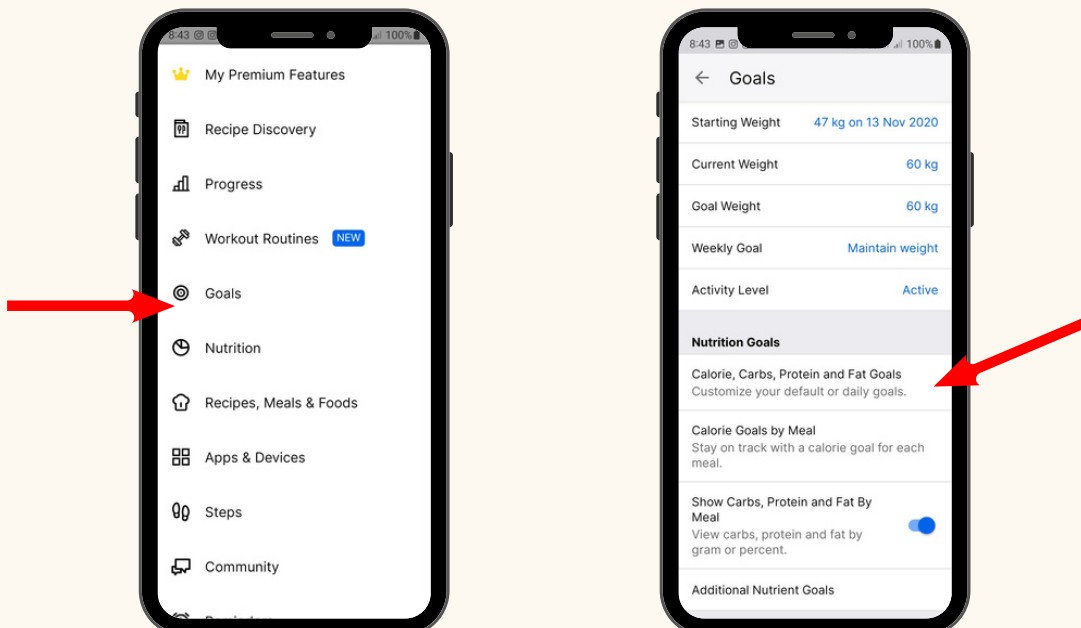
There are two versions of My Fitness Pal- FREE and PREMIUM. The premium version has a lot of features that the free version does not, such as setting your macros by grams not percentages, using the "quick add" feature and setting different goals by day.

The premium version is recommended however the free version is still very usable.

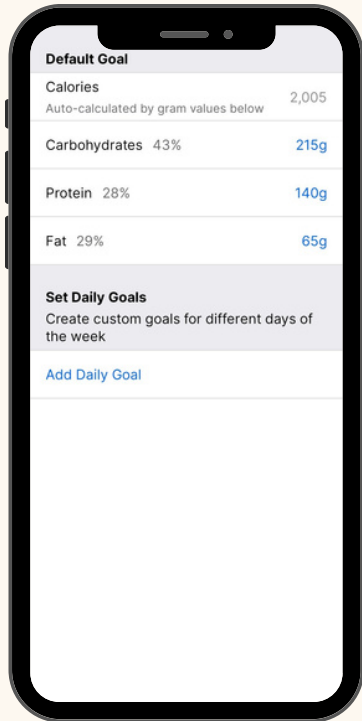
## STEP TWO: ENTERING YOUR MACROS

From your dashboard, select: More > Goals

My Fitness Pal will prompt you to enter your starting weight, goal weight and weekly goal and MyFitnessPal will automatically calculate your macros for you. However, we recommend that you go straight to Nutrition Goals> Calorie, Carbs, Protein and Fat Goals, and enter your macros that you have calculated earlier.



