THE NO-TRACK NUTRITION SERIES

# LEANER + STRONGER WITHOUT TRACKING

A precise food system for sustainable fat loss and muscle gain - without logging every calorie.



**NO APP. A CLEAR SYSTEM.**

Portions, decisions and adjustments.

NEON FITNESS | SEPTEMBER 2026

THE HONEST STARTING POINT

# You can make excellent progress without tracking calories.

Calorie tracking is the quickest way to quantify food intake accurately. It is useful, but it is not compulsory. Your body responds to what you repeatedly eat and do, not whether those choices were entered into an app.

## No tracking does not mean no structure.

This system replaces daily calorie logging with repeatable hand portions, a fixed meal rhythm and a short weekly review. Follow the starting plan for 14 full days before changing anything.

### 01 BUILD

Use the exact plate and meal rhythm in this guide. Choose from the food lists rather than improvising every meal.

### 02 REPEAT

Keep portions stable most days. Aim for at least 85% of planned meals across the week.

### 03 REVIEW

Check the goal dashboard weekly. If the expected trend is absent, make one small adjustment only.

## Your 14-day agreement

- Eat three structured main meals each day; add the planned protein snack only when needed.
- Strength train 2-4 times each week and record loads and repetitions.
- Keep liquid calories and unplanned grazing rare enough to remain visible.
- Review waist, body-weight trend and gym performance once each week.

### STARTING RULE

Do not reduce portions after one heavy day, one meal out or one scale fluctuation. Return to the next planned meal. Consistency beats compensation.

LEARN ONCE, USE ANYWHERE

# Your hand is the measuring kit.

These visual portions scale roughly with body size and work in kitchens, restaurants and work canteens. They are starting points, not laboratory measurements.

PALM

## Protein

One palm-sized, palm-thick serving. Usually about 20-30 g protein depending on the food.

CUP

## Carbohydrate

One cupped handful cooked rice, pasta, grains or cereal; or one fist-sized potato.

FIST

## Plants

One fist of vegetables or fruit. Two fists can be two different colours.

THUMB

## Added fat

One thumb of oil, butter, nut butter, cheese, nuts, seeds, pesto or creamy dressing.

## Useful household translations

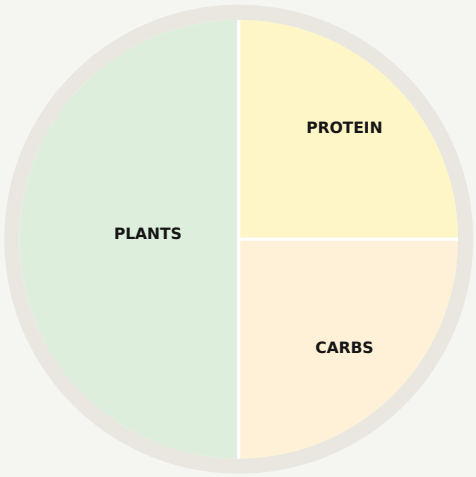
| Portion | Food examples | Use this when learning |
|---|---|---|
| **1 palm protein** | Chicken, fish, lean meat, tofu, high-protein yoghurt | About 120-150 g cooked meat/fish, 200 g tofu or 200-250 g yoghurt |
| **1 carb cup** | Rice, pasta, oats, beans, potatoes, bread, wrap | One cupped hand cooked, one medium wrap, or two average slices bread |
| **1 fat thumb** | Oil, nut butter, nuts, seeds, cheese, avocado | About 1 tablespoon oil/nut butter, or a small closed handful of nuts |

You do not need to weigh food every day. If a visual portion is unfamiliar, measure it once or twice, then use the visual cue.

FAT LOSS PLUS MUSCLE

# The Recomposition Plate

The goal is a modest, sustainable energy deficit with enough protein and training fuel to keep building strength. Scale weight may fall slowly or stay stable while waist and shape change. [1,2,7]




- 1.5 palms protein
  At each main meal.
- 2 fists plants
  Vegetables and/or fruit.
- 1 carb cup
  Use 1.5-2 around hard training.
- 1 fat thumb
  Count oils, dressings, cheese and nuts.

