



CHICAGO FIT
P E R F O R M A N C E

NUTRITION GUIDE





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UNDERSTANDING THE IMPORTANCE OF **HABITS**



The right habits done consistently are going to be the biggest key to your success with nutrition over your lifetime.



As you stack these habits on top of each other they're going to compound in effectiveness.



The goal is to stack habits on top of each other, and engineer a leaner healthier lifestyle you can maintain for the rest of your life.



Because the goal is to build sustainability and help you look, feel and perform better in life we're going to focus on 1-2 habits every 1-2 weeks.



If you're not ready for two habits per week which is fine, the focus on one new habit every 1-2 weeks and you'll still get amazing results.



Each week or two the goal is to maintain the previous weeks habits, and add a new habit or two to work on.



If you feel like you're executing on your previous weeks habits at least 80% of the time, then you're ready to stack another habit to work on.



The reality is if you commit to executing on these habits consistently you'll be well on the way. Let's go ahead and look at the very first habits you'll be working on! Path to a healthier, leaner and more confident version of yourself!



Let's go ahead and look at the very first habits you'll be working on!



≡ Habit #1:

EAT 1-2 PALM SIZED PORTIONS OF PROTEIN @ MEALS

- ✓ **Better blood sugar regulation**
- ✓ **Very satiating and you keep fuller for longer**
- ✓ **Body burns more calories to digest protein**

Under eating protein, and overeating carbs and fats throughout the day leads you to generally feel hungrier, increase food cravings and cause energy crashes, while contributing to muscle loss.

By having enough protein each day you'll have less energy crashes which will allow you to be more productive and think clearly without feeling like you need to eat every two hours.

By eating enough protein you'll feel fuller for longer, and be much more satiated after meals and snack. This naturally reduces food intake without thinking about it which is especially helpful for fat loss.

In a fat loss or muscle gain phase eating enough protein along with strength training is necessary to retain that hard earned muscle while losing fat.

Protein has the highest thermic effect of food which means more calories are burned by digesting protein than either fats or carbs, meat sweats anyone ? haha

Your Habit: Eat 1-2 Palm sized portions of protein at each meal, and sneak it in at snacks too (3-4 times per day)

For Those who are plant based here's some forms of protein for you to consider:



- Lentils
- Black Beans
- Garbanzo Beans
- Black bean burgers
- Seitan
- Plant based protein powder
- Tempeh
- Hemp seeds or protein powder
- Sunflower seeds or Pumpkin seeds
- Edamame
- Tofu
- Green peas



Habit #2:

TRACK YOUR FOOD INTAKE FOR A WEEK

✔ **Poor portion + calorie awareness**

✔ **Small daily errors add up**

✔ **Can still overeat healthy foods**

As humans we're all really bad at remembering what we've eaten during the day, especially when trying to recall things at the end of the day.

The only thing we might be might be worse at as humans is estimating calories and portion sizes when it comes to the food we eat.

Studies show that people unintentionally under report their calorie intake by upwards of 47%... that's a real statistic, stop and think about that!

Small consistent daily errors or forgotten foods can easily lead to your weight loss stalls and weight gain over time.

Eating whole nutritious foods is definitely a big step for your health and weight loss goals, but keep in mind that healthy food still contains calories, and you can overeat them if you're not aware.

I've coached a lot of people who ate "very healthy" but couldn't lose body fat, because they were eating too many calories in general.

Awareness is the key here as unconscious eating habits work against your goals usually when it comes to nutrition.

By tracking your food intake a food journal or a calorie tracking app, you'll be much more aware, and able to address those sneaky foods holding you back!

If you have a more health based goal you're working on tracking your food is great to see if there's any foods causing issues with you regularly.

Your Habit: Track your food intake for one to two weeks using a food journal or calorie tracker like myfitness pal.

Be diligent about entering everything you eat or drink so you can be as accurate as possible!

It's better to be precise about your food for a week or two and learn what you need to fix rather than continue to feel frustrated and not know what to fix in your nutrition.



≡ Habit #3:

EAT A 1/2 PLATE OF VEGETABLES AT EACH MEAL

- ✔ **High in fiber and micronutrients**
- ✔ **Lower risk of CVD, BP, Obesity, Diabetes**
- ✔ **Great for overall health & any fat loss plan**

By simply eating more fibrous vegetables daily you'll be able to stay a lot fuller for longer and as a result of the extra fiber and water which helps with fat loss.

Increasing your vegetable intake also lowers your risk of most chronic health diseases, stay fuller for longer and add a ton of micronutrients and fiber to your current nutrition plan.

