



## Macro Guide

### ***IIFYM, Flexible Dieting, or Counting Macros***

All these terms refer to the same thing. It is just tracking your Macronutrients or nicknamed Macros. Macronutrients are just the Proteins, Fats and Carbohydrates that we eat. It is nothing fancy or difficult. It is simply tracking those 3 macronutrients that we all learned about during health in high school.

1 gram of protein = 4 calories

1 gram of carbohydrate = 4 calories

1 gram of fat = 9 calories

Most people are familiar with this information, but just need to be reminded of it. Everything we eat has calories and you can break those calories down into its macronutrients. Soon you will stop seeing food and you will start to see the macro breakdown instead!

So lets say that you get to eat 2000 calories a day. This can be broken down into its macros as follows:

Calories: 2000

Carbs - 200g X 4 Calories = 800 Calories

Protein - 150g x 4 Calories = 600 Calories

Fat - 67g x 9 Calories = 603 Calories

Add the calories together and it = 2003 calories. So there is a little rounding for the calories but now you can see where these numbers come from.

### **The Importance of Tracking Macros**

Simply tracking calories will lead to weight loss or weight gain but tracking macros will lead to body composition goals. When it comes to body composition not all calories are created equal. Each one of the macronutrients plays a pivotal role in our nutrition.

**Protein:** The king of the macros. Protein helps build and repair muscle. It also helps you stay full and lean as well. (Without protein we will not build muscle and will just be what is called “skinny fat.”)

**Carbs:** Our primary source of energy. Carbs keep our brains and our muscle operating efficiently and effectively.

**Fat:** Essential macro for us to survive. Essential to our brain health, to our hormones, and to protect our organs. Also, used to store energy.

Tracking your macronutrients is a great way to ensure we gain muscle or lose body fat and maintain muscle. It may seem like it is restricting or time consuming but it really frees you up to eat foods without guilt. You just have to make sure that it fits into your macros.

With tracking macros, no foods are off limits. We are not going to say “no cookies, no bread” or anything of that nature. Research shows that when you restrict certain foods it actually has a harmful affect on our ability to stick with a diet. We want you to account for these foods into your macros to

ensure it meets our overall macronutrient goals for the day. In essence, we would rather you have one donut today, fit it into your macros than to say “no” for two weeks and then have a half dozen donuts. Simply put, its all about moderation.

With that being said, we want most of our foods to come from healthy, nutrient dense foods such as lean meats, vegetables, fruits and healthy fats like avocado. As a general rule, it would be good to have these nutrient dense sources about 80% of the time and then allow for those other types of foods in the other 20% of the time.

## Measuring Foods:

**Measuring foods correctly can make or break your success. So here are a few tips when measuring food at home:**

1. Use a digital food scale for anything you can put on there.
2. Scan the bar code if it has one, but be sure to compare My Fitness Pal to the nutrition label to ensure it is accurate. Ensure the food you select in My Fitness Pal has a protein, fat and carb number entered.
3. Make sure serving size on the nutrition label and then make sure you input the serving size correctly on My Fitness Pal
4. Before measuring on the food scale or measuring cups check My Fitness Pal to see how it is measured whether it be grams or cups and so forth.
5. Measuring meats should be done raw. The meat will shrink and will cause a few changes in measurements. If for some reason this is not possible, just measure in its current form. A little extra protein that day won't kill you. Just don't let it happen too often.
6. If the food does not have a food label, then search in My Fitness Pal and find a close comparable. Be sure to weigh and measure. This typically would be for fruits or vegetables.
7. If you have an item that has a nutrition label but you are unable to find it in My Fitness Pal, simply go to the meal you want to add it to, go to my foods, then create food and enter the nutrition facts for the food. Again, just make sure you double check serving size.

## Eating Out At Restaurants

The great thing about counting your macros is the flexibility. Eating out can be easy with My Fitness Pal. You simply have to plan ahead. ALWAYS LOG BEFORE YOU EAT. We can't emphasize this enough. This can make or break your day.

1. Plan your meal ahead of time. As soon as you know where you are going to be eating, plan your meal. If you know you are going to be eating out for dinner, go ahead and type it into My Fitness Pal. Then build the rest of your day around this meal to ensure you hit your numbers.
2. If you cant find the exact restaurant or nutrition information, don't stress. Just find the closest comparable you can. Don't stress that it is not the actual restaurant. It is close enough.