## The daily rhythm

| Eating time | Exact starting prescription | Purpose |
|---|---|---|
| **Breakfast** | 1-1.5 palms protein + 1 carb cup + 1 fist fruit/plants | Protein early; steady hunger |
| **Lunch** | 1.5 palms protein + 2 fists plants + 1 carb cup + 1 fat thumb | Reliable base plate |
| **Dinner** | 1.5 palms protein + 2 fists plants + 1 carb cup + 1 fat thumb | Recovery and fullness |
| **Optional snack** | 1 palm protein + 1 fruit; use only for hunger or protein | Prevents grazing |

### TRAINING-DAY UPGRADE

At the meal before or after strength training, increase carbohydrate to 1.5-2 cups if performance or recovery needs it. Keep added fat to 0-1 thumb at that meal. On rest days, use the base plate; do not remove protein or plants.

YOUR FOOD LIBRARY

# Choose mostly foods that make the system easier.

There are no magic foods and no forbidden foods. Core foods make portions, protein, fibre and recovery easier to manage. Flexible foods can still fit deliberately.



### PROTEIN FIRST

- Chicken or turkey
- Lean beef or pork
- Fish and prawns
- Eggs plus egg whites
- Greek yoghurt / skyr
- Cottage cheese
- Tofu, tempeh, beans
- Protein powder if useful

### CARBS WITH PURPOSE

- Oats
- Potatoes / sweet potato
- Rice and quinoa
- Wholegrain pasta
- Beans and lentils
- Wholegrain bread / wraps
- Fruit
- Lower-sugar cereal

### PLANTS + FATS

- Leafy greens
- Frozen mixed veg
- Berries and apples
- Tomatoes and peppers
- Olive oil
- Nuts and seeds
- Avocado
- Cheese / pesto measured

## The 80/20 decision

Build 80-90% of meals from the core list. Use the remaining 10-20% for foods you love, without turning every flexible choice into an unmeasured extra. Put it on a plate, sit down and enjoy it.

MAKE DECISIONS AUTOMATIC

# Use four meal templates.

Pick one option from each line. Repeat breakfasts and lunches if that makes your week easier. Variety across the month matters more than novelty at every meal.

### BREAKFAST

Formula: 1-1.5 palms protein + 1 carb cup + fruit.

Example: 250 g skyr, one cupped hand oats, berries and cinnamon.

### LUNCH

Formula: 1.5 palms lean protein + 2 fists salad/veg + 1 carb cup + 1 fat thumb.

Example: chicken grain bowl with mixed salad and olive-oil dressing.

### DINNER

Formula: 1.5 palms protein + 2 fists veg + 1 carb cup + 1 fat thumb.

Example: salmon, roast potatoes and broccoli; salmon supplies the fat.

### OPTIONAL SNACK

Formula: 1 palm protein + fruit.

Examples: cottage cheese and apple; protein shake and banana; yoghurt and berries.

## Mixed meals: use the batch rule

- Cook 4 protein portions, 4 carb portions and at least 8 fists of vegetables.
- Divide the protein and carb evenly into 4 containers before eating the first serving.
- Add oils, cheese, pesto and nuts by the thumb - do not free-pour them into the whole pan.

### IF HUNGER IS HIGH

First add one fist of vegetables, fruit or broth-based soup and check that protein was complete. If genuine hunger remains around training, add half to one carb cup - not random snacks.

A FULL WEEK WITHOUT LOGGING

# Monday to Thursday

This example uses three main meals and one optional protein snack. Strength days are Monday, Thursday and Saturday; carbohydrate is slightly higher around those sessions.

| DAY | BREAKFAST | LUNCH | DINNER | SNACK / FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **MON Strength** | Skyr + oats + berries 1.5P / 1C / 1F | Chicken rice salad bowl 1.5P / 1C / 2V / 1T | Turkey chilli + rice + veg 1.5P / 1.5C / 2V | Banana + protein shake if needed |
| **TUE** | Eggs/egg whites + toast + mushrooms | Leftover turkey chilli + salad | White fish + potatoes + green veg | Cottage cheese + apple if hungry |
| **WED Rest** | Greek yoghurt + fruit + oats | Tuna jacket potato + large salad | Chicken traybake + veg + potato | Optional yoghurt; no grazing |
| **THU Strength** | Overnight oats with skyr + berries | Chicken wrap + crunchy salad | Lean beef stir-fry + rice | Fruit + milk or shake after training |

## SWAP, DO NOT GUESS

Change chicken to fish, rice to potatoes, or berries to fruit - but preserve the number of palms, cups, fists and thumbs. That is how variety stays consistent.