Here's some of the extra benefits of eating enough vegetables on a consistent basis:

- High in fiber and micronutrients
- Lower cardiovascular disease risk
- Lower blood Pressure
- Reduce risk of diabetes and Obesity
- GI Health: constipation and diverticulitis
- Vision
- Great for any fat loss plan
- Low Calorie
- Helps with hunger and satiety

Eat different colors and textures of vegetables to keep your food interesting. Break outside your normal eating habits and try a new vegetable or fruit every two weeks.

Have some fun with trying a new veggie by going to a cultural store you wouldn't normally grocery shop at.

Your Habit : Eat a ½ plate of vegetables at each meal, as this will help keep you fuller for longer while eating fewer calories and helping with fat loss, and contribute to multiple areas of your health too.



☰ Habit #4:

GET 8-10K STEPS PER DAY



- ✔ Burns more calories than you think
- ✔ Double as stress reduction tool
- ✔ Burn more calories without stressing the body

I get it, walking isn't sexy and it doesn't leave you out of breath and in a pile sweat like other forms of high intensity exercise, but this doesn't mean that walking isn't a effective fat loss tool.

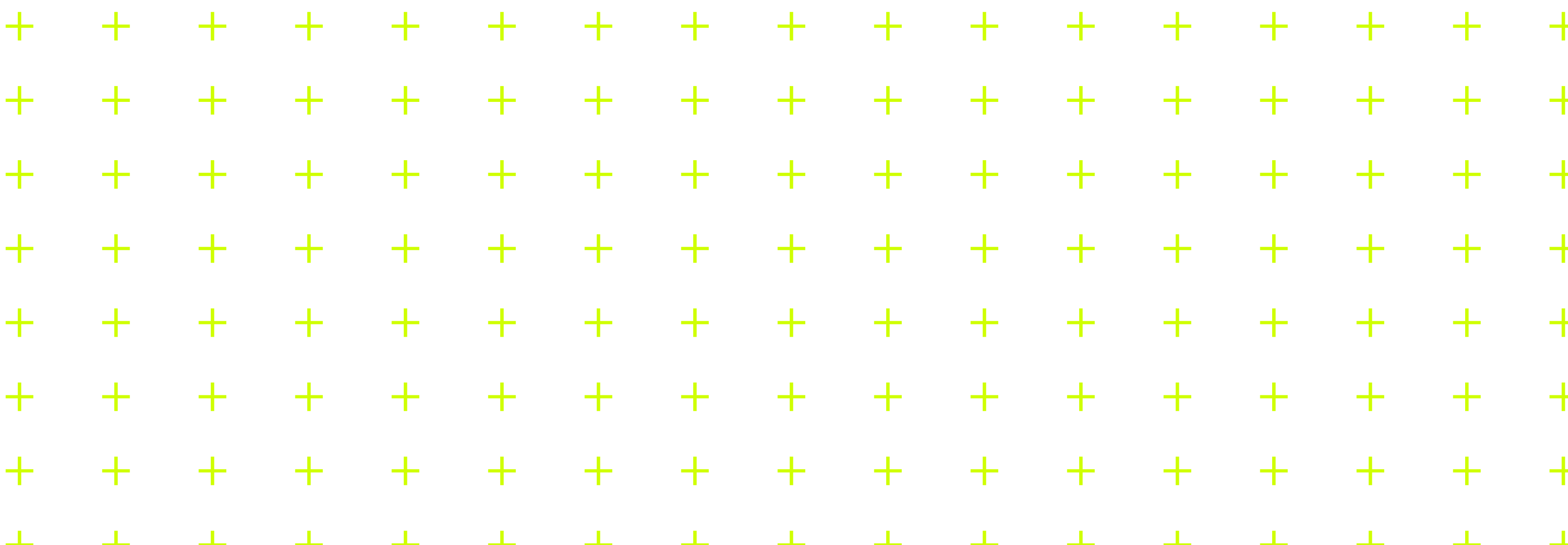
Believe it or not your daily activity burns more calories than almost any other component of your metabolism, and walking makes up a large part of that daily activity for most!

When compared to other forms of cardio walking also doesn't require any recovery, and can be done everyday to ensure you're keeping your calorie burn as high as you can.

Walking also serves as a stress reduction technique as well, toss in your headphones and listen to an audiobook, podcast or even use this time to call someone you've been meaning to catch up with.

The gold standard is 10,000 steps per day, but in reality just do as much as you can and and work your way up to the 10k mark, don't stress it!

