



CLAIRE GUENTZ

GUIDEBOOK

MINDSET || MOVEMENT || MACROS

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PROLOGUE

Hey there!

I want to thank you so much for investing your time in not only me but also yourself! Over the last 4 years my fitness and health patterns have varied from being an intense cardio girl to lifting weights, dieting to counting macros, cutting to bulking, and a lot of other trial and error in between. I've learned so much along the way about how to properly nourish my body, how to count macros, proper workout techniques and most importantly structuring my life around happiness and fulfillment not my next workout or the number on the scale.

In these 25 pages I want to share with you EVERYTHING I think builds the foundation for a successful, sustainable healthy lifestyle and allows us to create habits for positive lasting change.

I've broken it down into 3 core concepts mindset, movement and macros. Mindset as it related to mindfulness, balance and mental health. Movement as in fitness and activity. Macros as a style of eating I've used to successfully hit aesthetic goals while also finding a sustainable healthy way of eating that doesn't leave me with cravings, feeling deprived or uncontrollable binging.

I'd love to talk to you more about everything in this guide as you go through it so if you have any comments or questions join us on the facebook group 'Claire Guentz Community'.

PART 1: MINDSET

MENTAL HEALTH & THE FITNESS JOURNEY

Over the last 4 years I've followed countless fitness bloggers and influencers and I always see the same pattern: restrictive dieting + intense training = good results as well as stress, leading to unhappiness, being completely consumed by the diet/exercise of choice, which eventually results in some sort of breakdown or epiphany followed by less restriction, more happiness, a little back and forth, and finally....balance. I've probably watched it happen 10 times and heard hundreds of similar stories yet I watched myself go through the exact. same. path. *Sigh*. What's that saying? 'You won't learn until you try it for yourself'? I think it's true, even if someone had told me I shouldn't stress so much, and that fitness is a lifelong journey not a race, and all the other things I know now..I wouldn't have listened because I had goals I wanted to hit and I was determined! However, I'm here to share with you my experience, tips and tricks and hopefully you can avoid SOME of the bumps I hit along the way.

When I first started making working out a priority, I was doing BBG (Bikini Body Guide) and I was following the recommended meal plan that came with it. Basically, it broke down how many servings of each food group you should have each day, and then it allowed 1 cheat meal per week. In the beginning this worked for me because it gave me some sort of guideline to follow on what I should eat. As time went on though (maybe around a year?) I was starting to feel pretty restricted. Any time I wanted to go out to eat with friends it automatically became my one cheat meal for the week and I felt like I was planning my entire week around this cheat meal/outing. On top of that, I didn't feel like I was seeing the best results. Sure, I had gotten in better shape and I did look better than prior to BBG but I felt like I was busting my ass and not seeing nearly as many results as I should. That's when I considered counting macros. For me, I know eating 100% clean didn't make me happy mentally nor did it give me the look I wanted physically. With macros, I have boundaries and limits but I have flexibility within them. I know that I am eating the exact right amount of food for my body type and my fitness goals, which gives me peace of mind that I won't wake up 2 months down the line and be like WOAHH what happened to my body—wasn't expecting those changes! It lets me know that I am on the right track for what I want to accomplish but I don't feel like I'm on a diet of any sort since I am able to eat all types of food. Often people who want to get away from restrictive dieting choose intuitive eating and it's something I've never fully explored. But what I know is that if you have specific goals, and you want to look a certain way or you want make sure your body is getting

the right amount of macros (carbs, protein and fat) it needs then it would be very hard to do with intuitive eating. Eating intuitively requires a deep connection to your body and being able to listen closely to internal hunger cues, digestion and cravings and determine what your body really wants vs what it NEEDS. Definitely a challenge!

I'm going to talk about diet and counting macros a lot more in the macro section of this guide but for now just remember that you shouldn't adhere to any diet or workout regime that doesn't make you happy and work for you personally. I've been there before and it's not an effective plan for the long run—so just do what works for you and don't worry about anyone else.

DEALING WITH UNPLANNED WEIGHT GAIN

Over the last 2 years I gained almost 20 lbs. 2 years ago I broke my jaw and dropped down to 117 lbs, my normal weight was around 127-129 and I'm 5'9". If I'm being honest with you all, there was a brief moment during that time where I glorified that number on the scale just because it was lower. I thought I looked good, but after I kind of came back to reality I was like WTF was I thinking! I was so focused on my abs that I thought that number was "great" when in reality that weight was not healthy for my height and I was very thin. I made the same mistake that many of us do and assumed that a lower number is better. I was going through a lot during that period of healing and I think because I was so upset at all the progress I had lost from the jaw injury I instinctively shifted my mindset to think "well at least I'm super skinny". Once I started feeling better and was able to fully eat and move my body again I remembered how good it felt to be strong and I snapped out of it.

Since I broke my jaw I rarely step on the scale but when I saw 136 lbs in May of 2018 I kind of panicked. I am always one to say that you shouldn't judge your progress by the scale alone. In fact, as long as you're at a healthy weight and you're happy with yourself then number on the scale does not matter. But, I'll tell you why I weighed myself in the first place, why I panicked over the number, and how I processed it.

