Beginners Guide to Taking Control Of Your Own Nutrition: How To Lay Out a Plan For Success

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Warning:

Before starting any nutritional plan or exercise regimen consult your doctor. The author of this information accepts no responsibility for any harm, injury, or death that may occur from using the following information

Intro

My aim with this book is to equip you with the tools you need to set up a nutrition framework to help you achieve your goals. There are no "secrets" or "top tricks" in these pages. Layed out is a step by step approach for setting up an if it fits your macros (IIFYM) style nutrition plan.

IIFYM puts the power in your hands to include foods that not only provide your body with the nutrients it needs, but also foods you crave and want. It's this balance that creates habits and consistency giving you results for long periods of time.

By the end you will have learnt how to calculate your caloric needs based on your goals, the macronutrients you should eat, how you will structure those into meals, the foods you should eat, the supplements that may be worth your money, and how to set up a realistic timeline.

Each chapter walks you through every step with examples and reasons why each step is important. For those of you that want to skip all the words there is a quick sheet near the end that takes you through the calculations without the explanation.

Keep in mind, for all of this to work, I suggest downloading a macro tracking app, such as My Macros. You are required to weigh out and be accurate with the recording of your food intake as often as possible, so you'll need a food scale.

If by the end of this book you still have questions please contact me through my website www.RevampTS.com.

Let's get to it.

Step 1: Calculate Your Caloric Needs.

Calories in versus calories out is the foundation of weight gain or weight loss. In order for you to lose weight your body must have less fuel coming in than it requires, making it turn to stored energy sources, such as fat, to make up that difference. This is called being in a deficit. To gain muscle at an appreciable rate, you body needs an excess of supplies to fuel workouts and grow, so you have to take in a surplus of calories.

In order to calculate a deficit or surplus you must first find the required amount of calories to maintain your current body weight at your activity level. This is done in the following steps where we calculate your Basal Metabolic rate, and then your Total Daily Energy Expenditure.

1. Calculate your BMR or Basal Metabolic Rate

I.e the calories your body uses throughout the day

To do that we need the following: sex, age, height (CM), and weight (KG)

We plug that information into the formula below:

Men: [10 x _____(weight)] + [6.25 x_____(height)] - [5 x _____(age)] + 5

Women: [10 x _____(weight)] + [6.25 x_____(height)] - [5 x _____(age)] -161

2. Next we will calculate our TDEE or Total Daily Energy Expenditure.

This takes into account you activity levels to find out how many calories you burn throughout that day as you go about daily tasks.

To figure this out we use the following formula:

TDEE=BMR x Activity level

Activity level multipliers are as follows:

For men:

Sedentary (little to no exercise) BMR x 1.2

Lightly Active (light exercise/sports 1-3 days/week) BMR x 1.375

Moderately Active (moderate exercise/sports 3-5 days/week) BMR x 1.55

Very Active (hard exercise/sports 6-7 days a week) BMR x 1.725

Extremely Active (very heavy exercise/physical job/training twice a day) BMR x 1.9

For Women

Sedentary (little to no exercise) BMR x 1.1

Lightly Active (light exercise/sports 1-3 days/week) BMR x 1.275

Moderately Active (moderate exercise/sports 3-5 days/week) BMR x 1.35

Very Active (hard exercise/sports 6-7 days a week) BMR x 1.525

Extremely Active (very heavy exercise/physical job/training twice a day) BMR x 1.7

Step 2: Calculate how many Calories are needed to gain or lose weight

Now that we have our TDEE we need to know how to add or subtract calories to either lose (think fat loss) or gain (think muscle building). In order to lose we need to be in a caloric deficit, meaning we eat less then our body needs daily so it has to resort to using our stored sources of energy i.e fat. To gain we need to do the opposite, or be in a surplus of calories. This means we eat over our daily needs so our body as an excess of materials to support hard training, recovery, and muscular growth.

On average there is about 3500 calories stored in a pound of bodyweight. We can simply take this 3500 and divide it over 7 days, or one week, giving us a 500 calorie a day difference needed to gain or lose a pound a week. So now we have a formula:

Gain:

TDEE + 500

Lose:

TDEE - 500

Now you can adjust these numbers up or down. 750 will be roughly 1.5 pounds a week, and 1000 will be about 2 pounds a week.

