

Small Changes Add Up

Here are more great ideas that will cut calories from your daily intake, possibly without your even noticing:

1. **Downsize Your Dishes.** Use smaller plates and bowls to help you eat less. We tend to fill up the dish we're using and then eat it all. Our brains also think we are getting more when the same amount of food is placed in a smaller dish.
2. **Savor Your Meals.** Eating slowly helps you consume only what your body needs to feel satisfied. Eating too quickly, in less than 20 to 30 minutes, leads to overeating and feeling uncomfortably full afterwards.
3. **Leave Some Food on Your Plate.** This is especially important if you grew up in the "clean plate club." By leaving even a few bites, you can focus more on your internal signals of satisfaction and less on eating food just because it is there.
4. **Don't Eat Out of a Bag or Box.** When you eat out of a package, you are likely to keep eating until it's all gone – no matter how many servings the package actually contains. Pour one serving into a small bowl.
5. **Choose Your Glass Wisely.** Here's another place where our eyes play tricks on us. When glasses are short and wide, we tend to fill them with more fluid and to drink more. Use a slender glass for any beverage except water.
6. **Rethink Your Drinks.** High-calorie beverages like soft drinks, juice drinks, energy drinks, specialty coffees and alcohol add calories just like solid foods. Whenever possible, replace these drinks with plenty of water.

Creating a menu: Sample menu pattern

Breakfast

Fruit or juice
Hot or cold cereal
Eggs
Breakfast meat (optional)
Toast, biscuit, pancake, or French toast
Choice of beverage

Lunch

Entrée or sandwich
Salad and/or vegetable (2 servings)
Bread or roll
Fruit or dessert
Choice of beverage

Supper

Entrée
Vegetables, two kinds (one starchy if desired)
Salad or additional vegetable
Bread or roll
Fruit or dessert
Choice of beverage

Developing menus

Follow these steps when developing menus:

- **Entrees:** Plan the meats and entrées, including soup and sandwich entrées, for your entire weekly menu's
- **Vegetables:** Select vegetables that are appropriate to serve with each entrée
- **Salads:** Pick a salad that coordinates with the entrée and vegetables; to increase fruit in the menu, consider adding fruit salads regularly

- **Desserts:** Choose a light dessert when the meal is very filling; to increase fruit on the menu, add fruit desserts regularly
- **Breads:** Offer a variety of whole-grain and white breads and rolls
- **Beverages:** Include low-fat or fat-free milk at least two meals daily
- **Breakfast items:** If variety is limited in breakfast items, provide variety in the form of juices, different types of eggs, fruit, and breakfast meats

2000 Calorie Diet

MyPyramid recommends that a menu of 2000 calories/day contains:

- 6 ounces (oz) of whole grains every day
- 2½ cups (C) of vegetables every day (include dark green and orange vegetables frequently)
- 2 C of fruit every day
- 3 C of low-fat or fat-free dairy foods every day
- 5½ oz of meat and meat alternates every day
- Each meal should offer contrast in flavor, texture, and color