

# Setting Up For Success

## Tips to help you get started!

Now that you have an understanding of what flexible dieting is, let's talk about setting yourself up for success. Here are a few tips that we recommend to make things easier when you first get started. Remember, if you fail to plan, you plan to fail.

### **M** meal prep, meal prep, meal prep, preferably in bulk.

Meal prepping may seem like a pain at first, but it will make your life so much easier. Having food readily available in your fridge not only makes it super easy to throw together meals, but it also prevents you from grabbing unhealthy foods when you are pressed for time. It's all about setting yourself up for the best possible chance of success. We suggest food prepping once to twice a week, if possible.

**\*\*Please refer to the "Steps to Meal Prepping Guide" for more help with your meal prep!\*\***

#### **Protein Prep Suggestions**

- \* Grill, bake, or crock-pot chicken breasts or other lean protein sources seasoned however you like, slice them after, and store them in Tupperware. Whenever you pack lunch, or make wraps/sandwiches/salads, etc., you'll have your chicken and proteins all cooked, sliced, and ready to go!
- \* Brown lean ground beef or turkey in a skillet and store in Tupperware for salads,

to throw in some spaghetti sauce, or as a topping on sweet potatoes, etc.

- \* Use your favorite protein powder for breakfast smoothies or other protein powered snacks
- \* Boil a dozen or so hard boiled eggs for another on-the-go breakfast or snack option
- \* Make a large batch of protein pancakes or waffles, freeze them in individual servings and defrost and toast them as needed

#### **Veggie Prep Suggestions**

- \* Boil or steam your choice of vegetables (Fibrous veggies - broccoli, cauliflower, green beans, etc. work well) and store them in Tupperware for the week. Whenever it is lunch or dinner time and you need a side of veggies, you're ready to go!
- \* Chop up strips of raw bell pepper, carrots, celery, or any other crunchy vegetables you like to snack on. These are great to pack for lunch, or as a snack with some healthy Greek yogurt dip.
- \* Oven roast your vegetables for a bit more flavor and variety. Again, store in Tupperware for an easy grab for lunch and dinners.

- \* Buy pre-washed lettuce, or wash it yourself and store it in Zip-lock bags for easy salad preparations
- \* Have baby spinach readily available to throw into a salad, omelet, or wrap

#### **Fibrous Starch/Carb Prep Suggestions**

- \* Make a pot of brown rice or quinoa for the week, store it in Tupperware for lunches and dinners
- \* Bake, grill, or roast sweet potatoes and squashes, cut them up (for easier measuring) and store them
- \* Have sprouted wheat bread, whole wheat wraps, and sprouted wheat English muffin options readily available to change things up! All of these freeze really well and can be pulled out of the freezer as needed
- \* Cook a batch of whole wheat noodles and store them in a Zip-lock bag for pasta dishes, salad toppers, or other salad dishes.

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NOT  
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Measure your foods whenever possible, and “guesstimate” when you need to.

Whenever you first start tracking your macro servings, it’s important you are as accurate as possible with hitting your targets (how else will we know if your current macros are working?) The best way to do this is to weigh/measure the foods you are eating. You probably don’t know what 4 oz of chicken, 100 grams rice, or 16 grams of peanut butter looks like. As you weigh/measure your food, pay close attention to portion sizes. Become familiar with what 4 oz. of chicken breast looks and feels like, or 100 grams of sweet potatoes. Once you do so, you’ll be able to pretty accurately guess the portion sizes without measuring. Ideally, you will prep and plan your meals the day beforehand, so you can measure everything out at home and be ready for the day. However, if you find yourself out and about, most

restaurants now have their nutritional information online. If they don’t, it’s time to “guesstimate” your macros using your knowledge of portion sizes. If you order grilled chicken and rice, and you’re confident the dish contains about 1/2 cup of brown rice, and 3 ounces of grilled chicken, but the chicken seems a bit oily, add a tablespoon of olive oil into your tracking just to cover your bases. It’s not 100% ideal, but life isn’t always 100% ideal. Moral of the story – measure out your food as much as possible, but be flexible and guesstimate if you failed to plan accordingly.

Food scales are fairly inexpensive, and you can purchase them at Target, Bed Bath and Beyond, or on Amazon.

Meal Planning 101 – Fail to plan, plan to fail!

Planning your meals ahead of time is important when you first

begin tracking your macros. Eventually, you will become a macro ninja and longer need to plan in advance, but until that time, plan your meals out each night for the following day. Once you become comfortable with macro tracking, you’ll be able to just track each meal/snack as you go, but planning ahead of time makes it that much easier to stay on track.

Macro counting is essentially a big jig-saw puzzle. You are given X grams of protein, carbohydrates, and fats, and you need to plan your meals to reach those servings every day.