A FULL WEEK WITHOUT LOGGING

# Friday to Sunday

Use this as a complete example, then swap foods within the same portion category. Keep the structure even when the ingredients change.

| DAY | BREAKFAST | LUNCH | DINNER | SNACK / FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **FRI** | Eggs + wholegrain toast + fruit | Prawn or tofu grain bowl | Turkey meatballs + pasta + veg | Yoghurt + berries if needed |
| **SAT Strength/social** | Skyr oats bowl | Chicken salad wrap + fruit | Restaurant: protein + veg + one main carb; choose two extras | Pre-training banana if needed |
| **SUN** | Protein omelette + toast | Leftover protein/veg bowl | Roast: lean protein + 2 veg + potatoes; one extra | Prep tasting is not a snack |

## The 45-minute weekly prep

- Cook two lean proteins.
- Prepare one tray of vegetables and one salad base.
- Cook one carb source and portion it into cups.
- Stock three fast protein options: yoghurt, eggs and tuna/tofu.
- Choose this week's two flexible foods before shopping.

FUEL MUSCLE WHILE LOSING FAT

# Put more carbohydrate where it earns its place.

Protein distribution and progressive resistance training matter most. Carbohydrate helps you train hard enough to keep or build muscle; it does not need to be removed for fat loss. [1-3]

| WHEN | WHAT TO DO | GOOD OPTIONS |
|---|---|---|
| **2-3 hours before** | 1 palm protein + 1-1.5 carb cups; keep fat moderate | Chicken and rice; yoghurt and oats; eggs and toast |
| **30-60 minutes before** | Only if hungry: one easy carb portion | Banana, toast, rice cakes or small cereal bowl |
| **Within 2 hours after** | 1.5 palms protein + 1-2 carb cups + plants | Your next main meal; no special supplement required |
| **Rest day** | Keep protein identical; use the base 1-cup plate | Do not slash food to compensate for not training |

### PROGRESS IN THE GYM IS PART OF THE DIET PLAN

Aim to add a repetition, improve control or add a small amount of load over time. If strength is falling for two weeks, recovery and food may be too low - do not automatically reduce portions further.

## What about cardio?

Use walking and 1-3 cardio sessions to support health and expenditure, but keep the deficit modest enough to recover. More exercise is not a licence to eat chaotically, and less exercise is not a reason to skip meals.

RESTAURANTS, TAKEAWAYS AND WEEKENDS

# Keep the structure. Drop the perfectionism.

A useful system must survive work meals, family food and social events. The goal is not to make every meal lean; it is to stop one choice turning into an unplanned weekend.

### 1 PROTEIN

Choose a clear protein anchor first: grilled meat/fish, eggs, tofu, beans, yoghurt or a lean burger.

### 2 PLANTS

Add vegetables, salad or fruit. Ask for an extra side if the meal contains none.

### 3 ONE MAIN CARB

Choose rice, potatoes, bread, pasta, noodles or dessert as the main extra - not every option automatically.

## Use the 'choose two' rule.

At a richer meal, choose the two that matter most: alcohol, starter, dessert, chips, creamy sauce or extra cheese. Enjoy them deliberately. You do not need all six because it is the weekend.

## Common situations

| Situation | Decision |
|---|---|
| **Cafe lunch** | Pick eggs, chicken, tuna, salmon, tofu or beans; add salad/veg; choose bread or chips as the carb. |
| **Takeaway** | Order a protein-led main, add veg, plate one carb portion and store leftovers before eating. |
| **Alcohol** | Decide the number before you go, alternate with water and keep the next meal normal. |
| **Big Sunday meal** | Use the base plate, choose one favourite extra, then return to normal at the next meal. |

NON-TRACKING STILL NEEDS FEEDBACK

# Look for a smaller waist and stronger lifts.

Recomposition is not judged by scale weight alone. Use several signals for at least 3-4 weeks.

| SIGNAL | HOW OFTEN | WHAT GOOD PROGRESS LOOKS LIKE |
|---|---|---|
| **Waist** | Every 2 weeks | A gradual reduction under the same conditions |
| **Body weight** | 3 mornings/week; average | Stable or falling around 0.25-0.5%/week |
| **Strength log** | Every session | Reps, control or load gradually improving |
| **Photos / clothing** | Every 4 weeks | Visible fit and shape changes |
| **Adherence** | Weekly | At least 85% of planned meals followed |

## The weekly review

- Did waist or average weight move over 2-3 weeks?
- Did gym performance improve or remain stable?
- Were at least 18 of 21 main meals built to the plan?
- Where did oils, drinks, bites or weekend extras become invisible?

