



LiveLifeWell Food Journal



Keeping a food journal is one key to successfully improving your eating habits. Whether you are trying to lose weight, better understand your food consumption, or are focused on a particular health condition, thoughtfully recording what you eat will help you analyze your food choices to see where you have room for improvement.

It really works! A study in the American Journal of Preventative Medicine showed the effectiveness of keeping a food journal. Participants who kept a journal lost twice as much as those who did not. The act of writing down everything you eat brings a sense of awareness and mindfulness to your meal planning and consumption.

As you embark on this journey to healthy eating, make as many copies as you need of the food journal to keep you focused and on track.

How to Use Your Food Journal

1. **Get familiar with portion sizes:** One of the key factors in losing weight and maintaining a healthy weight is portion control. However, research by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration shows Americans often underestimate the amount they consume by as much as 25%! Check out the next page for more information.
2. **Track the time you eat:** Do you eat regularly, or do you eat a little and then overindulge late at night?
3. **Track your food and serving size at every snack or meal:** If you ate a hamburger, fries and a soda, list fries on one line and soda on another; then break up the hamburger into its components.
4. **Track your consumption and physical activity:** To prevent gradual, unhealthy weight gain, engage in approximately 30-60 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise, 3-6 days a week. Along with tracking your physical activity, use your food journal to track calories, fats, carbs, protein and sodium.

Calories: Here is an estimated amount of calories needed to maintain energy balance:

GENDER	AGE	SEDENTARY walking ≤ 1.5 miles/day	MODERATELY ACTIVE walking ≈ 1.5 - 3 miles/day	ACTIVE walking ≥ 3 miles/day
FEMALE	19 - 30	2,000	2,000 - 2,200	2,400
	31 - 50	1,800	2,000	2,200
	51+	1,600	1,800	2,000 - 2,200
MALE	19 - 30	2,400	2,600 - 2,800	3,000
	31 - 50	2,200	2,400 - 2,600	2,800 - 3,000
	51+	2,000	2,200 - 2,400	2,400 - 2,800

Source: US Department of Health and Human Services

Fat: Keep total fat intake between 20 to 35% of calories. Most fats should come from sources of polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fatty acids, such as fish, nuts, and vegetable oils.

Use this formula to determine how much fat you need in a day:

Example: $\frac{1,800 \text{ calories per day}}{\text{Calories needed}} \times \frac{35\%}{\text{Recommended intake}} = \frac{630 \text{ calories}}{9 \text{ calories per gram of fat}} = 70 \text{ grams}$

calories per day x = calories/9 calories per gram of fat = grams

Carbohydrates: Keep carbohydrate intake between 45-65% of calories. Choose and prepare foods and beverages with little added sugars or caloric sweeteners.

Use this formula to determine how many carbohydrates you need in a day:

Example: $\frac{1,800 \text{ calories per day}}{\text{Calories needed}} \times \frac{45\%}{\text{Recommended intake}} = \frac{810 \text{ calories}}{4 \text{ calories per gram of carbohydrate}} = 202 \text{ grams}$

calories per day x = calories/4 calories per gram of carbs. = grams

Protein: Keep protein intake between 10-35% of calories. Select lean meats, trim away any visible fats and broil, roast or boil meat instead of frying.

Use this formula to determine how much protein you need in a day:

Example: $\frac{1,800 \text{ calories per day}}{\text{Calories needed}} \times \frac{20\%}{\text{Recommended intake}} = \frac{360 \text{ calories}}{4 \text{ calories per gram of protein}} = 90 \text{ grams}$

calories per day x = calories/4 calories per gram of protein = grams

Sodium: Consume less than 1,500 mg of sodium per day.

5. **Track your water intake:** Water flushes toxins out of vital organs and carries nutrients to your cells. Drinking eight to nine, 8 ounce cups of water a day is recommended for your body to function optimally.
6. **Be mindful of your hunger level:** On a scale of 1-5, how hungry were you? 1 = starving, 2 = hungry, 3 = comfortable, 4 = full, 5 = stuffed. Record how you were feeling **before** you started eating and how you were feeling **after** you were finished.

Making Sense Out of Portion Sizes

Examples of a Serving Size:

- 1 slice of whole-grain bread
- 1/2 cup of mashed potatoes
- 1 small pancake or waffle
- 1/2 cup cooked vegetables
- 1 small baked potato
- 1 medium apple
- 1/2 cup berries
- 1 1/2 ounces of cheddar cheese
- 1 medium pork chop
- 1/2 cup of cooked rice or pasta
- 3-4 small crackers
- 2 medium-sized cookies
- 1 cup (4 leaves) lettuce
- 3/4 cup vegetable juice
- 1/2 grapefruit or mango
- 1 cup yogurt or milk
- 1 chicken breast
- 1/4 pound hamburger patty

Help With Portion Sizes: Rather than trying to memorize lists of ounces, cups, and tablespoons, simply compare the serving sizes of particular foods to familiar physical objects:

- A Serving of fruit or vegetables: A baseball
- A serving of dried nuts or fruit: A golf ball
- A baked potato: A computer mouse
- A serving of cheese: Six dice
- A serving of meat, fish, or poultry: A deck of cards
- A serving of ice cream: A tennis ball
- A pancake or waffle: A CD or DVD

Controlling Portion Sizes:

- Use smaller plates and bowls
- Put left overs away in a portion-controlled amount
- Never eat out of the bag or container
- Remove platters as soon as you are done eating so that you don't "pick" at it
- Choose foods packaged in individual serving sizes
- Ask for half of your meal to be brought in a to-go container at restaurants
- Share your dessert

Quick Tip to Portion Sizes: Get out a measuring cup or a food scale and practice measuring some of your favorite foods onto a plate, so you can see how much (or how little!) a 1/2 cup or 3-ounce serving is. This will help you "eyeball" a reasonable serving.

LiveLifeWell Resources

- **Partner with a Health Coach**
 - If you want support and encouragement to make changes to your lifestyle habits, consider working with a LiveLifeWell health coach.
 - To make an appointment, call **Healthways at (877) 292-1373**.
- **Talk to a Registered Dietitian**
 - If you need additional support in making changes in your eating habits, consider talking with a LiveLifeWell Registered Dietitian.
 - To make an appointment, call **Healthways at (877) 292-1373**.
- Go to **iLiveLifeWell.com** to find more resources available.