Your Habit: Walk 8-10,000 steps per day, while this form of cardio is not intense the calories you burn do add up and help you to lose weight and inches, while also reducing stress and helping you to get some fresh air!





Habit #5:

PUT YOUR FORK DOWN BETWEEN BITES

- ✔ **Eating too fast causes overeating**
- ✔ **Slower eating makes 80% full rule easier**
- ✔ **Takes 15-20 mins to feel full/ satiated**

Many of you sit down at meals eat so fast you would think it was a race haha

When you eat that quickly it's no surprise that you'd end up overeating and feel excessively full afterwards.

When eating the gut has to signal satiety and fullness to the brain, and by eating too quickly you to shortcut that system and eat far more than you need before the brain turns off the hunger signal... the result is feeling stuffed and bloated.

It takes about fifteen to twenty minutes for the stomach to signal satiety in the brain, but you'll rarely find people that spend that much time at the dinner table, let alone eating.

By taking the time to relax, slow down and adequately chew your food it allows adequate time for your gut to communicate to the brain, and tell you to push the plate away.

Another less appreciated benefit of slowing down your eating is better digestive function. By adequately chewing your food it helps with the mechanical and chemical breakdown of foods.

By chewing you help to physically break the food down to smaller component so the stomach doesn't have to work as hard to pick up the slack from your lack of chewing.

On top of that your saliva contains an enzymes that helps to better breakdown your food.

An easy way to slow down your eating is to put your fork down in between bites at each meal and snacks.

This is a really simple, yet effective and natural way to take a little longer to eat meals, and encourage better chewing, digestion and allow you to stop eating when you're full.

This fork down method is perfect when you're eating meals in social settings and allows for some good conversation as an added bonus.

≡ Habit #6:

ONLY DRINK LOW OR ZERO CALORIE DRINKS

- ✔ **Liquid calories are generally less satiating**
- ✔ **Makes it very easy to overconsume calories**
- ✔ **Sugary coffee, beer, smoothie & wine add up**

Liquid calories are less filling, and don't keep you full for very long.

For anyone with a fat loss goal managing hunger and calorie intake is a large part of the puzzle, and liquid calories don't help with this.

Many of these liquid calories such as smoothies, sodas, fancy coffees and alcohol contain a significant amount of calories that can add up very quickly without you even realizing it.

Because these liquid calories aren't nearly as filling you can easily over do them and still be hungry for a meal shortly after.

Think of the amount of whole fruit you'd have to eat to get a full glass of fruit juice.

The amount of fiber and roughage from whole fruits would make it really difficult to consume that much food unless you blend it up or juice it.

Your Habit: Ditch the liquid calories, and concentrate on having very low or zero calorie drinks..

This will allow you to satisfy your cravings and sweet tooth without slowing down your fat loss results.

These drinks could include but are not limited to water, Zevia, Kombucha, flavored seltzer water or any other zero calorie drink.





≡ **Habit #7:**

USE THE SIMPLE MEAL TEMPLATE

- ✓ **Very filling and lower calorie foods**
- ✓ **No macro is off limits + Protein and vegetable focus helps to prevent overeating**

Most people can stick to their nutrition plan when they're in total control of their food choices and have meals prepared and ready to go.

However where most people tend to fall short and make poor decisions is on the weekends at social events or while eating out.

Getting overwhelmed in social situations because you don't know what to eat to stay on track is really common, and simple meal template is here to help.

Everyone does better when they have a plan to follow, and the simple meal template can be your plan moving forward.

The goal was to come up with the simplest and easiest way for you to eat in a social situation and enjoy yourself while sticking to your fat loss plan.

Your Habit Solution: **The Simple Meal Template**



- $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{3}$ plate protein
- $\frac{1}{2}$ plate vegetables or fruit
- $\frac{1}{4}$ plate denser carbs
- No macro is off limits, you can fill up your plate and your stomach while staying on point with your nutrition.
- The emphasis on protein and vegetables helps to prevent overeating.

≡ **Habit #8:**

KEEP EASY HIGH PROTEIN SNACKS IN THE FRIDGE

- ✓ **Filling & helps to curb cravings**
- ✓ **Good way to increase protein intake**
- ✓ **Helps with muscle retention in calorie deficit**

Empty kitchens can be just as bad as a kitchen filled with less nutritious food.

Even if you only want a snack but have an empty kitchen you're forced to go somewhere and buy a full meal which generally leads to eating more than needed.

Another scenario is that you'd head to the store and grab a snack while you're already starving and are more likely to choose easy to overeat calorie dense foods.

Your Habit Solution: Keep easy protein dense snacks on hand that make it easy to eat something that's filling and nutritious without overeating.