For example:

- Mexican restaurants (Rosas, Chipotle, or Taco Villa)
- Sub place (look up [Subway](#) or [Firehouse](#))
- Pizza place ([Pizza Hut](#), [Dominoes](#), [Papa Johns](#))
- Italian restaurant ([Olive Garden](#), Fazzoli's)
- Seafood restaurant ([Red Lobster](#))
- Breakfast restaurant ([Ihop](#), [Denny's](#))

- Southern food restaurant ([Cracker Barrel](#))
- Burger restaurant ([Five Guys](#), Whataburger)

3. Estimating - Can't find the exact information for nutrition. For example, you are eating a burrito. You may have to build the burrito using individual items like, cheese or beef fajita. The more you weigh and measure at the house the better you will be at estimating when it comes time at a restaurant. If in doubt on the amount, always overestimate.

## Planning: If You Fail To Plan, You Plan To Fail

Plan your meals in advance! This does not mean that you have to meal prep, even though that is a great idea. Planning ahead can simply be typing in the foods and meals you plan to eat the next day to ensure you are going to hit your numbers for that day. Waiting only makes it harder and can make it very frustrating even for those who are very experienced.

## Alcohol

- Track alcohol by taking the calories of your drink of choice and then divide it by 9. You will subtract this number from your daily allotment of fats.
- Why fats and not carbs?
  - The main site of alcohol metabolism is in liver and also in the brain which is why you get intoxicated when consuming too much.
  - Alcohol is digested in the liver as a poison, as in, your body has no capacity to store it like the other macronutrients. Thus it is given top priority by our metabolism to get rid of it.
  - This increased urgency to metabolize the alcohol substantially slows dietary fat metabolism, causing a big increase in the chances that dietary fat intake while consuming alcohol will be stored as fat.
  - Beer example: 1 12oz Bud Light = 110 calories
    - Divide 110 by 9 and you get 12.2g of fat
    - Then you subtract 12g from your fats for the day
    - So if you were eating 60g of fats for the day, you would have 48g of fat left
  - Liquor example: Whiskey and Diet Coke
    - 0 cals for the diet coke. 1 shot of whiskey = 72 calories. Divide 72 by 9 and you get 8
    - Then you subtract 8g from your fats for the day
  - Wine Example:
    - 5oz glass of red wine = 125 cals
      - Divide 125 by 9 and you get 13.888
      - Subtract 14g from your fats for the day
    - 5oz glass of White Wine = 120 cals
      - Divide 120 by 9 and you get 13.3333
      - Subtract 13g from your carbs for the day

### How to input Alcohol into My Fitness Pal:

1. Go to My Foods
2. Create New Food
3. Type in the beverage of choice and always put Macro after the name so you know.
4. Enter the serving size
5. Enter the total calories of the beverage just as shown above.
6. In the fat column, input the calories divided by 9 or the amount you are supposed to take out of your fat.

7. Save - This will store this item in the My Foods section for easy access in the future.

## **Bad Meal**

The world is not going to end with one bad meal. If for some reason you go way over on your carbs because of a bad choice at lunch. You will simply do the following:

1. Limit if not eliminate carbs the rest of the day.
2. Get as close to your protein number by the end of the day.
3. Do not go over your calories for the day.
4. You will sacrifice your fat if you go over on carbs, not protein.

If you go over on fats, you will simply follow the same steps as above and sacrifice your carbs. Always try to hit your protein goal.

## **Bad Day**

The world is not going to end with one bad day, but it might if we don't get back on track. Just get back on track the next day. Thats it, nothing special. Just get back on it.

## **Additional Tips:**

1. Include a fat, carb and protein in every meal. This will ensure you don't get stuck with 100 grams of protein left at the end of the day.
2. Count your macros before eating and make sure you input into My Fitness Pal.
3. Always weigh your food.
4. Be sure to read nutrition labels for serving sizes, for prepared vs unprepared nutrition facts. Always be detailed.
5. Eat all your macros. Don't leave anything on the table at the end of the day. Don't think "if I don't eat it all, I will see faster progress." This will only hurt us in the long run, so trust us when we say don't do it.
6. Commit to the program. Work hard to hit your numbers everyday.
7. It all comes down to consistency. Consistently hit your numbers and the results will come.

Understanding macros and how to track will teach you so much about food and about how your body responds to certain foods. This information will create a healthy and sustainable relationship with food.