For example, say Panthro Pete’s macros for the day are 140 grams of protein, 180 grams of carbohydrates, and 50 grams of fat, and he enjoys having 3 large meals a day. (\*Remember, 3 meals a day is just Pete’s personal preference. If you are a 6-meal-a-day type of person, follow the exact same process, only divide your macros into 6 meals instead of 3.)

Pete will take those macro numbers and divide them up between his three meals, which calculates to roughly: 47g protein/60g carbs/17g fat per meal. From there, he’ll tackle each meal one at a time and find foods that fit. Let’s go to the next page for an example of how Pete may structure his meals. Remember, he is aiming for 60 grams of carbohydrates, 47 grams of protein, and 17 grams of fat at each of his 3 meals. His goal is to stay within +/- 10 grams of his protein and carbohydrate goals, and +/- 5 grams of his fat goal.

For Meal 1, Pete plans the following breakfast:

	Calories kcal	Carbs g	Fat g	Protein g	Sodium mg	Fiber g
Meal 1	561	57	18	47	76	9
Old Fashioned Oatmeal Quaker Oatmeal, 0.5 cup dry	150	27	3	5	-	4
Protein powder PEScience, 50 g	179	1	2	36	-	-
Creamy Almond Butter Salted Trader Joe’s, 1.5 tbsp(s)	142	5	13	5	75	2
Bananas, raw 100 g	89	23	0	1	1	3

For Meal 2, Pete plans to have some grilled chicken, sweet potatoes, rice, and vegetables:

	Calories kcal	Carbs g	Fat g	Protein g	Sodium mg	Fiber g
Meal 2	615	73	15	49	409	12
Rice - Brown, medium-grain, cooked 200 g	224	47	2	5	2	4
Broccoli - Raw 100 g	34	7	0	3	33	3
Roasted Sweet Potatoes Eurest, 4 fluid ounce	86	15	3	1	258	2
Cooked Chicken Breast Perdue, 4.5 oz.	180	-	2	39	112	-
Avocado Usda, 2 ounce	91	5	8	1	4	4



For Meal 3, Pete plans the following dinner:

	Calories kcal	Carbs g	Fat g	Protein g	Sodium mg	Fiber g
Meal 5	566	69	12	47	79	3
Beef - Round, top, lean only, prime, cooked, broille... 4.5 oz	274	-	11	40	78	-
Potatoes Sweet potato, 300 g	257	61	-	5	-	-
Beans - Snap, green, cooked, boiled, drained, with... 100 g	35	8	0	2	1	3

These leaves Pete with the following totals:

Protein	143
Carbohydrates	198
Fiber	24
Sugar	23
Fat	45

As you can see, Pete came within +/- 10 grams of his 140 gram protein goal (at 143 grams), +/- 5 grams of his 50 gram fat goal (at 45 grams), but he did not stay within +/- 10 grams of his 180 gram carbohydrate goal (he went over by 18 grams with a total of 198 grams). Pete also hit his daily fiber goal of 20-30 grams.

Pete can now start manipulating his food portions one macronutrient at a time to adjust his numbers until they fit within +/- 10 grams for carbohydrates and protein, and +/- 5 grams for fats. For example, Pete is 18 grams over on his carbohydrate goal for the day. He can start going through his planned meals and shave off small portions of his pure carb sources. By “pure carb sources”, we mean carbohydrate sources that strictly contain carbs such as rice, fruit, potatoes, etc., instead of foods like a whole wheat wrap that may also contain protein and fats. Maybe he will reduce his brown rice at lunch by 20 grams, or eat 50 grams less of sweet potatoes at dinner.

Remember the acronym K.I.S.S - Keep it simple, stupid. Create your meal plan as basic as possible to make it easier on yourself. It may seem daunting, but after a few weeks of planning and tracking, you’ll be pro before you know it! My Fitness Pal is extremely user friendly, and shows you the total macronutrients numbers for each day/meal as you log them.

**Be accountable and honest with yourself, and watch your BLT’s!**  
When we begin any new lifestyle change, we may blame the process or plan and think

it isn’t working. However, the reality often is we aren’t following the plan as best we can! It may seem trivial, but watch out for “BLT’s” - bites, licks, and tastes. It may seem like one bite of a peanut butter and jelly sandwich or tiny sliver cake is nothing, but those little bites add up quickly! For simplicity sake, let’s say each small bite you have is about 20-30 calories. No harm done, right? Well, let’s say throughout the day, you have 5 of these untracked bites – that leads to an additional 100-150 calories a day, or 700-1050 calories a week! Over time, those calories definitely make a difference! So before you feel like you aren’t progressing, reflect on what you’ve done each day. Have you hit your macronutrients within +/- 10 or 5 grams consistently? Have you weighed out your food and tracked everything accurately? Have you hit your workouts to the best of your ability? Are you planning your meals ahead of time, or have you slacked off and “winged it” lately? Always examine yourself throughout this process, and find ways to be better every day.