Now keep in mind the more extreme you push this the more negative side effects can be. Depending on your starting point, aiming for a more than 2 pound weight loss a week may increase your chance of muscle loss. Conversely, trying to gain more than 2 pounds a week may cause a larger than ideal amount of fat gain compared to muscle. The safest bet is to start at the lower and and slowly increase the difference if you aren't seeing the desired results.

Step 3: Set up your Macros

Now that you have your calories figured out it's time to assign them to different macronutrients. The three macros are carbs, fats and proteins. Each macro plays a role in your diet.

Carbs act as a "fast" fuel source being stored in your muscles and liver as glycogen. A gram of carbs provides 4 calories. Activities that are at high intensities such as lifting weights or sprinting will use these stored carbs as fuel. It is important to have carbs in your diet to support you training to either grow, or maintain muscle.

Some carbohydrate sources also provide fiber. Not only will it help keep you full, it helps maintain healthy digestion and slows down the movement of food in your intestines, which may help with nutrient absorption.

Fats are often hated and people think they need to be avoided in order to stay or get lean. A gram of fat provides 9 calories. While fats don't offer a significant performance benefit, they do have a few other functions. Firstly stored body fat supplies our body fuel for low intensity activities such as walking or working. They also support proper hormone balance, production and function.

The last macro is protein, the one everyone can't get enough of in the fitness industry. A gram of protein provides 4 calories. Protein is known for it's important role in muscle growth and repair, however, it also has other roles such as creating important enzymes in our body and maintaining the health of connective tissues. In a diet protein is also the most filling and satiating macro. Having lots of it regularly will help stave off hunger during times of lower caloric intake.

Now that you know a brief overview of the macronutrients I hope you can see how eliminating one of them may be detrimental in the long term. While certain dietary strategies aim to do this with the promise of faster fat loss, more often than not a balanced diet will prevail in the long term. Removing or minimizing a macro source may not only create health and performance problems, but can decrease the likelihood of long term adherence.

So how much do we need of each macro?

Well it depends on a few things. Activity level, body fat level, goals and adherence abilities to name a couple. What is going to matter most is finding a balance of what can maintain you activity level day to day and your

performance in the gym while minimizing cravings and maximizing your ability to stay on the diet. Each macro is going to have a range and it will be up to you to find where in that range accomplishes that balance.

Protein intake has always been heavily debated in the health and fitness industry. Some suggesting upwards of 2 grams per pound of bodyweight to maximize muscle growth, and then some as low as even 10 grams a day to maintain health. Both of these end ranges are a little absurd and unmaintainable. It seems a range of .8 to 1.25 grams per pound body weight is going to cover most people's needs. Generally the leaner you are, or the larger the deficit you are in, the more you're going to want to lean towards 1.25 grams. If you are in a large surplus, or carry a lot of body fat compared to muscle, you may error toward .8 grams. For a lot of people a great place to start is 1 gram per 1 pound of body weight.

The next macro we will calculate is fat intake. Now fat intake doesn't have as much a range as it does a minimum. Where it gets manipulated is for allowance of carbs in the diet. Generally a minimum of .3 grams per pound bodyweight will be enough to maintain health and hormone function. Fat can be taken higher if someone is having trouble eating enough to reach the calories needed to gain weight as each gram provides 9 calories, however carbs should be at a high enough level first, in order to support performance and recovery.

Which brings up to the last macro, carbs. Once your protein and fat macros are decided on, calculating carbs just requires some basic math. By taking our daily calories and subtracting the calories from protein and fat, we will get our remaining calories. Divide this number by 4 (the number of calories 1 gram of carb supplies) and we will get our carb amount.

Now fibre intake is something people often forget about. The recommended fibre intake is between 25 and 30 grams a day. This should be adjusted based on your size and the amount of food you take in. The bigger you are and the more food you eat, the more fibre you should intake. Now this is simply supplied from your carbs and will be indicative of your food choices. Usually relying more on processed foods results in a low fibre intake, while natural whole foods such as grains, fruits and vegetables will provide a diet full of fibre.

Because this can be quite complex I wanted to provide an example where I take someone through the steps of calculating out their macros.