The reason I stepped on the scale in the first place was mostly curiosity. I felt like I didn't look quite as lean as I usually do which is fine, but then I also felt like some of my clothes were fitting a little differently. Differently as in tighter LOL. So, the most logical next step was to weigh myself so I could take my actual weight into account too. When I first saw the number I honestly was like "WTF?" Yes, I had been more lenient with my macros and I hadn't been

training as strictly as in the past but it's not like I had fallen off the wagon....but that number made me feel like I had! I was definitely feeling frustrated but I tried not to panic or freakout. I was just like, okay it is what it is and I know what I need to do if I want to lean out a bit! So over the next few days I started to to be more conscious of my carb intake. I usually eat around 190-200 carbs a day so I started eating around 160-170. I've been counting macros for long enough that I know around what I need to eat to lose/gain weight. (Sidenote: These numbers are specific to ME! Please don't use them for yours because everyone is different in terms of their nutritional needs!). A few days after this I had the thought to take a "progress" photo so I had something to actually measure what I look like now versus then. And you know what? After I took those photos and actually looked at them I realized that while I wasn't as lean as I once was, the biggest difference in my body was probably the size of my legs and butt. When I would try on a skirt that used to fit, the hardest part was getting it over my butt and then of course around the waist was tighter when your butt is taking up more fabric! Now I realize that my midsection had accumulated some more muscle and fat than I had last summer but it was due to intentional training, I was trying to grow my booty and didn't realize it was working! I definitely had added a little fluff along with the muscle but I jumped to conclusions and just assumed that because 136 lbs was more than I've ever weighed it must be fat. When I started thinking back in review of the passed months I also realized I was a lot happier and not as stressed.

When it comes to weight fluctuation I've realized at this point that things like this just ebb and flow and that's okay. Some months I may be leaner and others I may not be—it just depends on what is going on in my life at the time. I've learned that nothing is permanent and there is no use into holding on to how we look so tightly. Being healthy and fit is much deeper than your appearance and it's okay for both our weight and our goals to change.

If you're in a similar position and have gained weight recently ask yourself these questions:

-If you didn't know what the number on the scale was, would you be happy with your progress mentally and physically?

If the answer is yes, then who cares about the number! If the answer is no, then ask yourself these questions:

- What has caused this shift?
- Have I been too lenient with my diet?
- My workouts?

Try to pinpoint what has changed and adjust accordingly. If you just came back from vacation, don't focus on your weight. Give yourself a week to get back into your routine and then reassess. Post vacations when you're out of your routine are not good times to make a judgment.

As a general rule, please remember that your health and fitness journey is going to change many times whether it be your workouts, your diets or just your consistency. You're going to have different priorities and focuses at different points in your life and that's totally okay. I encourage you to look at the big picture of your life and decide what's realistic for you as opposed to comparing yourself to others when you are setting standards for yourself!

CONSISTENCY, MOTIVATION & BINGE EATING

I want to tackle 3 topics that I get asked about on a daily basis. I'm sure many of us have experience one or more of these three hurdles: consistency, motivation and binge eating, when it comes to our health journeys so, let's talk about them.

Consistency

In order to create a habit that you can and will repeat over and over it has to be enjoyable and sustainable. Read that first sentence again, it's important! This doesn't mean we have to love working out or obsess over broccoli it just means we have to at least kind of enjoy it or else we simply won't do it. When we set unsustainable goals we start to create any excuse possible to justify falling away from them. "Oh it's Friday", "I had a bad day so I'm not doing that", "I'm tired", "I don't feel well", the list goes on. I believe creating consistency is a combination of choosing sustainable goals and having a clear action plan for how you will carry them out. Have you heard of the SMART Goal acronym? All goals you set should be Specific Measurable Attainable Realistic and Timely.

Example 1

My goal is to workout. **vs.** My goal is to workout 3 times a week. My workout days are Monday evening, Wednesday morning and Saturday morning.

Example 2

My goal is to eat healthy this week. **vs.** My goal is to make home cook dinners Monday-Friday and prepare enough to have leftovers for the lunch the next day. The dinners are ____, ____, ____, ____, and ____ and I will do my grocery shopping on Sunday.

The second goal in both examples is much more specific, easily measured, attainable and realistic and has a 7 day expiry date.

Motivation

Motivation is a bit of a different game than consistency. I think we all have fluctuations in motivation, we set goals and are super fired up about achieving them but then time passes and either life gets in the way or we don't see immediate results and we start to give up. One important thing to keep in mind is that you don't need to be 100% motivated all the time to do good things for your body. On days I'm less motivated I think, "Okay what's the bare minimum I have to get done today to feel accomplished?", and if the answer is "workout but not clean my room like I had originally planned" then that's good enough for me on that day.

Secondly, if you have consistency then motivation doesn't matter as much. If you consistently set out your workout clothes, or pack your lunch the night before (small simple tasks) then there's a better chance you will actually do the workout and eat healthy when the next day rolls around whether you're necessarily motivated or not because it's easier to say yes since you've already done the pre-work. Those who have consistency are naturally more motivated because they've put the steps in place to set themselves up for success!