## STEP THREE: ENTERING YOUR MACROS

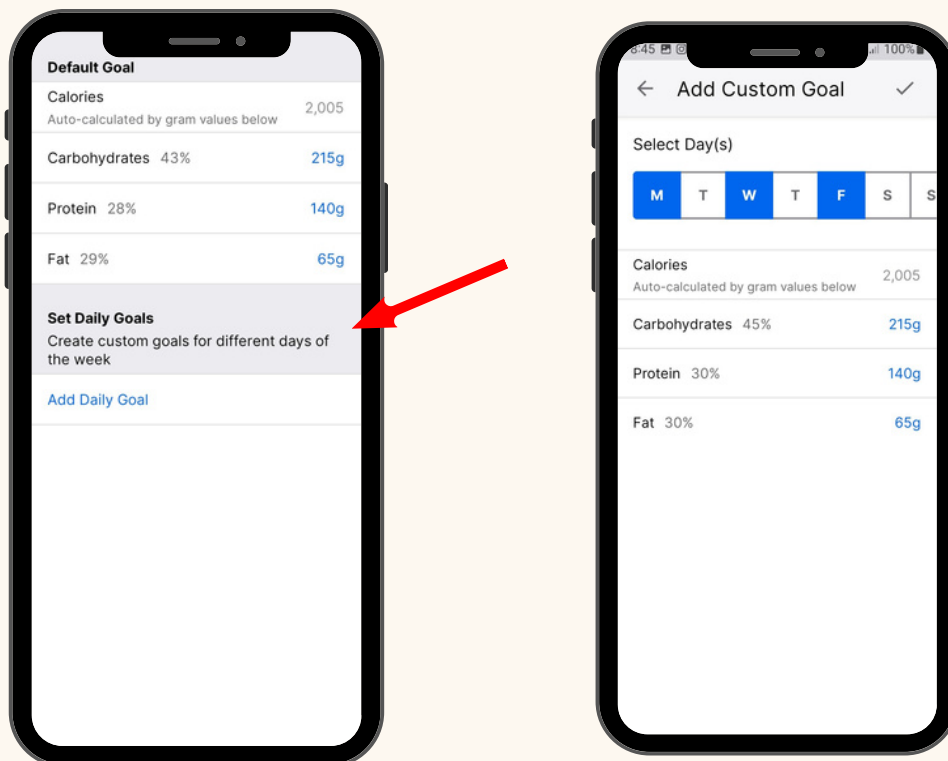


Once you have selected "Calories, Carbs, Protein and Fat Goals", enter your macro values. If you have the premium version, enter the "gram" value.

If you have the free version, you can only enter percentages, therefore you may not be able to select your exact calculated macro goals- just aim to have it as close as possible.

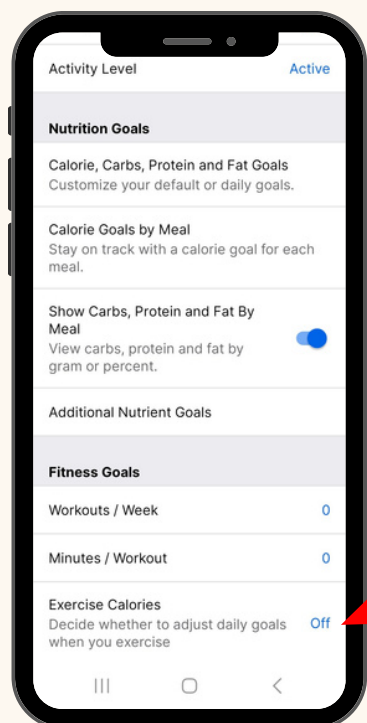
TIP: Please ensure that your unit measurements are set to "calories" and not kilojoules. If you need to change your unit measurements, simply go into settings > edit profile > units.

If you have different macro goals for different days, you can use the "set daily goals" feature and create custom goals for different days of the week (Only available with premium).





## STEP FOUR: TURN OFF EXERCISE CALORIES



Because you have already accounted for your activity levels when calculating your macro requirements, ensure that this option is switched off so that your calories don't change as per calories burnt through exercise. You can turn this feature off in "settings".