Daily body weight is optional. If the scale harms your relationship with food or your body, use waist, photos, clothing fit and performance instead.

AFTER 14 DAYS

# Change one lever, then hold it.

Random changes create random data. Only adjust after two consistent weeks, and only when the relevant outcome has genuinely stalled or moved the wrong way.

### ON TRACK

Waist is down, body weight is gently down or stable, and gym performance is improving. Keep every portion unchanged for another 14 days.

### NO CLEAR TREND

If adherence was 85%+ for 3 weeks, remove either one carb cup OR one fat thumb per day. Alternatively add 1,500-2,000 daily steps. Choose one.

### RECOVERY / HEALTH FLAG

If recovery, mood, sleep or strength is worsening, add one carb cup around training and review stress and training load. Seek help if symptoms persist.

## Adjustment rules

- Do not remove protein or vegetables.
- Prefer removing a portion from the least useful time, not from pre/post training.
- Aim for slow loss; faster is not automatically better for lean mass or performance. [7]
- If waist is falling and strength is rising, a stable scale is success.

**Never respond to one meal, one weigh-in or one poor workout. Look for a repeated pattern.**

Hold each adjustment for another 14 days unless health, hunger or recovery makes it clearly unsuitable.

WHEN THE PLAN FEELS DIFFICULT

# Solve the problem beneath the problem.

Most stalls are not caused by a broken metabolism. They come from invisible extras, changing portions, missed meals, under-fuelling training, low sleep or an unrealistic weekly routine.

| PROBLEM | LIKELY CAUSE | NEXT ACTION |
|---|---|---|
| **Hungry at night** | Breakfast/lunch too small; low protein or plants | Complete 1.5 palms protein at lunch, add vegetables and plan the protein snack. |
| **No change** | Portions drift; oils/drinks/weekends uncounted | Photograph meals for 7 days and count portions, not calories. Tighten one leak. |
| **Strength falling** | Deficit too aggressive; poor sleep; too much cardio | Add one carb cup around training and reduce unnecessary fatigue. |
| **One meal goes off plan** | All-or-nothing thinking | Make the next meal the base plate. No fasting or punishment workout. |

## WHEN TO GET PERSONALISED HELP

Speak with a GP and/or registered dietitian before major nutrition changes if you are under 18, pregnant or breastfeeding, have kidney disease, diabetes treated with medication, gastrointestinal disease, a history of an eating disorder, unexplained weight change, or symptoms of under-fuelling. Persistent fatigue, repeated injury or illness, menstrual disruption, low libido, dizziness and a worsening relationship with food deserve attention.

This booklet is education, not diagnosis, treatment or a substitute for individual medical care.

PRINT OR SCREENSHOT THIS PAGE

# A seven-day consistency check.

Tick the process, not perfection. A strong week is usually 85% consistent, not 100% controlled.

| HABIT | M | T | W | T | F | S | S |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Three structured meals** | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |
| **Protein at every meal** | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |
| **2+ fists plants at lunch/dinner** | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |
| **Carbs matched to training** | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |
| **No unplanned grazing** | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |
| **Planned strength / steps** | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] | [ ] |

## Sunday review

Wins I can repeat: _____

The meal or situation that needs a plan: _____

My relevant outcome trend: _____

One action for next week: _____

If adherence was below 85%, improve the routine before changing portions.

EVIDENCE AND SCOPE

# References and further reading

The evidence supports protein distribution, progressive training, balanced food patterns and training-specific carbohydrate. The hand-portion system is a practical coaching framework for consistent decisions; it is not a clinical prescription.

[1] Jager R et al. International Society of Sports Nutrition position stand: protein and exercise. JISSN, 2017.

[2] Morton RW et al. Protein supplementation and resistance-training adaptations: systematic review and meta-analysis. Br J Sports Med, 2018.

[3] Thomas DT, Erdman KA, Burke LM. Position of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Dietitians of Canada and ACSM: Nutrition and Athletic Performance. 2016.

[4] NHS. The Eatwell Guide: balanced food groups and higher-fibre carbohydrate choices. NHS guidance.

[5] NHS. How to get more fibre into your diet: UK adult target of 30 g daily. NHS guidance.

[6] NHS. Physical activity guidelines for adults aged 19 to 64. NHS guidance.

[7] Garthe I et al. Effect of two different weight-loss rates on body composition and strength and power performance in athletes. IJSNEM, 2011.

## Start with the next meal.

You do not need perfect data. You need a repeatable system, honest feedback and enough time for the trend to emerge.