These easy protein sources can include things like cottage cheese, greek yogurt, hard boiled eggs or high quality deli meat or beef jerky.

As we discussed in one of the first habits protein is going to be one of the most important factors for managing hunger and staying fuller for longer, and holding onto muscle while dropping body fat.



≡ Habit #9:

MAKE SOME LOWER CALORIE SWAPS

- ✔ Allows you to mindlessly reduce calories
- ✔ Adds up during duration of fat loss phase
- ✔ Can eat foods you enjoy, but lower cal version

By simply making some lower calorie swaps throughout the day you can easily shave off a couple hundred calories without realizing it.

These will be small changes to your food choices, but those small changes done consistently add up over the course of weeks and months to big results.

Another benefit is lower calorie swaps allows you to still eat foods you enjoy and avoid feeling deprived, but stay on on course towards your goals.

Unfortunately there is no lower calorie swap for doughnuts and cookies, but I'm on the case!

Use some of these lower calorie options to unconsciously reduce your calorie intake while still eating foods you enjoy. Some easy examples of these are listed below.



- Pasta for spaghetti squash or miracle noodles
- Pasta for zucchini or carrot noodles
- Rice for cauliflower rice
- Egg whites with whole eggs
- Half your starches and double the veggies
- Use almond cashew milk/creamers instead of a heavier creamer
- Replace caloric beverages with low or zero cal beverages like Zevia, Kombucha and flavored seltzer water.



≡ Habit #10:

ON LESS ACTIVE DAYS DOUBLE THE VEGGIES & REDUCE CARBS

- ✔ Carbs aren't inherently bad or fattening
- ✔ Allows you to eat a larger volume of food
- ✔ Easy way to lower calories

There's nothing inherently bad or fattening about carbohydrates when you eat them in the right amount for your needs.

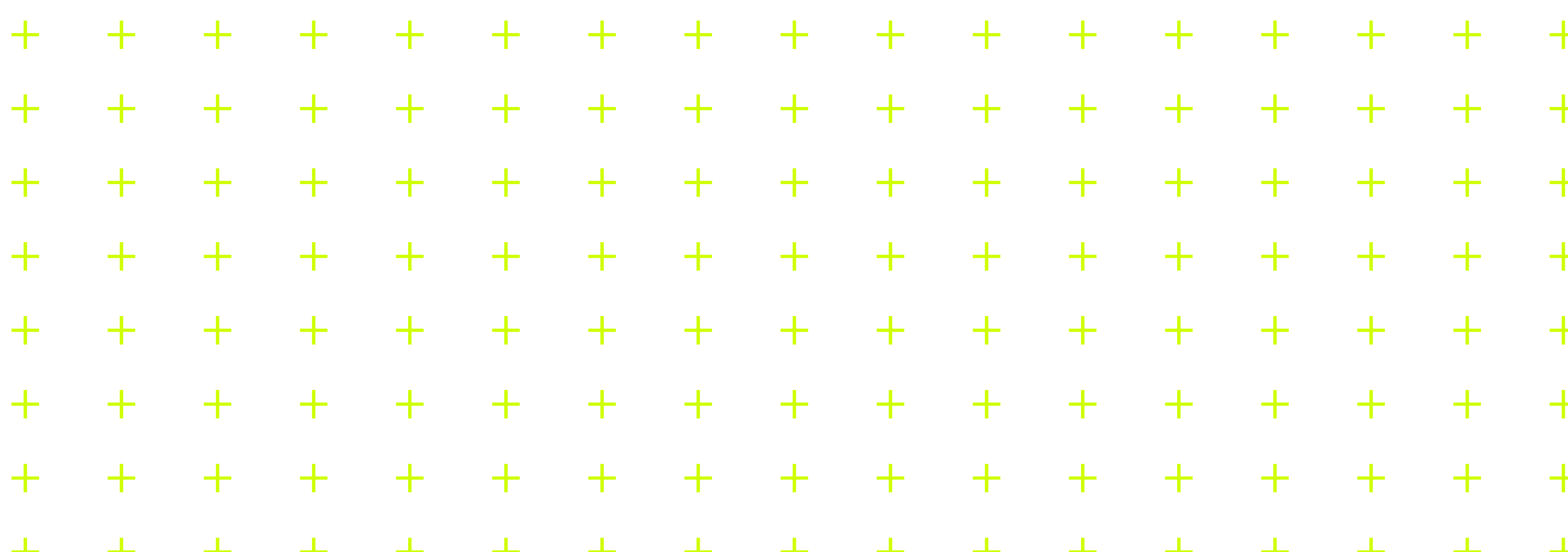
However you may find it much easier to overeat carbohydrates, especially when paired with sources of fat like butter and sauces that increase your calorie intake by a lot!