# 04 START TRACKING



# LET'S BEGIN!

Although flexible dieting allows you to "track as you go", it is always best to plan ahead, and pre-track as much as possible. This way, you set yourself up for success as you have a "plan" to follow! This does not mean that you are not able to change things up when you want, it simply means that you have a base plan to go by.

## BENEFITS OF PRE-TRACKING:

- You set yourself up for success by having a plan and
- Lower chances of having "this is too hard moments".
- You save time as you don't have to consistently pull your phone out throughout the day to track.
- You don't get to the end of the day and end up with an impossible macro split left to follow in order to reach your macro targets- (for example, 50g of protein but not only 5g of carbs and 2g of fats left).

## SO, HOW DO YOU PRE-TRACK?

Depending on your own preference, you can pre-track your macros by building yourself a meal plan that you can follow for a day, a week or even a fortnight...This is totally up to you. Some clients prefer to pre-track their macros for the next day, whilst others prefer to pre-track their macros at the start of the week and follow it for an entire week for time and convenience.

Whatever you choose to do- remember that consistency always comes first!



# MAINS FIRST, SNACKS SECOND

The easiest way to plan a full day of eating is to start with your THREE main meals first- Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner. You can then fill the gaps with snacks with the remaining macros. Use the template below to help you plan a full day of eating!

BREAKFAST

SNACK 1

LUNCH

SNACK 2

DINNER

SNACK 3

# FOOD DIARY

Okay, by now, you should have had your macros figured out, and have thought of your three main meals to enter into your food diary. To begin, click on "Diary". This is your diary where you enter all your food into.

1. Click "add food". You can then search for the food item you'd like to add OR use the "scan barcode" option. Always use the barcode option for packaged food. This will be far more accurate as it will give you the exact brand of food you're consuming.
2. Once you have scanned your barcode or selected your food, you will then need to enter the amount of food you are consuming. This will show you how many calories, and how many grams of protein, fats, and carbs that food contains. Once you're done, press the "tick" at the top.

## LET'S PRACTICE!

I want you to enter the following into your breakfast meal:

- x2 large eggs
- 80g Woolworths short cut bacon
- 40g of avocado
- x1 slice of Helga's gluten free wholemeal bread

(TIP: REMEMEBER THAT My Fitness Pal is a public food library that ANYONE can enter any data they like. You still need to double check that the data provided is correct (This will come with experience).



# FOOD DIARY

It should look something like this!

<b>Breakfast</b>	<b>407</b>
Carbs 18g · Fat 24g · Protein 27g	
Gluten Free Wholemeal, 41.5g Helgas, 1.0 slice	97
Egg 2.0 large	143
Short Cut - Bacon Woolworths, 80.0 g	117
This food is high in protein.	
Avocado, Hass, Raw Nuttab, 40.0 g	50

## TRACKING TIPS



Barcode: MyFitnessPal has a barcode scanner which allows you to scan food products that have barcodes. This is a great feature as it quick and easy and is likely to be accurate. Limit generic entries as much as possible!



Green tick: Whenever possible, select the entry with a green tick, as this means that it's been verified and its nutritional information should be correct. Remember, not all entries are accurate since anyone can create entries for all MyFitnessPal users to see.

**NUTTAB:** NUTTAB is the reference for the food database of Food Standards Australia. When a person creates an entry and adds "NUTTAB" to the name, it means that they have cross checked the data with other reliable sources.