So we will say this person is 235 pounds and is currently trying to lose some fat. They workout five times a week and really don't want to lose any muscle mass. They have calculated their TDEE to be 3150 calories a day, and

have set themselves up in a 500 calorie deficit, meaning if they eat 2650 calories a day they will lose roughly a pound a week.

So let's start with their protein. We are going to put them right in the middle of the range and give them 1 gram per pound bodyweight. So 235 grams of protein a day.

Next is their fat intake. This person trains very hard and loves carbohydrate rich foods. So we are going to put their fat on the lower end with .35 grams per pound bodyweight. This works out to be roughly 80 grams (82.25 to be exact, but I like simple math).

So to calculate their carbs we will use this formula:

(Daily calories - (grams of protein x 4) - (grams of fat x 9)) / 4 = grams of carbs

Or in their case

(2650 - (235 x 4) - (80 x 9))/4 = 247.5 (or rounding to 248)

And we will set him at a fibre goal of 28 grams per day!

So his macro breakdown ends up being:
Protein: 235 grams
Fat: 80 grams
Carbs: 248 grams
Fibre: 28 grams

This Balance can be changed and altered throughout his diet depending on his needs and preferences. Over time your body may adapt to being in a deficit or surplus and you may have to increase of decrease calories to keep seeing progress. Anytime you make a change to calories, or a macro amount, you simply just refollow the steps and end with the same calculation.

Step 4: Nutrient Timing

Nutrient timing is a fancy way of saying "when should I eat my macros throughout the day." It's a combination of meal frequency and macro nutrients distribution in each meal. While this is far less important for success than nailing your calorie intake and macro split, it can help with adherence and may offer some advantages when it comes to supporting training.

Let's start with meal frequency. From eating 8 meals a day like some professional bodybuilders to eating one meal a day, much like protein intake, there is a huge range of options for meal frequency. And while these extreme ends of the range may offer benefits to certain populations, like most things, settling in the middle is often best. Most people seem to do well between the range of 4-6 meals, with 5 being a great go to.

5 meals a day is great, usually consisting of 3 whole meals and 2 snacks, because it allows you to eat often enough to stay full and maximize nutrient uptake, while still having enough calories at each meal to make them satisfying. Adding more meals will make them smaller, which may be beneficial in a surplus to eat more food easily. Eating less meals will make each one more satisfying in a deficit, but may leave you hungry for more hours of the day. Like choosing macros, finding your ideal balance is key and is individualized to your lifestyle and time table. Having 5 meals a day has the average person, who is awake for 16 hours, eating every 3ish hours or so.

Having one of these meals in the 2 hour window after your training session may offer some benefits in terms of recovery or muscle growth as some theories may suggest there is an increase in nutrient absorption, particularly carbohydrates and protein.

Once you've chosen your meal frequency you can begin to think about how you want to distribute your macros in each meal. The simplest option is to evenly distribute them throughout the day. Each meal will roughly have the same amount of protein carbs and fats as all the others. You may want to have smaller snacks and larger meals, so maybe your two snacks have 14% of you calories allocated to them each, and your meals have 24% each. Some other options are higher carbs the first three meals of the day and higher fat the last two, or vise versa. Some people put most of their carbs in the meal before and two meals after training.

The key, again, is personal preference. Nutrient timing is incredibly complex, but the reality is that it is not necessary to nail down for success if calories and macro intake is in check.

Some things I do suggest doing, however, are:

1. Eat some protein at every meal
2. Avoid grazing as often as you can, try to have scheduled meals
3. Try to eat 2-3 hours before the gym
4. Eat something directly or up to 2 hours after the gym
5. Try not to get into the habit of hoarding calories/macros for the end of the night. Try to have a balanced distribution throughout the day.

Step 5: Food choices

After the framework of the diet is constructed we need to start thinking about what we need to eat at each of our meals to meet our macro requirements and stay under our calories. This is where they beauty of following an IIFYM style diet comes into play because you are not forced to stick to only a few types of foods and can eat the foods you enjoy…to an extent.

One of the downfalls of not being told what to eat for your macros is that people can fall into the trap of eating calorie dense, low nutrient food for a large majority of their day, and substitute all their protein intake with shakes and bars. While you can most certainly lose fat doing this, there are some downfalls:

1. You get hungry fast: Processed foods often digest really quickly and don't satiate hunger for long. This leaves people starving and having to go over their calories in an effort to put their hunger at bay.

