



Keep Track: 5 Tips to Help You Make Better Food Choices

So how do you keep track of what you eat? Choose a format that works for you. Research shows mobile apps work well for most people.³ But a paper journal or notebook works, too.

Here are five tips to help you track your food choices to improve your diet.

1 Keep Track...But Don't Change Anything Yet

Keep track of all the food you eat and drink for meals and snacks.

Include time and date with each entry to help you identify specific eating patterns.

Be honest. Dessert, alcohol, second or third servings all count.

2 Count Your Calories

Apps make this easy and track calories for you. Everyone's calories needs are different. Men usually need more calories than women. And everyone needs fewer calories as they age.

Use a calorie calculator like (My Plate: <https://tinyurl.com/rd4tn7ae>) to help you find your daily calorie goal.

3 Pay Attention to What You're Eating

Read food labels to find out. Most packaged food labels include the number of calories. Pay attention to serving size...it might be less than you think.

Restaurant calories. Check the menu before you order. A typical fast-food meal (burger, fries, and soda) contains 1,000-plus calories.

4 Evaluate Your Eating Habits

Once you've kept at least a week of entries about your eating habits, take a closer look at what you've been doing. This helps you see what you're doing well, and where you can improve.

Total your daily calories, and make some changes if you need to.

Follow a healthy eating plan. Most of your food should come from fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts and seeds, and legumes. If you eat meat or dairy, go with fish, skinless poultry, and non-fat options.

Share your results with someone you trust. Or review your foods choices with your doctor or nutritionist. It's a smart way to help you be more accountable.

5 Set a Goal

Keep a food journal for at least a week. Track everything. Then set a goal to improve, lose weight or eat healthier.

Choose a food diary
Paper:
 Daily Food and Activity: <http://tinyurl.com/hcylldfo>
Web-based:
 My Plate Meal Template: <https://tinyurl.com/2d2cjhvn>
Mobile app:
 Lose It!: www.loseit.com

Train Your Brain to Make Better Food Choices



Eat this, not that. Have more fruits and veggies. Drink more water. You've heard the advice before. But are you doing it? If you're not, keeping track of what you eat can help.

In a recent Duke University study, researchers followed a group of 105 overweight people for 6 months.² One group measured their weight every day. Another group tracked everything they ate. And a third group tracked both.

On average, everyone lost weight. But the group that track their weight AND food choices lost the most weight (about 7 pounds), and kept it off.

"We have very strong evidence that consistent tracking — particularly of diet, but also one's weight — is an essential element of successful weight loss," says lead researcher Dr. Gery Bennett. "Consumers should look for apps that make it easy for them to track on a consistent basis.

How to read food labels
<https://tinyurl.com/9x42pf5>

References

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