



Overview of 53 Weight Loss Actions



Weight Loss Actions Category Red: Eating in a structured way

No	Action	What to do	Why does it matter?
1	Plan all meals for the day in advance (what and when)	Take the time to plan what you will eat over the next 24 hours. Make it quite detailed – when will you eat, what will you cook, will you take something prepared if you're going out? If you know you are eating out, look up their menu in advance and plan your order. Then make sure that you stick to your plan and don't eat more.	A lot of calories are added to our diet from impulsive snacks or poor food choices. Committing to a food plan in the morning, when you are mindful of your goals and not exposed to temptations, can help you eat healthily throughout the day.
2	Eat no more than three times	Make sure that you have no more than three eating occasions throughout the day. You can have a breakfast, lunch and dinner, but no snacks in between or after.	Impulsive snacks can add lots of calories. Cutting out snacks will reduce your daily energy intake.
3	Skip a meal	Skip either breakfast, lunch or dinner. Make sure you don't compensate for the loss by snacking instead.	By skipping a meal, you are saving a lot of calories, which means your body will use its fat reserves instead.
4	No calories after 8pm	Don't eat any food after 8pm and ensure any drinks you consume after 8pm have zero or very few calories (e.g. tea without sugar, water).	Food and drink consumed in the late evening are often unhealthy and high in calories (e.g. crisps, beer). Cutting out all foods and calorie-rich drinks in the evening can help reduce your calorie consumption.
5	Check the calorie count of everything you want to eat or drink	Use nutrition labels, websites or apps to check the calorie content of foods before you eat. Make sure you consider how the calories are presented as they sometimes refer to a portion size or per 100g. Reflect on whether consuming the food or drink is worth the calories you're adding to your daily intake. Compare the calorie content with that of similar items and see if there is a lower calorie alternative.	Many people don't know how many calories their foods and snacks contain. You might realise that a lower calorie alternative will be just as satisfying.

No	Action	What to do	Why does it matter?
6	Set yourself a calorie goal and stick to it	Go to the following website to find out how many calories you need per day: https://www.bbc.com/food/diets/how_many_calories_do_you_need . Subtract 600 calories and set the resulting figure as your goal for the day. Then keep track of the calorie content of everything you eat throughout the day. Ensure you do not exceed your target. You can use free calorie counting mobile phone apps, such as MyFitnessPal.	Research shows that setting calorie goals can help you lose weight. It makes your goal for the day more tangible and helps you think about how to spread your daily calorie intake.
7	Have a “fasting” day with less than 800kcal	Have a day of “fasting” where you consume less than 800kcal. You can find some low calorie recipes to help you here: https://www.bbc.com/food/collections/intermittent_dieting_recipes https://www.bbc.com/food/diets/low-calorie_diet Make sure you drink at least 2 litres of low calorie fluids to avoid dehydration. You can use free calorie counting apps, such as MyFitnessPal, to help you keep track.	Eating only 800 calories means cutting out more than half of the calories you consume on a normal day. Your body will have to source half to two-thirds of the energy you need from fat reserves, giving a boost to your weight loss.
8	Keep a diary of what you eat and how you feel	Keep a record of all the foods and drinks you consume throughout the day. Make a note of the time when you consume and also the reason e.g. whether you were craving this kind of food, wanted to reward yourself or were hungry. Write down how you felt after consuming the food or drink. Go through your food diary in the evening and see which foods or drinks you could have avoided.	Keeping a psychological diary will make you think more about how you use food not only to feed yourself but also to provide comfort or reduce boredom. You can then think of other strategies to handle these emotions that do not include food.



No	Action	What to do	Why does it matter?
9	Check your portion size	Weigh everything before you eat it and check your portion against the recommended serving size on the packet or by using this general guide: https://blog.myfitnesspal.com/essential-guide-portion-sizes/	Most people are unaware of recommended serving sizes. Checking portion sizes will help prevent overeating.
10	Only eat when sitting at a table	Only eat while you are sitting at a table. Don't eat while you're on the go or when working.	When you eat while doing other tasks, it is easy to overeat. Sitting down at a dining table will help you focus on your food and boost feelings of fullness. By committing to only eating while sitting at the table, you will reduce snacking.