2. Lack of fibre: This goes hand in hand with point one. Processed foods are often void of fibre. This can lead to gastrointestinal upset and discomfort, or irregular bathroom trips.

3. No nutrients: A steady intake of vitamins and minerals can do wonders for feeling better, recovering better, and overall just functioning better. A diet that includes little wholefoods can yield low amounts of these nutrients. This leaves people feeling like garbage.

Finding a balance between nutrient dense, whole foods and the foods we crave is the key to long term diet adherence without sacrificing health or performance. The mindset I suggest adopting is called the 80/20 rule. 80 percent of your calories are allocated to nutrient dense foods, while the remaining 20 percent can be used for foods you are craving.

So if you are having 1750 calories a day that means 1400 calories should be used on meats, fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts, whole wheat breads, and the like, leaving 350 calories to be used on a fancy coffee, or chocolate bar, or any other treat you want.

At the end of this write up will be a list of my "Go-to-Foods" that makes up 80% of my food intake. It will be broken down into the subcategories of protein, fat, carb, and vegetable sources that you can quickly reference a good food choice for a specific macro.

I will say, however, that for those that struggle to gain weight, you may want to resort to eating more calorie dense foods more often. Now you still want to get a good supply of nutrient dense foods first to meet your daily needs, but have some faster digested food options will make putting down the calories easier.

Step 6: Filling in the gaps

Supplements, unfortunately, are often people's first stop when it comes to getting in shape. The promise of fast weight loss and quick muscle gain wrapped up in a pill is a hard offer to pass up on. However, very few supplements live up to what they advertise and leave you with no changes except a lighter wallet.

While most supplements are not worth your money, I do think there are a couple that can help support your diet. The important thing to note here is to support, not to replace. Don't get stuck getting all your protein from powder and all your nutrients from a multivitamin. Make sure that you are buying a supplement to fill a specific gap in your diet.

1. Protein powders: Protein powders offer a quick, cheap source of protein. Coming from many different sources from pea, to beef, to whey or casein, finding a protein that digests well for you and you can regularly stand the taste of, while fitting your budget is key. They tend to be great after a workout, as part of a snack or a good "on the go" alternative to the standard sources of protein i.e meat. It is worth noting that some protein, such as casein, digest slower than others, making them more ideal for feeling full or before bed.

2. Fish oils: I can not say enough good things about fish oil or omega-3 supplements. With potential benefits ranging from heart and brain health, eyesite, healthy joint function, skin health, fat loss, or muscle gain, omega-3 intake seems to benefit most people. While an established recommended intake has yet to be pinpointed it seems like most adults benefit somewhere between taking 1-3 grams daily. So if you aren't eating fatty fish several times a week, supplementing pills or oils may be ideal.

3. Individual vitamins and minerals: While eating a variety of whole foods should allow you to meet most of your vitamin and mineral requirements, depending on your needs, you may come up short on a few. This is where purchasing individual vitamins or minerals might be beneficial to you. I suggest working with your doctor, naturopath, or a dietician to properly identify these gaps, but most often the culprits are Vitamin D (especially if you live somewhere with low sun exposure) and Magnesium, and for females iron and calcium. Again double check your diet or get blood work done to make sure you are deficient.

4. Creatine: Creatine is probably one of the most well supported and researched supplements that there is, and yet people are still misguided about it. It doesn't just cause water gain, it's not a steroid, and it's not only for men. In simple terms, creatine is going to help support your muscles produce energy during high

intensity activities such as weight training. It's going to help you push out an extra rep or two, resulting in more or maintaining muscle mass. Right now monohydrate is the only source of creatine with enough research behind it to recommend. 3-5 grams daily is enough to see results.

5. Caffeine supplements (i.e pre workouts): Caffeine has become the norm in society. Daily coffee and energy drinks are the standard. In the fitness industry pre workouts are the go to before the gym. They help people with energy levels and give them the push they need to work hard in the gym. The main driver of coffee and pre workout, the thing that makes them so wonderful, is of course caffeine. Caffeine makes us feel goods, heightens our senses and gives us the energy needed to conquer our day or workout. I am a huge fan of caffeine because of these benefits and therefore give it the okay. Try new pre workouts, find the ones you like the best, and used the recommended dose. Enjoy that morning coffee to get through the day!