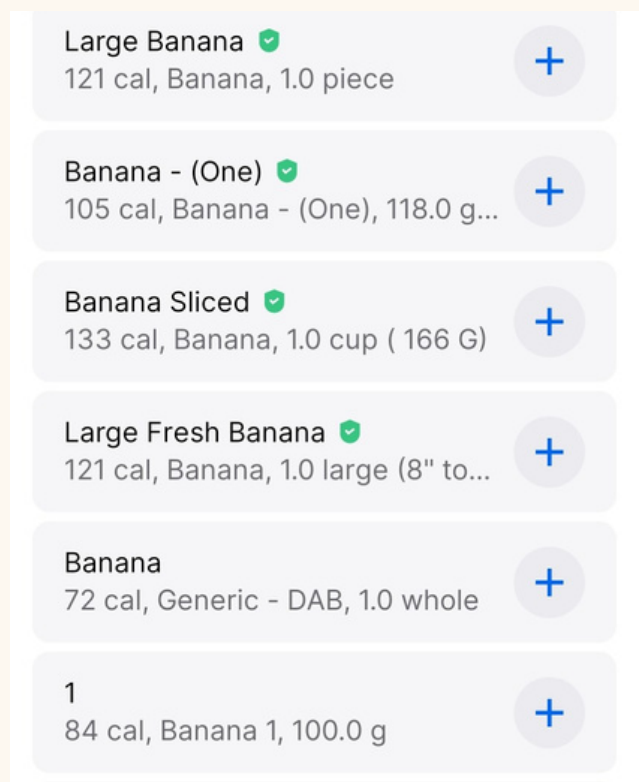
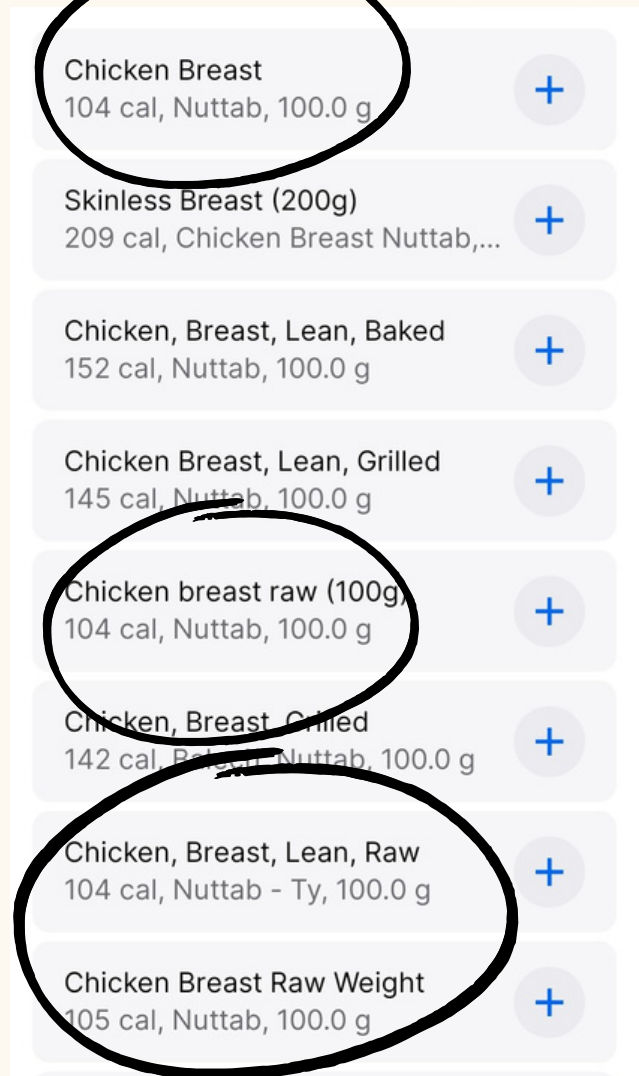
You can type 'NUTTAB' in the search engine when searching for a food. For example, "chicken breast NUTTAB".

You can see that there are many options to choose from, however **FOUR** of these options the same/very similar data. Therefore, are likely to be more accurate than the others.

#### UNIT MEASUREMENTS:

Make sure you are tracking via weight (grams). Measurements such as "big", "small", "1 cup", "1 tablespoon" etc. are often subjective, and inaccurate.

You can see that the results given for one banana range from 72-133 calories! Using weight measurements will be far more accurate.