On less active days when you reduce carbs, you can eat a greater volume of food that still allows you to feel full by doubling your non starchy vegetables while dropping your calories too.

Your Habit Solution: On Days when you're less active, just doing some conditioning or want reduce denser carbs to have a lower carb/calorie day focus on doubling your vegetable intake, while reducing starches.

By doubling vegetables you'll be able to eat a larger volume of food that's filled with fiber, micronutrients and some water.

This larger volume of vegetables keeps you fuller for longer while keeping calories lower than if you ate the same amount of denser carbs.



A background image of a woman's face in profile, looking down at an apple she is holding. The image is in grayscale and has a dark, moody feel. Overlaid on the left side is a bright yellow rectangular box containing the text 'Habit #11:'. To the left of this box are three white horizontal lines, resembling a menu icon.

≡ Habit #11:

EAT UNTIL 80% FULL

- ✔ **Teaches you to check in with hunger cues**
- ✔ **Prevents mindless overeating**
- ✔ **Helps with practicing self control around food**

Many people eat so quickly it makes it really easy for them to overeat in the moment and then feel overly stuffed afterwards.

Over time this is guaranteed to lead to fat gain.

But there is a better way to eat, and check in with your hunger cues that help you to actually lose fat.

Some of the leanest cultures around the world they have the idea that you eat until you're satisfied, and no longer hungry for the next bite.

However here in the united states we have the idea and we need to be one hundred percent full after every meal, but eating to this level of fullness isn't necessary.

Eating beyond the eighty percent full mark doesn't leave you with any greater level of satiety or satisfaction than if you pushed the plate away sooner.

Your Habit Solution: Check in and ask yourself am I actually hungry for the next bite of food or am I just using the clean my plate mentality out of habit ?

This habit goes really well with the put your fork down habit as it would allow you the time during a meal to really ask yourself if you're actually hungry for the next bite.

In Okinawa Japan one of the leanest and healthiest cultures on the planet they have a saying "Hara Hachi Bu" which is a Confucian teaching that means "eating until you're 80% full."





Habit #12:

WATCH OUT FOR THE HEALTH HALO EFFECT

- ✔ When a food labeled as healthy people eat larger portions tending to ignore calories
- ✔ “Healthy” foods can still be high in calories
- ✔ Can be very easy to overeat due to HH effect

The “health halo effect” is when someone believes a food to be healthy they’ll allow themselves to eat more of that food because they think it’s good for them.

You need to keep in mind that just because something is “healthy” doesn’t mean it’s always going to be great for fat loss..

Many times when something claims low carb, low sugar or low fat it that doesn’t mean that the food is any healthier, or lower in calories it just doesn’t contain extra fats, carbs or sugar.

Take the time to look at the caloric content of some healthy foods and recognize that just because they are nutritious doesn’t always means they are going to be great for fat loss. Some common examples of health halo foods are:

- Salad dressings
- Nuts (especially roasted and salted)
- Nut butters
- Granola Bars
- “Health” bars
- Oils
- Granola
- Butter

A woman with long brown hair is shown in profile, holding a fork with food on it, looking down at it. The background is dark and out of focus.

≡ Habit #13:

HAVE A PLAN FOR DINING OUT

- ✔ Use these while dining out or at social events
- ✔ Helps to limit options
- ✔ Can stick to your plan & enjoy yourself socially

When it comes to nutrition being prepared and having a plan is crucial for success, and eating at social events is no different.

Dining out and social events is a common catalyst for people to deviate from their nutrition plan.

The reason people don't execute on the right habits in social settings is they don't have any kind of plan or structure to follow.

The Simple Meal Template and the Rule Of 2 are great ways to build those guard rails into your social life so you can enjoy time with friends and family while still staying on course with your nutrition.

Your Habit Solution: Implement the Simple Meal Template or the Rule of 2 while going out to eat at restaurants or social events. You'll have a basic structure to follow, and have some balance in your life too.

Simple Meal Template:

This is a very easy way to regulate your portions and construct healthy meals without counting calories or overthinking too much. As the name implies we want things to be simple and easy to execute on.



- ½ plate vegetables
- ¼-½ plate protein
- ¼ plate of starches

The Rule of 2:

No one wants to go out to restaurants and only eat salads, and I completely understand. Sometimes you want to kick your heels up.

