

Combat Fitness

Bodyweight training exercises for fitness



The Real Diet Plan – the one that actually works to lose weight long-term and keep it off.

This is not a one hit, 'lose lots of weight and then put it all back on again within a year or two' plan, this is a way of life, it is about learning the way our body is designed to operate. People are overweight because they either eat too much or are eating the wrong sorts of foods at the wrong times.

As you progress along this diet plan you will find out what works for you, however if you stick to the principles of this plan for 3 months you will lose weight in the healthiest way possible, not be bored of your food, and hopefully keep it off for life. The rules are simple:

- Breakfast like a King
- Lunch like a Prince
- Supper like a Pauper

This is because you use most of your energy during the day, so you don't need a lot during the evening to sit around and watch tv / sleep so should eat accordingly. Any excess calories you have in your body in the evening will make you fat. This plan may be hard for the first few days but within a week will be a lot easier.

Morning

Eat breakfast within 30 minutes of waking up (preferably 7-8am) even if you don't feel like it when you first start the plan. A good sized bowl of healthy cereal with raisins, porridge, etc is fine. Nothing with loads of sugar ('basics' ranges such as museli usually have the least rubbish in them). Also make sure you have a glass of water, before breakfast if you can. If you don't eat breakfast your stomach switches off and your body goes into starvation mode, this will not help you lose weight and virtually guarantees you will eat junk later on in the day and keep weight on. This diet is not about starving yourself, it is about losing weight the best way possible.

Mid-morning (11ish?)

You will feel hungry mid-morning and feel like something sweet, like a biscuit – you are not hungry, you are actually thirsty, drink 500ml of water. If you can drink lots of tea/herbal tea/water throughout the morning to keep hydrated.

Lunch

Eat lunch approx 4-5 hours after breakfast (preferably between midday and 1pm). You can have whatever you like (medium sized portion), for example chicken pasta with an apple after, couscous, beef burger with beans and salad, etc. Do not drink anything for an hour after eating, you will bloat your stomach – you want your stomach to shrink so it takes less to fill you up, it should start to shrink within a week if you don't eat too much, and the diet become much easier – you don't need to feel bloated to be full. You must eat some form of carbs with your meal or you will feel hungry later and over eat later in the day. Lunch should be between 200 – 300g portion (no more or less).

Mid-afternoon

You will feel hungry mid-afternoon and feel like something sweet – you are not hungry, you are actually thirsty, drink 500ml of water. If you can drink lots of tea/fruit tea/water throughout the afternoon to keep hydrated.

Supper

Supper is approx 4-5 hours after lunch (preferably between 5pm and 6pm). The main rule is NO carbs! Once in a week if you have a brown pitta or something and it's fine, so long as you're good 90% of the time. Preferably something like stirfry, salad, tuna and sweetcorn with a little mayo, omelette, protein (chicken, a bit of beef, etc), vegetables – you have to eat food you enjoy or you'll never stick to it. Remember you will be unlikely to burn these calories off before you go to sleep if you eat too much – these will sit on your stomach and turn to fat, your stomach muscles will relax when you sleep and your stomach will expand – not good! Don't drink anything for an hour after you eat but then you can drink whatever you like in the evening (no alcohol – especially beer). If you have some protein and veg/salad you can't go wrong, but you have to eat what you feel like so long as it isn't junk food.

Evening

No more food, preferably nothing after 6pm. But drink lots of liquid – tea / water / etc. If you are ever desperate for food once in a blue moon it is fine to have something so long as it is not too naughty – a small bag of twiglets, microwave popcorn, yoghurt (soya yoghurts are nice), even a handful of pistachio nuts are ok (which are 50% fat but pretty much all unsaturated fat). You can even try brushing your teeth so you don't feel like any food. It is a change for life, not a one-hit diet, so live the way you intend to live. You may find for the first week you find it hard to break your old habits so it is ok to ease slowly into the diet for the first week, don't beat yourself up too much if you eat some popcorn or something most evenings at the start.

Other suggestions

Pin a fat photograph of yourself on the fridge. Everytime you want some junk look at it and touch your stomach, remember why you're doing it, the 'diet' is only temporary - but the effects are for life. Having a biscuit never helps, after a while or cutting out chocolate / etc you will not crave sugar or if you ever eat out and are given a dessert you will only want half, this is self-control, after you eat it takes 20 minutes for the food to hit your stomach - so don't feel you need to eat something else straight away, wait and see how you feel after half an hour.