Be weary as there are a few drawbacks, especially when caffeine reliance and intake gets high. Probably the biggest question you need to ask yourself is: Am I drinking caffeine because I am actually tired, or am I tired because I chronically drink caffeine. See caffeine has this effect on sleep where if it is in the body it can decrease the quality, or quantity or sleep. Thus starting the cycle of waking up tired and having more caffeine to get through the day, resulting in poor sleep and so on and so on. So caffeine is great until this happens. So I recommend a couple of things:

   a. Limit yourself to 1, maybe 2 sources of caffeine a day. So your morning coffee and a preworkout. This will limit the amount of caffeine you take in.

   b. Only use it when you will actually benefit. If you wake up feeling awesome and full of energy it is unlikely that having caffeine will increase that further. Take the opportunity to skip the coffee.

   c. Cut off caffeine 8 hours before sleep. Caffeine can affect you for a long time, whether you feel it or not, so stopping consumption at a certain time can help minimize its effects on your sleep. If you train in the evening there are some caffeine free pre workouts that will still help with focus and pump.

So that's my list. 5 very basic supplements that can help support your nutrition plan and get you to your goals. Right now there just isn't enough positive research for me to suggest more. By all means if you enjoy BCAAs during your workout or like the way a certain fat burner makes you feel, have at it, but you most likely aren't getting many benefits from them and that money could be spent elsewhere, like on high quality foods.

I will say there may be a host of other supplements that support health and wellness for joints, inflammation, and digestion, but I just wanted to touch on the ones that relate mostly to body composition and the gym.

Step 7: Timelines and Goals

Now this could arguably be the first step, but I wanted you to have some buy in before we got to this point. You've calculated your calories and your macros. You know when you'll be eating your meals, and what foods you'll be eating. You went to your local supplement store and bought your favourite pre workout and protein powder. Now the question that is often asked: How long is this going to take?

This is often a difficult question to answer because It depends on so many variables such as weight to lose/gain, adherence, activity levels, planned trips etc; and it can deflate people's motivation.

We unfortunately get bombarded with 3 week challenges, rapid fat loss transformations, or ads promising 10 pounds of muscle in 3 months. The reality is, is that for most people losing fat or gaining muscle is a long arduous task that requires consistency for weeks, months or years. People don't like to hear this and often spend the same amount of time jumping from fad to fad not making any progress that it would take to reach their goal.

I have a few steps to giving rough expectation for a timeline. I will use fat loss as an example, but muscle gain is a fairly similar approach.

So however many pounds you think you have to lose to get the body you want, double it. More often than not, people think that the six pack they want is 5 or 10 pounds away when in reality it is 20-30. They grind to get to the 10 pounds they thought they had to lose gone, and then feel incredibly defeated when they aren't where they thought they would be. Instead they should be focused on long term continuous change. This way, losing ten pounds is a huge win, not a perceived failure. If you double it and it turns out you did only have 10 pounds to lose, great! You just got to your goal faster than you thought you would.

Now that you have a rough number in your head, let me set up the expectation of weight change per week. I used to say half to one percent of body weight a week. So if you weighed 200 pounds you could lose or gain 1-2 pounds a week. However, that is based off a perfect world. A world where all of the calculations we use are 100% accurate, you never fall off your diet, your sleep is perfect, and basically life doesn't happen.

But that's not the world we are operating in. We make mistakes, face drawbacks, get stressed and lose sleep. Many things go wrong. So with that being our reality, I suggest hoping for .5-1 pounds lost per week. This may

not seem like a lot, or more likely not as much as you wanted to hear. Some people may experience more change, and that's great, but if .5-1 pounds is the expectation then these seemingly small changes become huge.

These add up becoming 5 pounds, 10 pounds, then 20. You can maintain this lifestyle and you keep plucking away day by day. Then one day you step on the scale and your at your goal. All those workouts, meal preps, and days macro counting become worth it.

So once you have your estimation of the pounds you want to lose divide it by .5 and 1 to get the number of weeks it will take to get there. So if you have thirty pounds to lose you are looking at between 30 and 60 weeks of consistent work. Let's use the middle ground of 45 for the next part.