Lastly, when you DO fall out of your routine when it comes to your workouts or eating habits it can be really hard to start up again. This is why so many of us end up living this yo-yo version of health versus actually living a healthy LIFESTYLE. This is where habits come in because they determine your next course of action when those temporary circumstances that were getting in the way of your normal routine are no longer around. When you form habits, even when you've been out of your routine for a week or two for whatever reason (you were injured, you were on vacation, etc) you will be much more likely to JUST START again. It's not easy but it is much easier when you've created habits for yourself. So even though you may not necessarily want to hit the gym, or make healthier decisions after spending time out of your routine, you will be much more likely to just back into your routine when it's what you're overall accustomed to.

Binge Eating

Binge eating is a very common behavior so don't feel embarrassed or ashamed if it's something you've been through or continue to suffer from on a weekly or even daily basis. Binging behavior is usually a result of restriction or a coping mechanism for emotions. When

we try and eat a very restricted diet we may be depriving our body of nutrients it needs and sufficient calories. When that happens cravings get out of control and after a few days of unsustainable eating we want to eat everything in sight and we do.

For example if we follow a diet that has a list of 'no' foods we naturally want them more. When we do allow ourselves to enjoy one of the 'no' foods as a 'treat' or a 'cheat' our mind automatically thinks "okay we get to have this now but come Monday we're never allowed to have it again", which causes us to overindulge on the food in one sitting since we begin to fear never tasting this delicious food again. The restriction, binge cycle is not only hard on our mental health (as it also becomes a cycle of discipline followed by disappointment), but also very hard on our metabolism. If we are instead sustaining ourselves throughout the day with nourishing foods and eating when we are hungry by listening to our hunger cues then we shouldn't feel as inclined to binge in the evening. I always fall back on the 80:20 rule. 80% of my diet is whole nourishing foods, and 20% is less nutrient dense treat foods. That means if I eat 2000 calories a day, 400 of them could be from less healthy alternatives. I could eat a chocolate bar and a flavoured latte everyday! What we also have to remember is that that food, that brownie, ice-cream, whatever it may be will always be there whenever you want it. And it IS possible to achieve weight loss while still enjoying foods you like. Sometimes diets with clear guidelines and rules provide the structure that some people need for success while others feel overwhelmed and restricted. Know your limits and know what triggers you into binge eating situations.

Disordered eating is a very broad and complicated topic and one that I don't feel fully confident advising on. If you'd like to learn more about it or talk to a professional I recommend reaching out to NEDA (online or at 1-800-931-2237).

FINDING BALANCE

A couple years ago I remember waking up the week of Thanksgiving and dreading the upcoming meals. I was so scared that this indulgent weekend was going to ruin my progress no matter what I did. This wasn't the first time I'd felt this way, there were other moments similar such as during weddings, summer weekends at the beach, and during my birthday (remember that one time I had Stephen get me a protein bar instead of cake?!) But it was that specific Thanksgiving morning that I thought okay no, I cannot keep letting this stress run my life. I knew it was an internal fear and that no one else around me was concerned. No one was watching the portion of mashed potatoes I took, or wondering in their head if I was going over

my grams of carbs for the day, it was only me. And with that realization I recognized that all of this stress was my choice, my goals were ones that I set for myself and the only one who stressed about them was me. I knew I couldn't continue my life doing constant ab checks and being constantly worried about my progress. Was I going to start each morning pulling up my shirt and analyzing how define my abs were? No! How ridiculous, miserable and unsustainable would that be! So I decided it was time for a mindset shift, I was going to enjoy my weekend without strictly counting my macros but just being mindful of how I felt. This is a pretty fine line to walk and easier said than done. Because when we let ourselves relax for a little our minds may go into panic mode and think "okay, this is only a short term 'treat' so I better enjoy it fully because come next week I'll never get to do this again". Wrong. This is the exact thought pattern we DON'T want to go through. Instead I remember to remind myself that all the candy, donuts, chocolate and cake in the world will always be there, whenever I want it. Just like the broccoli, chicken and rice will be too. There was a point during that weekend where I definitely felt anxiety creeping in, during the hours between family visits I felt like I should be working out, and having something better than leftovers for lunch but I just took a few deep breaths and reminded myself that these are the feelings I was letting go of.

Now when I know that I'm not going to get in my normal workouts, not be able to count my macros as strictly or that I'm heading into an indulgent weekend I just don't worry about it because I know I can always come back to my routine and that fitness and health is not a race it's a lifelong journey for all of us.

That pretty much sums up the mindset part of my fitness journey. The ultimate goal is not abs or a certain number on the scale it's happiness and sustainability. Every. Time.

To summarize, here are some thought stimulators you can use to determine how you can find balance your OWN way for your OWN personal lifestyle:

1. Find a workout routine that works for you (see page 14).
2. Create a routine and and SMART goals that you actually enjoy to ensure consistency (page 5).
3. Know your limits and what triggers you. If you immediately know you aren't going to incorporate a habit that someone suggests then don't feel like you need to try. If 6am workouts and 'no white foods' sounds impossible to you then don't even bother if it's going to lead to a fear of failure or an episode of binge eating.