## RAW VS. COOKED WEIGHT:

The macros for raw vs. cooked food will differ. An obvious example is the difference between uncooked rice and cooked rice. Rice expands in volume when cooked, therefore 100g of uncooked rice will contain different macros to 100g of cooked rice.

This applies to all other foods as well. You can choose to track either raw or cooked, as long as you are consistent with your method of measurement. Personally, we find that tracking raw weight is easier, as we often use raw weight when making a recipe.

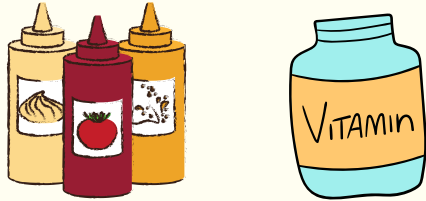
If you are cooking a recipe in bulk, the most accurate way to portion them into multiple servings is to track using raw weight, and then weigh your food again once it's cooked, and divide the total weight into desired servings. For example,

1kg of raw chicken breast to make 4 portions: Once cooked, this may result in 800g of cooked chicken breast. You then divide 800g into 4, which will give you 200g of cooked chicken per serve.





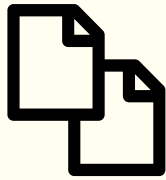
# OTHER TRACKING TIPS...



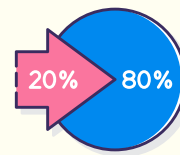
#1. Don't forget oils, sauces, seasonings & SUPPLEMENTS!



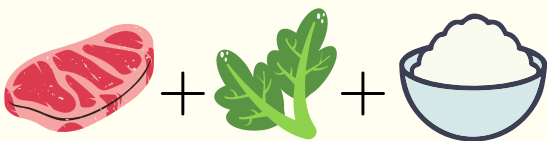
#2. Track your meals BEFORE consuming them as much as possible.



#3. Use the "copy to date" feature to copy meals to the next day to save time.



#4. Flexible dieting is not an excuse to fill your daily intake with as many treats as possible! It is an opportunity to include these foods in moderation (80% whole foods, 20% "soul foods").



#5. Keep it simple! Recipes with big ingredient lists are more time consuming to track & also have higher likelihood of tracking errors!

# READING NUTRITION LABELS

This is the serving size as determined by the food brand. It is only relevant IF you follow their recommended serving size

This tells us how many servings the brand says there are in the package

## Nutrition Information

(AVERAGE)

servings per package - 16

average serving size - 30g ( $\frac{2}{3}$  cup)

Use this to compare between different food brands or product. I.e. how much sugar does product A have per 100g compared to product B.

Remember, this gives you information about per serve determined by the brand, not you!

## Nutrition Information

(AVERAGE)

servings per package - 16

average serving size - 30g ( $\frac{2}{3}$  cup)

Per serve

Per 100g

# READING NUTRITION LABELS

	Per serve	Per 100g
<b>ENERGY</b>	432kJ	1441kJ

kJ (kilojoules) is a measurement of the units of energy that food gives us. This can be easily converted to kCaL (calories) by dividing the number by 4.1

In this example, there is 432 kJ (or 105 calories) per 30g of this product and 1441kJ (or 351 calories) per 100g

	Per serve	Per 100g
<b>ENERGY</b>	432kJ	1441kJ
<b>PROTEIN</b>	2.8g	9.3g

This tells us how many grams of protein per serve. If you are not going to follow the serving size determined by the brand, this is irrelevant.

This tells us how many grams of protein per 100g of that product. This is a better indicator of the nutritional value of the product.

# READING NUTRITION LABELS

	Per serve	Per 100g
ENERGY	432kJ	1441kJ
PROTEIN	2.8g	9.3g
FAT, TOTAL	0.4g	1.2g
— SATURATED	0.1g	0.3g
CARBOHYDRATE	18.9g	62.9g
— SUGARS	3.5g	11.8g

This tells us how many grams of carbs per 30g/ serving size in the left column & per 100g in the right column

This tells us out of the 18.9g of carbs, 3.5g of it is sugar; and out of 62.9g of carbs, 11.8g of it is sugar.

