



# 51 best- ever diet tips

Smart moves to slash calories, boost your motivation and more by Marissa Lippert, RD

## cut back on fat and calories

**1** Pile veggies on pizza instead of sausage or pepperoni (you'll save 200–300 calories per slice).

**2** Fill most of your grocery cart with items from the perimeter of the store—fresh produce, lowfat dairy, lean meats and seafood—says Dawn Jackson Blatner, RD, a spokeswoman for the American Dietetic Association.

**3** Check the calories and fat grams of “healthy” fast foods like muffins: A honey bran muffin can have as many as 550 calories!

**4** Swap high-fat, high-calorie condiments like mayo, butter and sour cream for lighter ones like mustard, salsa and hummus.

**5** Leave a third of every meal behind. One study found that when portion sizes were reduced by 25 percent, women ate 800 fewer calories a day and never missed them.

**6** Ditch the soda in favor of water or flavored seltzer water.

**7** Don't buy in bulk. Research shows that people who stockpile food products usually eat more (especially if the food is visible and easily accessible).

## lose while dining out

**8** Skip the bread (ask the waiter not to bother bringing the basket) and you'll save about 100–200 calories.

**9** Check the menu in advance and scope out healthy options. Many restaurants list nutritional info on their websites (or look on [healthydiningfinder.com](http://healthydiningfinder.com)).

**10** Split an entrée with a friend or ask the waiter to pack up half of your food before even bringing it to the table.

**11** Order two appetizers instead of an entrée. *(Please turn to 83*

**12** Eat a broth-based soup first, which makes you feel full and may reduce your total calorie intake by 20 percent, says research from Penn State University.

**13** Dip a fork into dressings or heavy sauces instead of pouring them all over your food.

**14** If a piece of chicken or a slice of pizza looks greasy, dab off some oil with a napkin—it can save you up to 40 calories.

## Cut calories without feeling hungry

**15** Eat water-rich foods, like fresh fruits and vegetables. You'll be able to eat larger amounts without consuming a lot of extra calories, suggests Barbara Rolls, PhD, author of *The Volumetrics Eating Plan*.

**16** Eat at least one apple a day. One study found that people

who ate an apple a day before a meal consumed fewer calories. They also drank less water during the meal.  
**17** Keep a bowl of granola in the kitchen. When you go to the kitchen for a snack, you'll be tempted to eat the granola instead of the cookie.

**18** Chew slowly. It takes 20 minutes for your brain to get the message that you're full. Aim to start last and finish last at mealtimes, suggests Linda Antinoro, RD, of Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston.

**19** Get a serving of protein at every meal and snack (during a meal, aim for 4 oz or about the size of your fist). Research shows that protein helps you feel full longer because it stabilizes your blood sugar levels.

**20** Choose whole fruit instead of juice. It's more satisfying since you get to chew instead of sip, and it saves calories (for example, swapping your morning 8-oz glass of OJ for half a grapefruit saves nearly 60 calories).

**21** Downsize your dinnerware. Eat your entrée off a salad plate and use teaspoons instead of soup spoons to make smaller portions seem bigger.

## break through a weight-loss plateau

**22** Keep a food diary. The more you know you're eating, the less you'll have.

**23** Strength-train (if you already do, step it up). Experts at the Mayo Clinic and Harvard University say that *(Please turn to 84)*

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An apple a day may keep excess pounds at bay.

using light to moderate weights builds lean muscle mass and helps you burn more calories and fat.

**24** Think before you bite. Banishing mindless munching knocks out a few hundred extra calories a day, says Brian Wansink, PhD, who runs the Cornell Food and Brand Lab.

**25** Be patient. It's normal for weight loss to plateau for 2-3 weeks.

### quell nighttime munchies

**26** Brush your teeth. It sends a signal to your brain that you're finished eating.

**27** Wind down without food: Try activities that keep your hands occupied; give yourself a manicure or create beaded jewelry.

**28** Turn off the tube. "Studies show that the more TV you watch, the more calories you're likely to consume," says Blatner.

**29** Try a no-calorie "dessert" tea such as vanilla hazelnut to satisfy your sweet tooth.

**30** Keep pre-portioned sweets on hand (lowfat pudding cups or individually wrapped squares of dark chocolate). When you're really craving a treat, have just one.

**31** Out of sight, out of mind: Stash junk food in the back of the fridge or cabinet, and place fresh produce at eye level.

### don't go overboard at a party

**32** Fend off a high-calorie night (not to mention a hangover) by having a glass of *(Please turn to 86)*



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Start your meal with soup and you'll fill up faster.

water or seltzer after each alcoholic beverage. Overimbibing lowers your inhibitions, making you more likely to reach for higher-calorie foods or larger portions.

**33** Assess your options (do a lap around the buffet) so you can make healthy choices and decide what's really worth splurging on.

**34** Wear form-fitting clothing. "You'll think twice before grabbing that extra chocolate truffle or sugary cocktail," says Lisa Young, RD, PhD, author of *The Portion Teller Plan*.

**35** Pass on calorie-laden mixed drinks in favor of a flute of champagne, a glass of wine or a wine spritzer (half wine, half seltzer).

**36** Have a healthy snack before you leave home so you aren't tempted to devour the first thing you see.

## look and feel slimmer almost instantly

**37** Munch on fruits and veggies such as cucumber, watermelon, asparagus and beets; all have mild diuretic properties, which helps flush away excess water weight, says Dr. Young.

**38** Limit gum, carbonated drinks and artificial sweeteners, which can cause your stomach to bloat up with air.

**39** Keep track of your fiber intake. Adding too much to your diet too quickly can cause tummy bloat.

**40** Avoid high-salt items to decrease water retention. Watch out for high-sodium canned soups and frozen meals (aim for no more than 550 mg of sodium a serving).

**41** Stand up straight. Bad posture weakens your core and ab muscles, potentially giving you a belly pooch.

## lose the last 10 pounds

**42** Calculate your new calorie needs. Once you've lost weight, your body needs fewer calories to keep losing more. Use free websites like [my-calorie-counter.com](http://my-calorie-counter.com) or [foodfit.com](http://foodfit.com) to figure out your new numbers.

**43** Wear a pedometer for a few days to see how many steps you generally take each day—then aim for at least 2,000 more (about a mile).

**44** Reevaluate your goal weight. Is it realistic? Calculate your BMI at [nblbisupport.com/bmi](http://nblbisupport.com/bmi). If your current weight falls in the middle of the "healthy" range, consider that your new (completed) goal and shift your focus to maintaining.

## stick to your diet when you're tempted to quit

**45** Reward yourself with something non-food-related, like a new book or a manicure, every time you reach a goal (losing 1 pound or skipping that extra glass of wine).

**46** Hang a little-too-tight dress where you can see it to remind yourself why you're working so hard.

**47** Write down the health goal that motivated you to lose weight in the first place—whether it's playing with your kids without getting out of breath or dropping your cholesterol.

## keep the weight off after you've lost it

**48** Weigh yourself daily, or at least weekly. If you're 3 pounds over your goal weight, pull back on what you're eating.

**49** Drop the safety nets. Give away or alter old clothes that are too big.

**50** Walk or do other exercise for at least half an hour a day. A study published in the *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity* found that it's essential for weight maintenance.

**51** Keep a "before" and "after" picture of yourself on your fridge or at your desk as a reminder of your weight-loss achievements. **wd**