PART 2: MACROS

MACROS 101

What does counting macros refer to?

Macros or macronutrients include carbohydrates (sugar and fiber), fat and protein. All food is made of one or all of these components. When counting macros, your goal is to consume a certain number of grams of each macronutrient daily. The numbers are determined based on your specific goals and should be calculated for a healthy rate at which to lose/maintain/gain weight (which is about 1-2lbs/week).

Carbohydrate	4 calories/gram
Fat	9 calories/gram
Protein	4 calories/gram

Counting macros is not quite the same as counting calories

When counting macros, we are more concerned that we are hitting the specified number of grams allotted to each macronutrient. Of course you can calculate a caloric value if you wanted to do a little math. BUT the difference of 2000 calories of carbs and 2000 calories of protein acts very differently in our bodies. So it's the grams of macronutrients that's more important than the calories. When tracking you only need to look at the grams per serving in a food item not the calories! Based on the table above we can see that something with 4 grams of protein and 4 grams of carbs would have 32 calories, something with 8 grams of carbs would also have 32 calories however, if we were eating 32 calories of carb vs. 32 calories of protein it will act much differently in our bodies! When we count macros vs. calories we are making sure our bodies are getting a good ratio of protein, fat and carbs.

What are the benefits of counting macros?

Unlike restrictive diets that often come with a list food you can't eat, any and every food fits when counting macros. So if you want a donut you just have to fit it into your macros. Of course because donuts are high in carbs and fat this might mean you have to have a little

less rice with dinner or an open faced sandwich at lunch. I find when there's a food I 'can't' have I just want it that much more. Diets like "no white foods" or "no carbs", or waking up on a Monday and saying you won't eat your favorite food for a week is incredibly restrictive and mentally taxing. Of course when we tell ourselves we can't have something it's ALL we want to eat. By the weekend the cravings are so bad it can lead to bingeing, not good!

Counting macros also provides a lot of structure which is beneficial for some personalities. You have set numbers to hit daily and you know if you meet those numbers you are on track toward your goals, pretty simple! This setup can be very satisfying and the perfect level of challenge for many. If you're trying to reach a specific fitness or weight loss goal, you can't really say "just eat healthy!" This could result in eating any number of calories, which might not result in weight gain/loss if you aren't sure if you are eating in a surplus or deficit based on your activity level.

Because I count macros I know that, without a doubt, my body is getting exactly what it needs. I know that I am getting enough (no more, no less) carbs, proteins, and fats to achieve my goals. Not only that, I feel like I have way more flexibility. Before counting, I was so focused on clean eating that being social, or enjoying going out became difficult. With macros, I eat clean overall but I am also able to go out to eat with friends, or have treats at home, and not question whether what I'm eating is deterring my goals. At night if I want a bowl of ice cream, I just account for it in my macros and that's that; I don't feel restricted. Counting macros gives me a peace of mind that I am nourishing my body appropriately while simultaneously being able to enjoy foods I used to not let myself eat. For me, these benefits outweigh the time it takes to weigh/track what I'm eating.

Can you carry over macros into the next day?

The short answer from me here is no. This idea could promote bingeing behavior because if you instead look at your macros as a weekly value instead of daily then we might find ourselves 'saving' a ton of macros for one big cheat day. And if by saving we are simultaneously restricting and eating too little Monday-Thursday and a ton of junk Fri-Sun we start to create a restrict and binge style of eating which is exactly what we want to avoid! Plus this habit can be hard on our metabolisms as well.

How do you figure out what your macros numbers should be?

This is the biggest question! First, you have to decide what your goal is. Do you want to lose

fat (cut), build muscle (gain), or simply maintain (stay the same weight)? In general, it is very difficult to lose fat while simultaneously building muscle (it can be done but it takes very specific training and very strict macros). I'd recommend starting in one direction first. For example, lose fat for a number of months then gain muscle.

Once you've decided what you want your goal to be you need to get an actual calculation. There are a couple of options for this. There are tons of websites out there where you can insert your height, weight, and the number of hours you exercise per week in addition to whether you want to cut, maintain, or gain. Then, based off this information, the website will calculate your macros. However, I do not trust a lot of websites! Even reputable ones have given me numbers that were way off target (in my opinion). For example I entered the same values into two of the top google searches for Macro Calculator and got 122P, 164C and 58F on one, and 211C, 113P and 48F on another! That's a difference of over 50 grams of food!! And don't even get me started with MyFitnessPal (MFP). MFP is a great tool as we will dive into more below but PLEASE do not use it to calculate your macros! In my opinion, they are very inaccurate. Plus, websites and apps like MFP are not interactive, so if you have any questions, doubts, concerns, etc. you can't really address them. With that said, I would highly recommend having someone who is qualified calculate your macros for you. If you're serious about counting and are going to put in the time and effort, you want your numbers to be correct. Obviously there are a lot of people out there who are qualified to do this! I personally use [Paola \(@paosfitworld\)](#), and have been super happy with my experience with her over the years. She is also very very affordable charging around \$30 vs. some who charge hundreds!