Weight Loss Actions Category Orange: Avoiding or swapping specific foods

No	Action	What to do	Why does it matter?
1	Don't eat between meals	Do not eat any snacks between meals. Stick to your three main meals, breakfast, lunch and dinner.	Snacks increase your daily calorie intake. So cutting snacks will reduce the calories you consume.
2	Cut out crisps, biscuits, cakes and sweets	Do not eat any crisps, biscuits, cakes, chocolates and sweets throughout the day.	These foods are very 'energy dense' and contain a lot of calories in every bite, so it's easy to overeat.
3	Cut out fried food	Do not consume any fried foods today. This includes fries or chips, onion rings, poppadoms, battered fish, etc.	Fried foods contain lots of calories. Cutting them out will reduce your calorie intake.
4	Have only one course at meal-time	Do not consume any starters or desserts with your lunch and dinner. For breakfast, consume just <u>one</u> type of food (i.e. only toast or cereal, etc.).	Starters and desserts add to your calorie intake. Cutting them out will reduce your consumed calories.
5	Cut out carbs	Avoid carbohydrates, including potatoes, rice, pasta, bread, breakfast cereals, beans, and sugary foods such as pastries, cakes, biscuits, confectionery or chocolates. Fruit and dairy are allowed.	Carbohydrates account for around 40% of all the calories we eat. When you cut out carbohydrates, you will tend to reduce your overall energy intake.
6	Swap unhealthy snacks for fruits and vegetables	Swap unhealthy snacks with fruits and vegetables, such as apples, carrots, celery, or peppers.	Unhealthy snacks are rich in calories. Swapping them with fruits and vegetables will reduce your calorie intake.
7	Swap rice/potatoes/pasta for extra vegetables	Avoid rice, potatoes or pasta as a side to your main course. Instead swap them with boiled or steamed vegetables, including broccoli, carrots, or cabbage.	Rice, potatoes and pasta contain far more calories than vegetables. Replacing starchy carbs with vegetables will help you stay full while eating fewer calories.



No	Action	What to do	Why does it matter?
8	Use meal replacement products	Try swapping breakfast, lunch and/or dinner for a meal replacement product such as a specially formulated meal bar, shake or soup. You can buy them online or in your local pharmacy.	Specially formulated bars, shakes or soup shakes contain all the nutrients you need and are usually much lower in calories than a typical meal.
9	Swap unhealthy snacks with 6-8 individual nuts	Replace all unhealthy snacks with 6-8 nuts.	Nuts are high in protein and fibre which will help you to feel fuller.

Weight Loss Actions Category Yellow: Changing what you drink

No	Action	What to do	Why does it matter?
1	Drink only water or unsweetened coffee or tea	Drink only water, coffee and tea today. Your tea or coffee may include a small amount of milk, but no sugar, honey or syrups.	High calorie drinks can quickly increase your calorie intake without increasing your sense of fullness. Switching to low-calorie drinks will help you lose weight.
2	Swap sugary soft drinks with diet or no sugar versions	Swap your sugary soft drinks for the zero or low-sugar versions. You might have to experiment with different brands to discover your preferred taste.	A typical can of sugary drink contains about 100 calories. Switching to zero or low-sugar versions of soft drinks can help reduce your calorie intake.
3	Do not drink alcohol	Refrain from drinking any alcohol today.	Alcohol contains a lot of calories. A pint of beer contains about 250 calories, 150ml of red wine contain 125 calories. By avoiding drinking alcohol, you can save calories.
4	Drink a pint of water before each meal	Drink a pint of water before you choose your meal and decide on the portion size.	Drinking a pint of water will help fill up your stomach. That way you will feel less hungry when making meal decisions, helping you to make healthier choices and choose smaller portion sizes.
5	Swap juices or smoothies with whole fruit and vegetables	Avoid juices or smoothies and eat a piece of whole fruit or vegetable instead.	Swapping juice with intact fruits and vegetables has the advantage that you benefit from the fibres they contain. Fibres are good for digestion and cholesterol levels. They slow the breakdown of sugars from the fruit or vegetable, making it less likely that you experience peaks in your blood sugar levels. Eating whole fruits and vegetables rather than drinking a smoothie slows down the rate of eating and increases feelings of fullness.