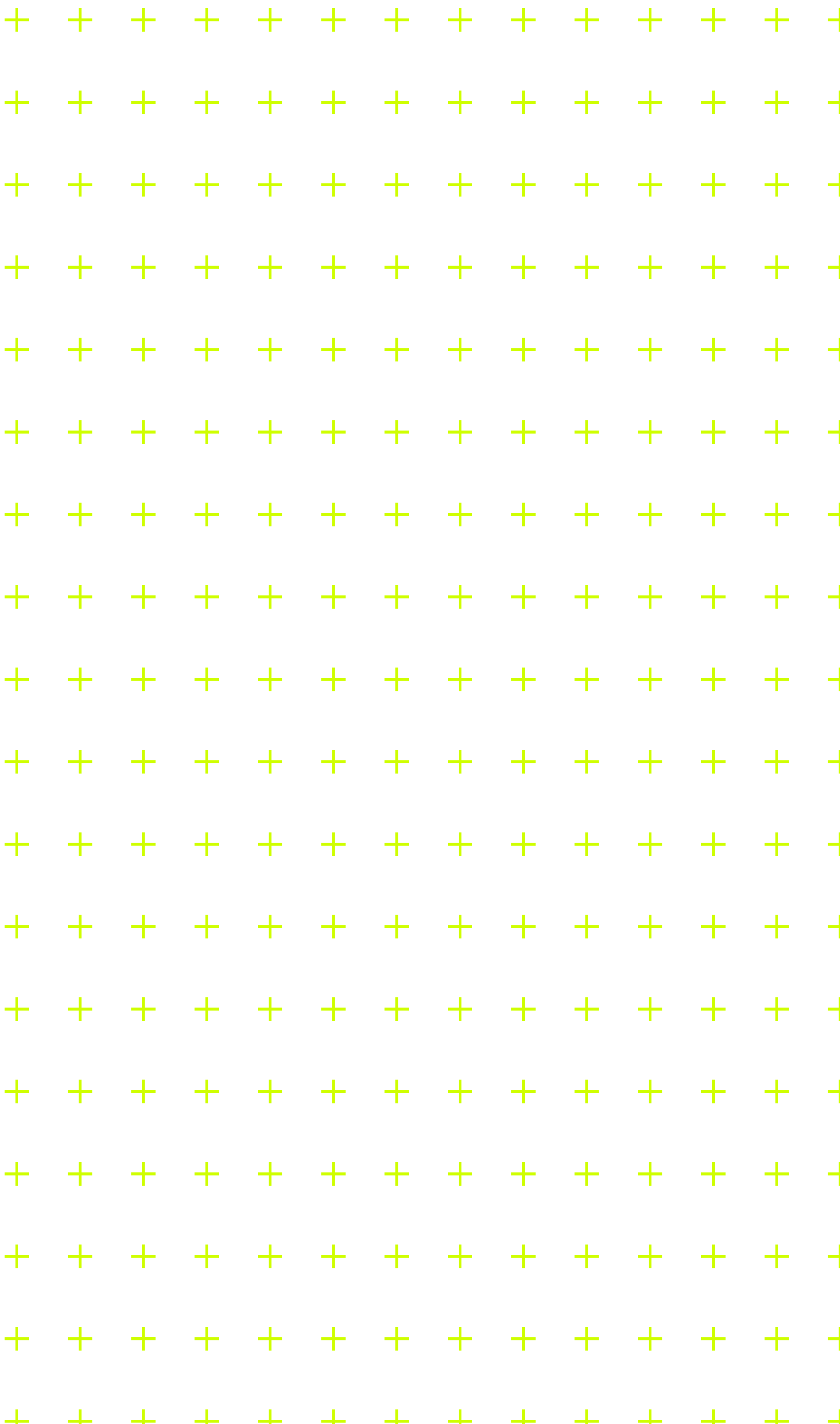
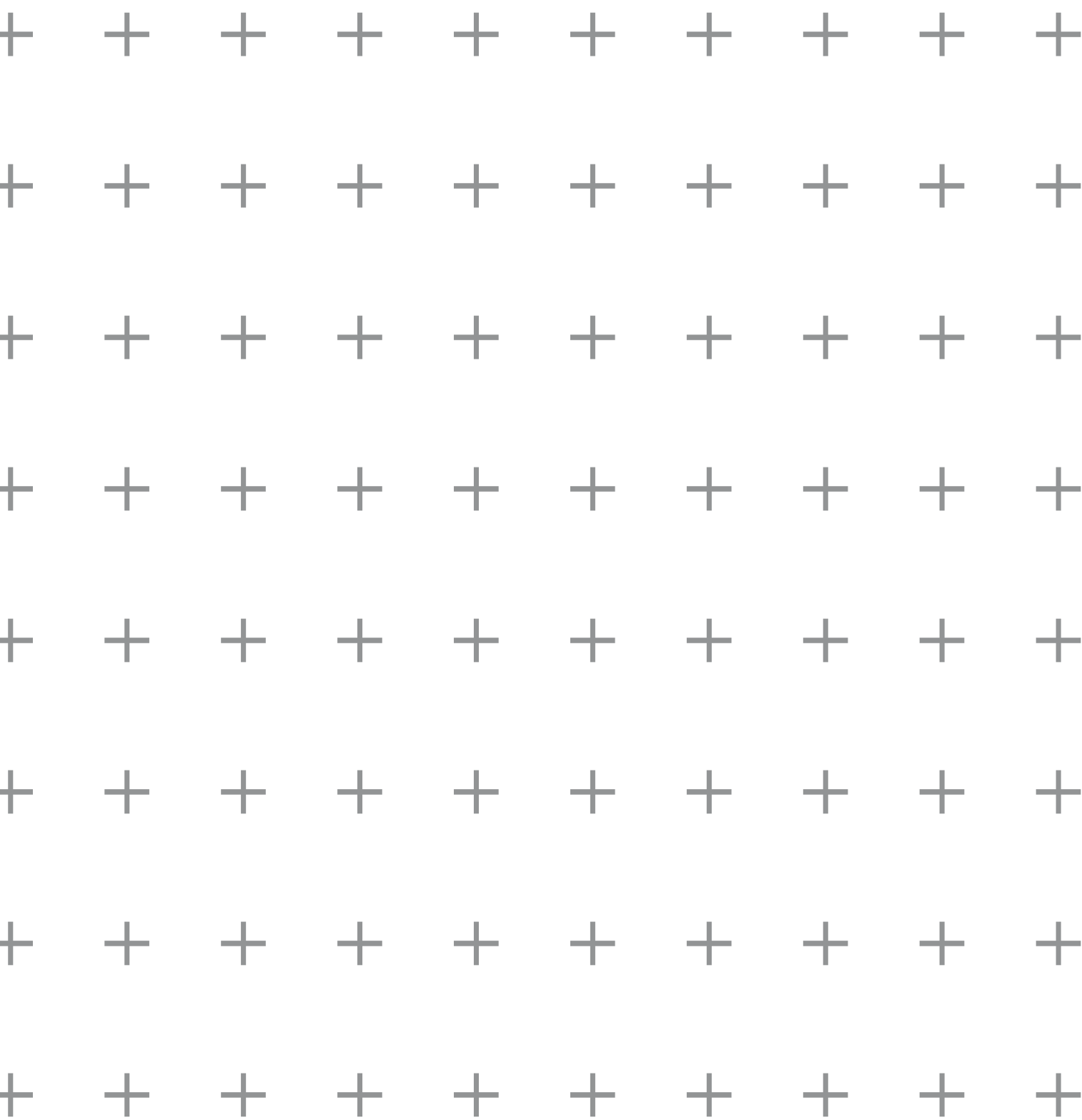