How to do keep tracks of your macros throughout the day?

I use a food scale and an app! This is definitely the quickest combination. I personally like MyFitnessPal (MFP) and in the last section of the guide I show you step-by-step how to get set up. MFP has a huge database of foods so you can search for a food item from a grocery store, certain restaurants, and even scan food labels! You select which meal or snack you'd like the food under and it will input the nutritional information into your consumption for that day. My Macros+ is another popular app. I just find MFP easier to use; it really just comes down to personal preference. See Next to MyFitnessPal a food scale is the second non-negotiable tool you'll need for counting macros. I've used [this one](#) and [this one](#) from amazon but you can buy them at any kitchen store or even Target. A food scale allows you to calculate in grams (and ounces) exactly how much of a food you are eating. Individualized, pre-packaged food

(ie. a protein bar) does not need to be weighed if you are eating the whole thing since all the nutritional information regarding total carbs, protein, and fat is on the label (which you can also scan on MFP). However, when you are eating a piece of chicken for example, it is preferable to weigh it so you know the exact number of ounces you are consuming. So if you were eating a drumstick or thigh you'd want to remove the bone and only weigh the meat/skin part. On that note, there are other foods that don't necessarily need to be weighed, but if I have a scale available, I prefer it. For example, a banana. You could insert "1 large banana" into MFP and it will input the macros for it. However, I prefer to actually weigh the banana if possible (without the skin!); in doing so, you will be the most accurate. Because 1 large banana could range from 85-105g but if I weigh it I know exactly how many grams I'm eating. Likewise, if you buy a bag of potato chips. Instead of saying, 1 serving = ~15 chips; I like to weigh out the actual number of grams per serving (if possible). But if you're in a pinch, guesstimating is better than nothing!

Once I started actually weighing my food, I was pretty surprised how off I was in eyeballing my portions. Like, 2 TBSP of peanut butter is a LOT less than you may think (unfortunately LOL). And 1/2 cup of pasta, is not really 1/2 cup of pasta when you actually weigh it out in grams! With things like pasta and rice for example, you want to weigh them out when they are dry/not cooked. The dry weight is what is equivalent to the serving and allotted macros on the packaging. So basically if they package says 1 serving of pasta is 57 grams, you want to weigh the pasta dry to get an accurate serving. As a side note, you'll get better at estimating portion sizes the longer you count, but like I said, when I have my scale, I always use it!

Isn't counting macros super time consuming?

To be honest, that is one of the cons, but only in the beginning! You do have to input everything you eat but as you use MyFitnessPal more and more you can save recipes and simply repeat them, you'll have a search bank automatically saved so you can find foods faster and you'll learn your own little hacks along the way to speed up the process. You might find it hard to remember that every bite that goes in your mouth has to be tracked, so you can't just go to the fridge and eat a scoop of peanut butter, or have a few crackers without thinking about it (this was a hard part for me!), you have to keep track of everything. This was challenging in the beginning but also completely stopped me from mindlessly eating. Overtime though, inputting your food into your app will take no time at all. Now, I spend less than 2 minutes a day inputting all of my food.

Do you feel restricted?

If your goal is weight loss and you are doing a cut then no matter what style of dieting you chose you will feel probably some level of restriction because you are burning more calories than you are ingesting. Since I was cutting in the beginning, my carbs were not only lower than normal, but they were way lower than what I was naturally eating, almost 100g lower... yes I was eating too many carbs beforehand for the goal I was working towards! AND GUYS. I was HANGRY. LIKE ALL THE TIME. The first day of counting, I texted Paola at dinnertime. I said, Paola, I can't do this. These carbs are way too low. I remember she responded and said, "If you want, I can increase them BUT I really want to encourage you to stick to these numbers; your body will adjust, I promise." And you know what, she was right! Within a week I could already tell that my body was adjusting to the new amounts/percentages of carbs, protein, and fat I was feeding it. Overall though, I was never hungry and I started seeing physical changes more quickly than ever before!

7 TIPS FOR MAKING THIS MACROS COUNTING THING WORK

- 1. Buy a scale.** A scale ensures accuracy. My thought is, if you're going to do something, do it right and to the best of your ability! So, while you're at home, there is no reason why you can't weigh out your food. This way you are ensuring that you are hitting your macros exactly. And if you aren't seeing progress you know that it's your numbers that need to be recalculated. You don't have to wonder, well, have I actually been "off" when calculating.
- 2. Give it time.** Guys, macros are scientifically proven to work. They make sense because they are based on a mathematical calculation. They work for everyone once you have the right numbers calculated for you. Now sometimes your numbers will be calculated right the first time, and you'll start seeing progress/changes within a few weeks. Other times though, they will need to be recalculated...in the beginning it can be a little bit of trial and error. BUT, once your numbers are correctly calculated for you then you will start seeing results. You just have to be patient and trust the process.
- 3. Follow the 80/20 rule.** Or I like to abide by more of a 70/30 rule. Macros and the If It Fits Your Macros (IIFYM) concept provides us with flexibility and balance within our diet while still being able to reach our fitness goals. Macros ensure that our body is getting the

proper amount of carbs, proteins, and fats to reach our (aesthetic) goal. Whatever food we choose to hit our macros, “clean” or not the aesthetic look WILL be the same, but I can promise you you’ll feel a lot better including healthy foods versus only eating fries, candy and protein shakes. We still want to make sure you’re nourishing your body with micronutrients (vitamins and minerals). Micronutrients are found in all foods but of course more so in fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and meats. Micronutrients are critical for all pathways in our body so we don’t want to discount healthy foods!