Be careful of eating bread, if you want bread have toasted brown pitta or something similar – stodgy bread, pizza, etc sits on your stomach and makes you feel crap, it also makes you feel more hungry and hence you binge later. If you have no option but bread maybe try and toast it so it is not as stodgy. Try to avoid fried foods such as chips, not only for the calories but also your arteries! Also try to avoid cheese which you won't miss after a while.

Aim to drink 1.5 litres of water a day up to 2 litres, spread out throughout the day, not all in the evening. Everytime you get hungry outside of your normal meal times have a glass of water and the craving will go. The more drinking the better but don't go mad, no fizzy drinks (including diet ones which are also pure crap), nothing regularly with too much sugar for example fruit juice. Normally I stick to fruit flavour teas, tea, water and milk – drink what you fancy. Don't go mad, you don't need 3 litres of water a day.

No late eating – ideally your last food will be at 6pm, although for the first week if it is at 7pm this is fine, ease your way slowly into the diet, if you're too strict with yourself you'll never keep to it. It is a change for life, not a race, if it takes a few weeks to get into it it really doesn't matter, so long as you're heading in the right direction.

Make sure you eat plenty of protein, this fills you up and burns away. Check % of fat, carbohydrates and sugar in foods (ie. g per 100g) before you buy them. More than 8% fat or sugar is fairly high, try to avoid excessive saturated fat especially. Carbs are ok in the morning or for lunch, preferably not after mid-afternoon or you will not burn off.

Vary your diet and make sure it is always interested, eat what you feel like so long as it is healthy, as soon as you think 'oh no not this again' you will start to find the eating plan hard.

The first few days of this diet will be hard, however your stomach will shrink and your cravings will go as you become more hydrated and used to it – within 1 week it will be easier but you need to stick to it [it will only be the first week that is hard, especially when you see the weight loss it will spur you on].

Weight yourself a maximum of once a week at the same time, eg. Every saturday morning before breakfast – never more than once a week however good you are feeling about your potential weight loss.

If there are any foods which you regularly binge on, consider stopping eating them as they will trigger your eating. If you really want them have a small amount, control your portion – but not at night. There are plenty of foods you can eat if you are craving some junk which aren't too bad for you like twiglets or microwave popcorn. Remember, if it's not at home you can't eat it so don't buy any crap like chocolate.

Be wary of other fad diets – such as the Dukan diet or Atkin diet – yes you will lose plenty of weight initially but it may lead to health issues such as a kidney infection [Google them] and it will not teach you to eat properly so all the weight will be back on within 1-2 years. I know numerous people who have tried them and the result has always been the same.

Exercise

In addition to the eating plan you should exercise for maximum benefit. Like this eating this needs to be in moderation, if you set your goals too high you will give up after a couple of weeks. Even if you only half follow this plan you will lose weight.

For the first 1-2 months your only exercise is fast walking initially. This involves 3 times a week going out of your front door and walking as fast as you can (do not break into a jog) for 30 minutes only, no longer. Build up slowly, start with 15 minutes only and built up 5 minutes for every training session. Fast walking works the optimum heart rate for fat burning and will burn more fat than any other exercise including running, etc. Don't listen to anyone who tries to tell you otherwise.

After 1-2 months if you feel ready you can start going to the gym, you must be a maximum of an hour there (preferably 45 minutes), do not stay stationary at all, no resting between exercises, move from one exercise to the next, do a mixture of weights and cardio. Think 'quality time management' – if you can get the same workout done in 10 minutes less than usual it is better for you.

Don't be fooled into thinking weight loss is all about cardio - you need a mixture. Cardio burns calories for up to 30 minutes after you exercise, weight lifting continues to burn calories for up to 48 hours after exercise.

A typical workout example : 5 minute warmup, stomach and lower back exercises, 1-2 weighted leg exercises, 2-3 upper body weights then 20-30 minutes cardio followed by a stretch.

If you don't want to go to the gym you can get just as good a workout for free at home [although it may not be as easy to motivate yourself if you are struggling] – see. www.combatfitness.co.uk for free exercise ideas!