That seems like a big number, but how many years have you put off doing this right just to be disappointed with where you are at. For many they have been off and on dieting for 3,5,10 plus years and still aren't happy. These are the people looking for the quick fix. They care about the result not the journey, so they never get to the finish line. If this is you then ask yourself: Is it worth spending 45 weeks straight, being as consistent as you can, putting forth all your effort and reaching this goal you've set, or not? If you answered no, then go back to your 4 week diets and challenges and I wish you the best.

If your answer is yes, let's get to work.

Use the tools I gave you. Work hard every day. Eventually, over time, you will reach a point where you are happy with your body.

Cheat Sheet

Calculate Your BMR

Men: [10 x _____(weight)] + [6.25 x_____(height)] - [5 x _____(age)] + 5

Women: [10 x _____(weight)] + [6.25 x_____(height)] - [5 x _____(age)] -161

Calculate TDEE

TDEE=BMR x Activity level

For men:

Sedentary (little to no exercise) BMR x 1.2
Lightly Active (light exercise/sports 1-3 days/week) BMR x 1.375
Moderately Active (moderate exercise/sports 3-5 days/week) BMR x 1.55
Very Active (hard exercise/sports 6-7 days a week) BMR x 1.725
Extremely Active (very heavy exercise/ physical job/ training twice a day) BMR x 1.9

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Moderately Active (moderate exercise/sports 3-5 days/week) BMR x 1.35
Very Active (hard exercise/sports 6-7 days a week) BMR x 1.525

Calculate Calories to Gain/Lose Weight

Gain:

TDEE + 500

Lose:

TDEE - 500

Calculate Your Daily Macros

Grams of Protein= BW (lbs) x .8 to 1.25

Grams of Fat= BW (lbs) x 0.3 minimum

Grams of Carbohydrates= (Daily calories - (grams of protein x 4) - (grams of fat x 9)) / 4

Top Go to Foods

Proteins

Food	Serving Size	Calories	Carbs	Proteins	Fats	Fibre
Chicken Breast	100 grams	103	0	23	1.2	0
Chicken Thighs	100 grams	114	0	19.7	3.9	0
Eggs	1 egg	82	1	6	6	0
Egg whites	100 grams	44	0	10.9	0	0
Extra Lean ground Beef (10%)	100 Grams	174	0	21	10	0
Salmon	100 grams	179	0	20	11	0
Tilapia	100 grams	95	0	20	1.7	0
Shrimp	100 grams	95	0	20	1.7	0

Other Sources: Protein Powders and any other meats. Macros will vary based on Brands

Carbs

Food	Serving Size	Calories	Carbs	Proteins	Fats	Fibre
Oatmeal	100 grams	383	68	13	6.5	10.1
Long Grain Rice	100 grams	348	80	7.1	0	1.3
Potatoe	100 grams	86	1.6	20	0	3
Banana	1 Banana	113	27	1.3	0	3.1
Apple	1 Apple	100	25	0	0	4.3
Kiwi	1 Kiwi	44	10	1	0	2.1
Orange	1 Orange	66	15.4	1		3.1

Other Sources: Any kind of fruit or whole wheat breads. Macros will vary based on Brand

Fats

Food	Serving Size	Calories	Carbs	Proteins	Fats	Fibre
Butter	1 TBS	48	12	0	0	0
Oil (coconut, olive, avocado)	1 TBS	126	0	0	14	0
Avocado	100 grams	179	9	2	15	6.7
Natural Nut butters	1 TBS	96	3	3	8	1
Almonds	20 grams	122	4	4	10	2.3

Other sources: Nut/Seeds or butter macros may vary from brand to brand

Vegetables

Food	Serving Size	Calories	Carbs	Proteins	Fats	Fibre
Broccoli	100 grams	38	6.6	2.8	0	2.6
Spinach	100 grams	26	3.6	2.9	0	2.2
Cauliflower	100 grams	29	5.3	2	0	2.5
Green Beans	100 grams	36	7.1	1.8	0	3.4

Other sources: Any non Starchy vegetables is an option. Variety is king

**Please Keep in mind this is a far from complete list but is simply to give you an idea of good food options to make up 80% of your caloric intake.