4. Guesstimating is better than nothing. I’ve heard so many people (myself included at times) be like, “Well, I couldn’t track exactly today so I’ll start again tomorrow.” I’d encourage you not to have an all or nothing mindset. If you eat at a restaurant chances are you probably don’t want to bring your scale. So if you’re out somewhere, guesstimate! Roughly guess the value and use your MFP app to track. Some restaurant meals are in the app or online so you can also search that for more accuracy! In the app, there are plenty of options that I can insert if I eat something when I’m out. For example if you go to a coffee shop and get a blueberry muffin, just select one of the options in MFP under ‘blueberry muffin’ that seems relatively accurate. Yeah, so maybe your muffin had 16g of fat instead of 12g but at least you’re accounting for something.

5. Decide on a goal and stick to it. When you count macros you need to give your body time to adjust to the goal you’ve set and the macros that go along with it. Switching your macros too often won’t be effective and it won’t provide you with results. If you are trying to lose weight a healthy and sustainable weight is 1-2 lbs per week!

6. Don’t worry about other people’s macros. I don’t know how much I can emphasize this. MACROS ARE DIFFERENT FOR EVERYONE. Even if you are the same height, weight, and have the same workout regimen—this does not ensure that your macros will be the same. Focus on your macros and not anyone else’s!

7. Everything you eat counts towards your macros. Yes, even mints and gum. A lot of mints have around 5 grams of carbs if you have 5 mints throughout the day? Well that’s 25 carbs! Ketchup is about 4 carbs per tbsp. So yeah, you get the point! Just make sure you are keeping track of the little things. They may not seem like much but they could be why you’re not seeing progress!

Can you ever stop counting macros?

You may have seen some fitness professionals say they are no longer counting macros and they are now just eating intuitively. While this may be true, keep in my mind that many of them know the rough estimate of what they need to be eating since they've counted macros for so long. So while they may not be strictly counting anymore, their intuitive eating is still more "precise" than someone who has never counted before. I personally think everyone who has specific fitness goals should count macros for at least a month or two so they know a rough estimate of what they should be eating to see the results they want!

TIPS TO MEASURING ACCURATELY

In an ideal world every food we eat would have a scannable nutrition label and simple serving sizes so we could easily determine exactly how much we ate, but unfortunately that's just not how it works. More often than not it's a lot more complicated than that, so here are some tips for consistent and accurate measuring!

- Properly use your scale: If you want to measure a wet food or something like peanut butter, first set a small dish on the scale and tare to 0, then add the peanut butter. If you tare the scale to 0 then add the bowl and peanut butter the scale will of course include the weight of the bowl too!
- If you are measuring something like a banana or apple make sure you remove the skin and the core, things you won't eat! So this mean, if you want to be most accurate you cut up the apple, throw away the core then measure before eating. If you just put in "one apple" to MyFitnessPal it will be roughly measured but not 100% accurate.
- Measuring meat is another tricky one! You want to weigh your meat raw (if you aren't comfortable putting raw meat on a scale then put it in a dish). If it's already cooked you need to multiply the cooked portion in grams by 1.4 to get the true raw weight—that is the weight you are actually going enter to My Fitness Pal. The reason we have to do this is that the water and protein is altered by cooking! So for example, if you weigh your chicken after it's cooked and it weighs 4 oz, you will want to enter 5.6 oz in MFP or whatever app you use ($4 \text{ oz} \times 1.4 = 5.6 \text{ oz}$)
- For sushi I usually disassemble one roll, weigh the rice, the veg and the protein separate and then just assume that the rest of the rolls are about the same. Sushi is definitely tricky to get spot on!

- When eating out you can sometimes find chain restaurant meals on MyFitnessPal or something similar. If you are ordering something like a muffin at a coffee shop and search for Banana Muffin in MyFitnessPal it's most likely closer to a higher calorie option than a homemade banana muffin would be.

I know it might feel overwhelming but I encourage you to TRY counting macros if you think it might be something that will work for you. Set a 4-8 week goal and stick to it at the end of a few months you'll definitely know if its right for you or not!

PART 3: MOVEMENT

Fitness and working out is definitely not a one-size-fits-all category and it's very common to migrate through different styles of working out as our desires change. No matter what, moving your body is what is important! Exercise is critical for joint health, muscle health and the health of our critical organs. The World Health Organization recommends adults do 150 minutes of moderate exercise weekly and this is a minimum! That's 3, 50 minute workouts, or 5 30 minute workouts. Not unrealistic but definitely requires planning and commitment!

Some people choose their style of workout based on the body aesthetic they are trying to achieve while others choose simply based on what they like. Both are correct!