So how can you go out and enjoy yourself without entirely blowing your nutrition plan for the day ? Enter the rule of 2.

This is a principle that I learned from Brian Wansink’s book Slim By Design, and have found to be very useful with my clients.

When using the rule of 2 you order a reasonable entree and pick two additional smaller items like a glass of wine and bread or dessert.

Using this rule of two you don’t feel deprived when you go out to eat, but it does make you more selective about your choices.





≡ Habit #14:

USE SMALLER PLATES, BOWLS, & GLASSES

- ✔ **Smaller plates/ bowls make portions look larger**
- ✔ **Unconsciously view portions as larger**
- ✔ **Smaller utensils slow down eating**

The exact same portion of food on a larger or smaller plate is going to be perceived by your brain as a different portion of food, even though it's identical.

This is because you unconsciously examine how much room food takes up on a plate, in a bowl or how much a liquid fills up a glass.

When you eat off larger plates and bowls you'll unconsciously think larger portions that take up more of a plate are average. Over time those plus size portions become normalized in your mind.

Now due to the normalization of those larger portion sizes you assume that's how much you should be eating at each meal, and as result year after year your weight increases.

Your Habit Solution: When it comes to bowls, plates, glasses and utensils think smaller so normal portions appear larger and make you think you're eating more.

Smaller utensils will help you to slow down your eating a little and makes the portion feel larger since it takes longer to eat.