Weight Loss Actions Category Green: Creating a healthier diet

No	Action	What to do	Why does it matter?
1	Eat at least 5 portions of fruit or vegetables each day	Eat at least five portions of different fruits and vegetables.	Fruits and vegetables bulk out a meal, helping you to feel fuller on fewer calories.
2	Snack only on vegetables	Tempted to snack outside of your three main meals? Then snack on vegetables, such as carrots, peppers or celery.	Vegetables are low in calories so they won't add too many calories to your daily intake.
3	Eat only foods with a green nutrition label for total fat	Only eat foods with low total fat (3g or less per 100g). This is often indicated by a green colour-coding for total fat on the nutrition label.	Fat contains a lot of calories. Eating low-fat foods will therefore reduce your calorie intake.
4	Eat only foods with a green nutrition label for sugar	Only eat foods with low sugar content (5g or less per 100g). This is often indicated by a green colour-coding for sugars on the nutrition label.	Sugary foods contain a lot of calories. Eating low-sugar foods will reduce your calorie intake.
5	Make sure half of your main meal of the day is a salad or vegetables	Make sure that half of your main meal of the day – lunch or dinner – consists of boiled or steamed vegetables or a salad. Potatoes do not count as vegetables. Salad dressings should be low fat, such as lemon juice, balsamic vinegar, or yoghurt dressing.	Vegetables provide you with many important nutrients and are low in calories. Salads and steamed or boiled vegetables are a great side to your main meal. They add bulk to a meal so you feel fuller and satisfied.
6	Swap rice/ potatoes/pasta with extra vegetables	Avoid rice, potatoes or pasta. Instead swap for boiled or steamed vegetables, including greens, carrots or parsnips.	Rice, potatoes and pasta contain far more calories than vegetables. Replacing starchy carbs with vegetables will help you stay full while eating fewer calories.
7	Swap fatty meats with lean meats	Avoid fatty meats, including salamis, sausages, steaks, pork belly or mince. Swap them with lean cuts of meat which have a relatively low-fat content. Remove all visible fat from meat, including the skin from chicken. Choose extra lean mince or ask your butcher for a leaner cut. Or choose fish instead.	Fatty meats contain many calories. You can reduce your calorie intake by switching to lean meats.

Weight Loss Actions Category Blue: Meal-time tactics

No	Action	What to do	Why does it matter?
1	Eat slowly or 20 chews per bite	Slow down how quickly you eat. You can achieve this by chewing each bite twenty times, decreasing your chewing speed or putting your cutlery down between bites.	Reducing your eating speed will help you notice feelings of fullness before you have overeaten.
2	Focus on your food while eating	Have a quiet meal without distractions. Be mindful about eating and your feelings of satisfaction and fullness. Concentrate on the feel of the food in your mouth, the smells, taste, and how your feelings change during the meal.	Being mindful can help you identify feelings of fullness and support you in avoiding overeating.
3	Stop eating before you feel full	Stop eating before you feel full. Instead look out for the moment when you stop feeling hungry. You can freeze leftovers or keep them in the fridge for another time.	It takes a while for feelings of fullness to set in. Therefore it's easy to overeat.
4	Use smaller plates and bowls	Use smaller plates or bowls and smaller serving spoons to help with your portion control.	Using smaller crockery and utensils will help you eat smaller portions and reduce your calorie intake.
5	Cut food into smaller pieces	Cut your food into smaller pieces when eating.	Reducing the bite size will increase the time you need to eat and help your gut hormones increase. These tell your brain you are full, meaning you can feel satisfied before you have overeaten. It will also give you the feeling of having had a larger meal.
6	Eat for less than 20 minutes at a time	Don't spend more than 20 minutes eating each meal. Eat at a normal pace. You can freeze your leftovers or keep them in the fridge.	Restricting the time you spend consuming your food will automatically restrict your calorie consumption.