Examples of Workout Styles

- Bodyweight only: HIIT, BBG, Pilates, Yoga
- Cardio intensive: Running, Spin classes, Tabata
- Strengthening and muscle building: Weight Lifting

PLANNING A WORKOUT REGIME THAT SUITS YOUR LIFESTYLE AND GOALS

Like I discussed in the motivation/consistency portion it's critical we chose a workout style that's truly realistic for our schedule and budget AND something we actually like so here are some things to consider:

1. What time of day do you ACTUALLY like to work out. I feel like the internet glamorizes early morning workouts, but 6am, 10am, 4pm or 9pm, it doesn't matter! Additionally your workout time can vary daily! 2 morning workouts, one evening? No big deal!
2. Find a type of workout you enjoy. We can only last so long dragging our butts to a workout we hate. Just TRY something new: yoga, spin, barre, pilates, boxing, weight lifting etc. You might be surprised with what sticks! Most places offer the first class for free so it's worth a try.
3. Invite friends to workout with you or have an accountability buddy. Even if you don't work out together you can both follow up with each other after working out.
4. Set weekly goals for the number of workouts you want to get in. I find monthly goals

such as, “workout 12 times this month” doesn’t hold me accountable enough because I can let the first week go by and still think “oh I have a lot of time”. So WEEKLY goals like “workout 3 times this week” are better!

5. Schedule in your workouts and treat them like meetings with your boss. Non-negotiable.

6. Decide how many times is realistic for YOU. Is it 2?..3?, 4? 5? 6?. Find what’s realistic and try and stay consistent vs. one week on one week off!

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU DON’T HAVE TIME TO WORKOUT.

I get it. Sometimes life can be totally overwhelming and there’s just no time to workout! In the past, the old me would have gotten really stressed about missed workouts and getting “off track” but my mindset has definitely adjusted. I’ve realized that my entire life isn’t going to be filled with perfect 4-6 day a week workouts. It just is what it is. That being said, what can we do when we are unable to workout?

1. First let’s ask ourselves. Do we REALLY not have time. Could we be getting up at 6am for a morning workout? Could you manage a 30 minute bodyweight workout in the morning or evening at home? We need to identify reality from excuses. If you have decided that 6am workouts aren’t worth it, or that you work until late and just end up being too tired that’s totally okay! If it doesn’t work it doesn’t work.

2. Have we looked for holes in our schedule where we COULD workout? Even if it’s just twice a week?

3. If there’s no time whatsoever in a week I make hitting my macros an extra big priority. Since I’m not able to get my workouts in, focusing on my diet is the next best thing. In doing this, I’m still able to work towards my goals. This allows me to avoid getting stressed or anxious because I can’t workout, but instead focus on what I do have control of. And again, your diet is a huge component of reaching your fitness and health goals anyway. You can workout 6x a week but if you aren’t nourishing your body properly it won’t matter!

4. It’s okay. I really try to remind myself that maybe during this week that extra 45 minutes of sleep is more important, or maybe my body just needs a physical rest from working several 12 hour shifts. Whatever it may be, I don’t place a lot of energy into worrying about

why I'm missing them. I know myself, and if I'm missing a workout it's probably for a valid reason and not because I'm being undisciplined. In all honesty, what bothers me about missing the workouts most is the mental aspect. Working out just makes me feel better, it helps me to de-stress, and to focus my thoughts somewhere else for that 45 minutes besides my "to-do" list. So missing out on that part isn't ideal, but I know that if I'm not working out that it is a reason that outweighs the benefit of me exercising.

WORKOUT ROUTINES FOR YOU

I'm including below 8 workouts for you guys to try! If you think HIIT would be more interesting to you there are three 30 minute HIIT circuits and if you want to try weightlifting there is a 4:1 weights:cardio week split there for you as well!

THREE 30 MINUTE HIIT CIRCUIT WORKOUTS

The workout should be completed as fast as possible while maintaining good form! You can start by taking 15-30 second breaks between exercises or 1 minute breaks between rounds.

Day 1:

- 4 Rounds
- 10 jump squats
- 10 pushups
- 16 lunges
- 50 mountain climbers
- 15 tricep dips on chair or bench

Day 2:

- 4 Rounds
- 12 plank up-downs
- 12 air squats
- 15 crunches
- 50 in-n-outs
- 10 burpees

Day 3:

- 4 rounds
- 1 minute skipping or jumping jacks
- 15 donkey kicks per leg (optional: add a resistance band!)
- 15 pushups
- 10 leg lifts
- 1 minute plank

ONE WEEK WEIGHT LIFTING + CARDIO

If you haven't lifted weights before start very light! The goal is to be able to do 8-12 reps without taking a break so adjust your weight accordingly. If you've never done squats with the bar (45lbs) before be super careful because the weight might be a shock so don't be afraid to ask one of the gym staff for help! If you're new to weight lifting you can use two dumbbells and set them up on your shoulders while you squat. Also you're going to be super sore in the beginning especially after leg days. I've given some approximate weights in brackets next to each exercise but everyone's body and fitness level is very different so don't feel bad if you aren't choosing weight within this range, just trust your body.