For glasses thin taller glasses are better for this purpose, and you can even use smaller forks and spoons to naturally slow you how quickly you eat as well.





≡ Habit #15:

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF PREMADE & EASY PREP FOODS

- ✔ **Outsource what you struggle to eat enough of**
- ✔ **Makes following through on habits easier**
- ✔ **Great for when you're low on time**

You might assume that because you struggle to get enough protein or veggies that you need to make more time to meal prep or work harder.

In some cases this can be true, but the majority of the time what I'm a much bigger fan of is making habits easier, not more difficult.

If you're short on time one of the most effective strategies is outsourcing what you struggle with. When I say outsource what you struggle with, here's what I mean:

Your Habit solution:

- **Struggle to get enough veggies:** Buy pre made salads, steamer bags of vegetables or pre cut up vegetables for an easy meal prep stir fry.
- **Struggle to get enough Protein:** Buy precooked proteins like rotisserie chicken, cooked sausage, or canned salmon, tuna or get pre cooked shrimp.
- **Struggle to get enough Dense Carbs:** For starches use microwave bags of rice or quinoa, pre cut and peeled squash to roast or sautee, microwave sweet or regular sweet potatoes or buy your starches from the hot case at the grocery store fully pre cooked.

To make this process of developing quick and simple meals when you're short on time I included The Simple 20 Minute Meal Matrix swipe.

EASY 20 MINUTE MEAL MATRIX ≡

PROTEIN: CHOOSE 1	VEGETABLE: CHOOSE 1-2	DENSER CARBS: CHOOSE 1	FATS: CHOOSE 1
			
			
			

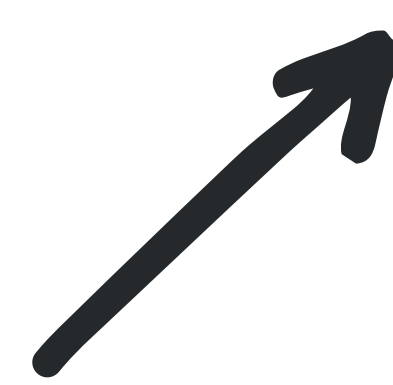
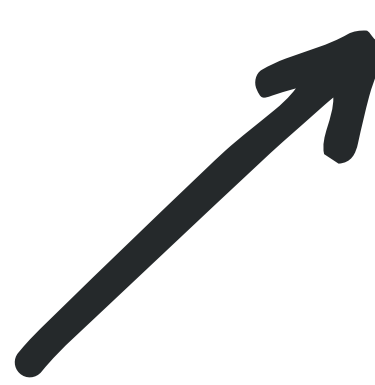
EASY 20 MINUTE MEAL MATRIX ≡

**PROTEIN:
CHOOSE 1**

**VEGETABLE:
CHOOSE 1-2**

**DENSER CARBS:
CHOOSE 1**

**FATS:
CHOOSE 1**





≡ Habit #16:

GET BACK ON TRACK WITH YOUR NUTRITION THE NEXT BITE

- ✔ **Single meal doesn't make you fatter or leaner**
- ✔ **Don't beat yourself up over it**
- ✔ **Learn from the situation**

One snack, bite of food or meal doesn't make anyone leaner or gain a significant amount of body fat in the same way one salad won't cause weight loss.

In the grand scheme of your weight loss one meal is very inconsequential if you choose to move forward and get back on track with things.

If you had a slip up and ate a meal that was more indulgent or off plan, your whole day and week isn't ruined.

You're still in control of all the other food you choose to eat for the rest of the day and can very easily course correct.

I encourage you to get away from the "I'll start over tomorrow" mentality, as it generally becomes a day of seeing how much junk food you can eat, and rarely do you actually get back on track the next day.

If you constantly allow yourself to "start over the next day" you only train yourself to give up on your diet at the first sign of a challenge,

Instead start teaching yourself yourself to course correct that same day.

Let's use an analogy to get this point across:

If you pop one tire on your car, you wouldn't decide to get out and pop all the other tires on your car right ?

A car with three working tires can still move forward, treat your nutrition the same way. When you slip up, keep moving forward it's not a big deal unless you let it be.

One nutrition slip up isn't a disaster, and just like a car with one popped tire you can continue to move forward! You might want to change that tire before too long though.

Slip ups are bound to happen, and it's part of the process that you can learn from to make a better decision in the future.



These slip ups are bound to happen, and if you always let a slip up landslide into a cheat day you're doomed to repeat the process.

Use this as your agreement with yourself!