Weight Loss Actions Category Purple: Burn more calories

No	Action	What to do	Why does it matter?
1	Walk up and down a flight of stairs for as long as you can	Walk up and down a flight of stairs until you are out of breath and can no longer sustain a conversation. Take a rest and then go again.	Engaging in exercise burns calories and helps you lose body fat.
2	Go cycling for as long as you can	Go cycling outdoors or at the gym. Take breaks if necessary.	Engaging in exercise burns calories and helps you lose body fat.
3	Go swimming for as long as you can	Swim until you are out of breath and can no longer sustain a conversation. Take a rest and then go again.	Engaging in exercise burns calories and helps you lose body fat.
4	Stretching Exercises	Do stretching exercises at home. There are many online tutorials available, like this one: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9jAyRP0bqKA	Stretching exercises help develop flexibility. This may enable you to engage in more physical activities. Any extra exercise burns calories.
5	Attend an exercise class	Attend a structured group exercise or sports class. This may be a class at a gym or sports club led by a trainer, e.g. a dance class.	Engaging in exercise burns calories and helps lose body fat. Doing exercise in a group can be especially motivating.
6	Play a group sport	Play a group sport such as badminton, tennis, or football. This might either be formal training or a game between friends.	Engaging in exercise burns calories and helps you lose body fat. Doing exercise in a group can be especially motivating.
7	Go to the gym	Go to the gym for a workout. A good way to structure your training is to start with a warm-up on a cardio machine, followed by strength training and cardio exercise to finish. Make sure to ask the trainers to explain any unfamiliar machines so you don't hurt yourself while using them.	The suggested gym routine will help you strengthen several muscles in your body, which helps boost your long-term metabolic rate. The cardio routine will get your heart-rate going and burn calories.

No	Action	What to do	Why does it matter?
8	Exercise at home with the 21-minutes NHS Choices workout: https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/10-minute-workouts/	Try one of the NHS Choices website 21-minute workouts that you can perform easily at home. They include: 6-minute warm-up, 10-minute workout of your choice and 5-minute cool-down. You can find them here: https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/10-minute-workouts/	The NHS Choices workouts will strengthen several body muscles. Building muscle mass will help boost your long-term metabolic rate. Plus, engaging in exercise burns calories.
9	Brisk walking for as long as you can	Go for a brisk walk until you are out of breath and can no longer sustain a conversation.	Engaging in exercise burns calories and helps you lose body fat.

Weight Loss Actions Category Pink: Be more active as part of your daily life

No	Action	What to do	Why does it matter?
1	Walk 10,000 steps	Set yourself the goal of walking at least 10,000 steps. You can count your steps using a pedometer or fitness tracker. There are many free apps that have pedometer functionality as well. They record the number of steps you made on your phone.	Walking 10000 steps in one day burns around 500 calories, which helps you lose body fat.
2	Walk/cycle instead of taking the bus or car	If going somewhere, cycle or walk some or all of the way to get more active.	Engaging in physical activity burns calories and helps you lose body fat.
3	Go for a walk with your friend(s)	Meet your friends for a walk instead of sitting down somewhere.	You burn more calories while walking than sitting. Sitting down with friends often leads to eating, which you can avoid by making it a walking meeting.
4	Stand up while working	Stand up while you're working. If your work place does not have a height adjustable desk, try to find a cupboard or cabinet that has a good height to work on. Try to have standing or walking meetings with your colleagues.	You burn more calories standing than sitting.
5	Take the stairs whenever you can	Always choose the stairs over the lift.	Engaging in physical activity burns calories and helps you lose body fat.
6	Have an active day with your family or friends	Have an active day with family or friends. For example, go for a hike or play sports such as football, frisbee, or badminton.	Engaging in physical activity burns calories and helps you lose body fat. Doing this together with family or friends makes it more enjoyable.
7	Stand up while watching TV	Stand up while watching TV.	You burn more calories standing than sitting.