# READING NUTRITION LABELS

	Per serve	Per 100g
<b>ENERGY</b>	432kJ	1441kJ
<b>PROTEIN</b>	2.8g	9.3g
<b>FAT, TOTAL</b>	0.4g	1.2g
<b>— SATURATED</b>	0.1g	0.3g

This tells us how many grams of fat per per serve in the left column & per 100g in the right column

This tells us out of the 2.8g/ 100g of fat, how many g are made of saturated fat, and trans fat in some foods.

Don't forget to pay attention to fibre as well! A great rule of thumb is 3g or more per serve!

<b>FAT, TOTAL</b>	0.4g	1.2g
<b>— SATURATED</b>	0.1g	0.3g
<b>CARBOHYDRATE</b>	18.9g	62.9g
<b>— SUGARS</b>	3.5g	11.8g
<b>FIBRE</b>	6.4g	21.2g

# TRACKING ALCOHOL

It should be to no surprise that alcohol and should only be consumed in moderation due to its known negative effects to the body. It is also not recommended while dieting. However, if you are going to consume alcohol, it is important to know that alcohol contains 7 calories per gram! There are empty calories as alcohol has no use for the body. Please also be reminded that these calories are also NOT INCLUDING the mixer, or any other ingredient that the alcoholic beverages contain.

<b>Snack 1</b>	<b>281</b>
Carbs 45g · Fat 0g · Protein 0g	
Vodka 1.0 shot	97
Raspberry Cordial Bickford's, 50.0 mL undiluted	95
Schweppes Lemonade Schweppes Lemonade, 200.0 ml	89

It is very easy for calories derived from alcohol to add up as it is very calorie dense!

TIP: Always try to plan ahead so that you are able to allocate adequate amount of calories for when you choose to consume them. Low calorie alcohol beverages include those made with soda water, sparkling water and no sugar/diet soft drinks.



# SUGAR ALCOHOLS

Sugar alcohols, or also known as polyols are used in many food products such as in those labeled as "sugar free", "99% sugar free". Examples of sugar alcohols include:

- Erythritol
- Xylitol
- Sorbitol
- maltitol
- Lactitol
- Isomalt
- Hydrogenated starch hydrolysates (HSH)

In this modern day and age, where we are moving towards a healthier way of eating, many people have been reducing their sugar intake and using the use of sugar substitutes instead. While they are great from a caloric density point of view, they CAN cause digestive issues when consumed in excess.

Sugar alcohols are harder for the us to digest, therefore they will not raise blood sugar levels as quickly as ordinary sugar. This is the reason why they contain less calories! However, it is important to note that sugar alcohols are NOT calorie free, they are just lower in calories. If you have tracked your food in the past and notice that the macro and calories don't match up.... this could be the reason.



# SUGAR ALCOHOLS

Some food brands do not account for fibre and sugar alcohols in their products- although they DO contain calories- sneaky! It will refer you to look at the "NET CARBOHYDARTE". Net carbohydrates refer to the total amount of fully digestible carbohydrates contained within a product. Because insoluble fibre and sugar alcohols are considered indigestible, food brands sometime exclude them in "total carbohydrates". Therefore, it is important that you are aware of this when tracking macros in order to track as accurately as possible.

It's also important to remember that these foods aren't always the "healthy option". If consumed too frequently or in large amounts, they can cause digestive issues such as bloating, fluid retention, constipation or diarrhoea. Therefore, they should only be consumed in moderation, and should be avoided by those who have a more sensitive digestive system.







# CONCLUSION

WE HOPE YOU ENJOYED LEARNING  
ABOUT FLEXIBLE DIETING... THE  
RIGHT WAY!

*Thank you!*