

# LEGION®

THE ONLY SUPPLEMENTS YOU NEED TO GET THE BODY YOU WANT.

## MEAL PLANNING 101



## HERE'S HOW IT BREAKS DOWN:

### ENERGY BALANCE

For meaningful weight loss or gain to occur, there must be an imbalance between how much you burn and how much you eat. That is, output must exceed intake (calorie deficit = weight loss) or vice versa (calorie surplus = weight gain).

***This isn't theory, either. This is immutable, indisputable scientific fact.***

- ✓ This is why every single controlled weight loss study conducted in the last 100 years...including countless meta-analyses and systematic reviews...have concluded that meaningful weight loss requires energy expenditure to exceed energy intake.
- ✓ This is why bodybuilders dating back just as far...from Sandow to Reeves and all the way up the line...been using, and continue to use, this knowledge to systematically and routinely reduce and increase body fat levels.
- ✓ And this is why new brands of "calorie denying" come and go every year, failing to gain acceptance in the weight loss literature.

### MACRONUTRIENT BALANCE

- ✓ Eat too little protein and you'll forever struggle to gain and preserve muscle.
- ✓ Eat too little carbohydrates and you're going to have trouble building muscle and making progress in your workouts.
- ✓ Eat too much fat and you're going to have to dramatically reduce protein and/or carbohydrate intake to compensate.

### FOOD CHOICES

- ✓ Generally speaking, foods that are "good" for weight loss are those that are relatively low in calories but high in volume (and thus satiating).

- ✓ Foods conducive to weight gain are the opposite: high in calories and low in volume and satiety.
- ✓ As a rule of thumb, if you get the majority (80%) of your calories from relatively unprocessed, nutrient-dense foods, you can fill the remaining 20% with your favorite dietary sins and be healthy, muscular, and lean.

## **NUTRIENT TIMING**

- ✓ There's a fair amount of evidence that eating protein before and after weightlifting workouts can help you build muscle and strength over longer periods of time.
- ✓ There's also evidence that post-workout carbohydrate intake, and high-carbohydrate intake in general, can help as well by helping you train more and with a higher intensity.

## **HOW TO CREATE MEAL PLANS FOR LOSING WEIGHT**

- ✓ Calculate your calorie deficit. I recommend you a moderate calorie deficit of 20 to 25%. Anything larger can cause unwanted side effects associated with "starvation dieting." So what this means is you want to set your daily calorie intake to 75 to 80% of your TDEE. For example, my average daily TDEE is about 3,000 calories, so when I want to lose weight, I set my intake to about 2,300 calories.
- ✓ Determine your macronutrient targets. Now that you have your calorie target worked out, it's time to turn it into protein, carbohydrate, and fat targets.

### **Here's how to do it:**

- ✓ Eat 1.2 grams of protein per pound of body weight.
- ✓ Eat 0.2 grams of fat per pound of body weight.
- ✓ Get the rest of your calories from carbohydrate.

## HOW TO CREATE MEAL PLANS FOR BUILDING MUSCLE

*When you want to maximize muscle growth, you should eat about 10% more than your average TDEE.*

The macronutrient breakdown for “bulking” is different as well:

- ✓ Eat 1 gram of protein per pound of body weight.
- ✓ Eat 0.3 grams of fat per pound of body weight.
- ✓ Get the rest of your calories from carbohydrates.

## THE BEST MEAL PLANNING APPS

**MyFitnessPal** - MyFitnessPal is a free iOS/Android/Web app that allows you to easily track your intake.

**Paprika** - Paprika is a robust and elegant app that helps you organize your recipes, make meal plans, and create grocery lists.

**Pepperplate** - Pepperplate is similar to Paprika. It's a little less slick and user-friendly but it's free.

**MyMacros+** - MyMacros+ is a simple food-tracking app made specifically for fitness folk. It allows you to plan and track your macronutrient intake.

## The Bottom Line on Meal Planning

You don't have to necessarily plan or track your food intake to lose fat or build muscle, but if you want guaranteed results and want them as quickly as possible, then meal planning is the way to go.

A good meal plan takes all the guesswork out of dieting and ensures you don't under- or overeat and that your diet meets both your macro- and micronutritional needs.

No matter what type of diet you're following, meal planning can work for you. And this article is all you need to get results.

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