

A black and white photograph of a person's hands measuring their waist with a white tape measure. The person is wearing a grey t-shirt. The tape measure is wrapped around the waist, and the hands are holding it in place. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

HOW TO CALCULATE YOUR CALORIES & MACRONUTRIENTS FOR FAT LOSS



LET US BEGIN.

There is so much information out there I wanted to write this article to ensure you it doesn't have to be complicated. The bottom line is to lose body fat you need to be in a calorie deficit and here is the best way to do it. I hope you find this helpful.

I would say that this is one of the key questions I get asked as a personal trainer. It's not as a direct question like the title suggests but it's phrased "How can I lose weight?"

You can check out a very rough guide in how to calculate your calories through my built-in Fat loss calculator on my website. This was a very basic and easy way for the readers to calculate their fat loss quickly. However, I felt it was not very personal and it only gave you a very rough idea. It is my job as a personal trainer to provide you with as much information as possible to help you on your quest to be the best version of your self in terms of your fitness and lifestyle. So without further adieu here's what you have been waiting for.

Now, Firstly I'm going to start by saying I am not a nutritionist or dietician. However, I do hold a fairly solid level of nutritional knowledge. If you would like to go into further detail regarding your nutrition for meal plans please search for a nutritionist. I am more than happy to recommend a few. With that little disclaimer out the way, let's get started.





WHAT ARE MACRONUTRIENTS?

Macronutrients can be broken down into three main areas, Fat, Carbohydrates and Protein. Your body requires a certain amount of each which provides you with energy, recovery and day to day bodily functions. Each of these macronutrients has a calorific value and eating too many of one or more and make you can weight and therefore fat.

- Protein = 4 calories per gram
- Fat = 9 calories per gram
- Carbohydrates = 4 calories per gram

So how does all this work when you want to lose weight? You need to figure out how much protein, fat and carbohydrates your body needs to lose fat without comprising your life. There are plenty of tools/apps out there that can help you with your process and one I can highly recommend is an app called MyFitnessPal. (I am not associated with them in any way) I use this to the app to help my clients to track their food and so far I haven't had any issues with the app or their results.



HOW TO CALCULATE YOUR CALORIES.

Firstly, we need to calculate your target calories. This is the foundation of "flexible dieting" for fat loss and needs to be calculated before we even look at the macronutrients targets. An important note to remember is that your calorie target is not set in stone and is an estimation, not an exact number. Some tweaking may be needed to keep an eye on your progress and note how you feel at the end of the day, week or month. There are many different equations and formulas you can use to work out how many calories your body needs to from fat. Over the years I have come to the conclusion that people get put off by complicated processes so I aim to make this as straightforward as possible. With that said you will still need a calculator. If your mental arithmetic is on point or you are part of Mensa this should be a doddle for you.

Meet Bob, Bob meets the world. Now Bob would like to lose fat and he is going to be our guinea pig. He is a 30-year-old male, weighing 90kg and is 190cm. Bob works-out a couple time per week and has a desk job. Firstly let's calculate Bob's body weight in pounds. Most scales have a function where you can change from stone > Kilograms > Pounds. If your scales don't take the number you are presented with and plug it into Google for the conversion. (where would we be with Google these days?)

- Bob 90kg = 198lbs aerobics) 4 to 6 times per week, or you're an athlete training every day or multiple times per day.

Once you have your body weight in pounds I would like you to multiply it by 11 to 14. Here's a key to see what you should multiply by Multiply by 11 if you have a sedentary job and do little to no exercise. Multiply by 12 if you have a relatively active job or you have a sedentary job but train 2 to 3 times per week. Multiply by 13 if you have an active job and train 2 to 3 times per week, or have a sedentary job and train at an intense level (ie. weight training, or high-level aerobics) 4 to 6 times per week. Multiply by 14 if you have an active job and train at an intense level (ie. weight training, or high level * Note – Be honest with your number here. Don't think that by picking multiplying by 11 when you're really a 14 will lead to you losing fat sooner. Yes, it will happen but you will also lose muscle mass and you don't want that.

- **Bob fits category 12 his total calories would be 198 lbs x 12 = 2376 calories**



CALCULATING YOUR MACRONUTRIENTS

Calculating your Protein Target.

Let's start with the most popular macronutrient protein. A high protein diet works well for fat loss as it helps preserve muscle and helps keep you feeling full for longer. This is relatively straightforward let's take Bob's body weight in pounds and multiply it by 1. • $198 \text{ lbs} \times 1 = 198$ grams of Protein This is your total number of grams of protein you'll eat a day. So if you weight 166 lbs you need 166 grams, if you way 300 lbs you'll eat 300 grams. Struggling to hit your protein target? have you seen this article on 17 high protein foods?

Calculating your Fat Target.

Now don't be scared with what you are about to read, the amount of fat you should eat depends largely on your dietary preference. You do require a certain amount of fat in your diet to stay healthy. It plays an important roll in the body and is essential for cell growth, cell repair, brain function and many more functions. A good starting point is between 0.3 - 0.6 grams per pound of body weight. As long as you are hitting a minimum of 0.3 and not exceeding 0.6 you will be ok. So how do you choose what number in that range you should go for? Well, this goes with what I said in the first paragraph of this section, it all depends on your diet. If you prefer fattier foods and have a bit of a sweet tooth then 0.5, 0.6 grams of fat per pound would be a good place to start. If like me you like your carbs and enjoy toast, pasta etc then aim for 0.3 to 0.4 grams per pound. This means you can keep the carbs high and your fat will be low. Remember, it's flexible dieting, not strict ass dieting. Bob $0.5 \times 198\text{lbs} = 99$ grams of Fat

CALCULATING YOUR MACRONUTRIENTS

Calculating Your Carbohydrates.

So far we have worked out the total calories, Protein and fat intakes. Now we need to work out how many carbohydrates you require for your fat loss journey. This is the part where you may need a calculator. Let me rephrase that, this is the part you will need a calculator.

Key: *4 calories per gram of protein / 9 calories per gram of fat / 4 calories per gram of carbohydrates*



BRING IT ALL TOGETHER

Calculating Your Carbohydrates Continued.

Let's begin.

1. Take Bob's daily protein intake and multiply that by 4. The resulting number gives you how many calories you are consuming from protein each day.
2. Multiply your fat requirements by 9. Again, the resulting number gives you how many calories you are consuming from fat per day.
3. Add protein calories to fat calories and subtract from the total calories you are aiming for each day, This is the number I told you to remember at the beginning of the article.
4. The resulting number will give you how many calories you need from carbohydrates each day. To change this back to gram divide by 4 (4 calories per gram of carbohydrates) and bingo you get how many carbs you need each day.

There you have it. Bob's daily macros to lose fat would be:

Calories = 2376Kcal • **Protein** = 198g • **Fat** = 99g • **Carbohydrates** = 173g

Example:

Bob is a 198-pound male who works a sedentary job and trains twice per week and prefers higher-fat foods.

Calories needed = $(198 \times 12) = 2376$

Protein = $198 \times 1 = 198g$

Fat = $198 \times 0.5 = 99g$

Protein and fat calories = $(198 \times 4) + (99 \times 9) = 1683$ Carbs = $(2376 - 1683) \div 4 = 173g$

Daily Macros = 198g Protein, 99g Fat, 173g Carbohydrates

Together Bob and I have shown you how to calculate your macro's to allow you to start flexible dieting. I can hear you saying now I have the numbers how do I start tracking them. Well, a good tool to help you with this is to download the app My Fitness Pal. You are 100% in control with what you eat. Rather than looking for food quantity start looking at food quality first, this will make sure you are getting in the essential micronutrients.