Like anything, you just have to work your way up to it! Each week try to increase weight a little bit in some exercises, and your cardio time by 5 minutes or so if you can't do 45 minutes right off the bat! Same goes for speed, if you have to start at a speed of 3 then whatever! Who cares. You'll get there! Also, fun fact, when I first started using the stairmaster I literally had to look at my feet the ENTIRE time otherwise I'd trip and fall haha. And now I can walk sideways, backwards, forwards AND be looking at my phone the whole time LOL. See! You just have to practice.

If there are any exercises you don't recognize just do a quick google or youtube search and you'll understand how to do it! This is just one example of a 5 day workout week with 4 weight training sessions and 1 cardio session.

Day 1	Exercise	Reps	Rounds	Weight
Arms & Chest	Incline Chest Press	10-12	4	10-15lb dumbbells
	Bent Over Dumbbell Flys	10	4	10-17.5lb dumbbells
	Bicep Curls	12	4	8-10lbs
	Skull Crushers	12	4	8-15lbs
	'21's Bicep Curls • Rep 1-7 is 180°-90° • Rep 8-14 is 90° to 360° • Rep 15-21 is 180° to 360°	21	3	5-10lbs

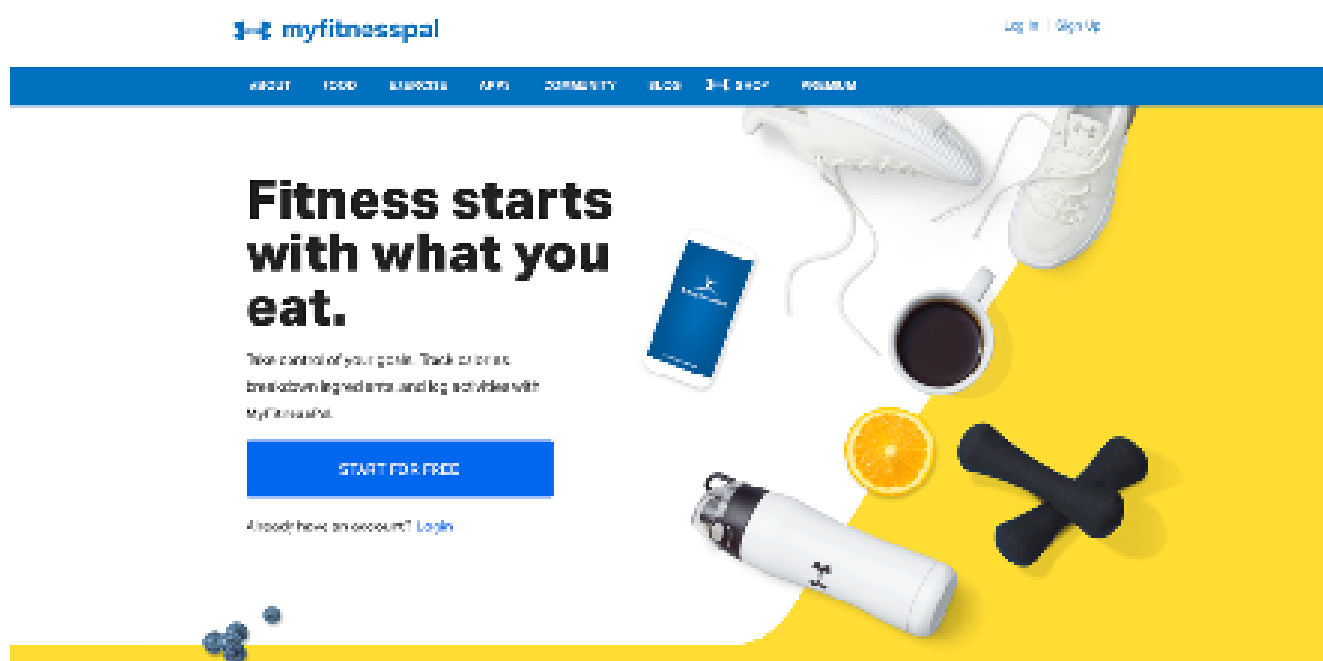
Day 2	Exercise	Reps	Rounds	Weight
Quads & Hamstrings	Bar Squats (or dumbbell)	10	4	(20-45+lbs)
	Deadlifts	10	4	(20-45+lbs)
	Lunges	12 per leg	4	(20-45+lbs)
	Quad Extensions (machine exercise)	10	4	(30+ lbs)
	Hamstring Curls (machine exercise)	10	4	(20+ lbs)

Day 3	Exercise	Reps	Rounds	Weight
Shoulders & Back	Lat Pull Downs	10	4	(40+lbs)
	Bent Over Bench Row	10 per arm	4	(15-35+lbs)
	Seated Cable Row	12	4	(30+ lbs)
	Shoulder Press	10	4	(10+ lbs)
	Lateral Flys	12	3	(5-10lbs)
	Parallel Flys	12	3	(5-10lbs)

Day 4	Exercise	Reps	Rounds	Weight
Calves & Abs	10 Minutes on the Rowing Machine or walk on treadmill on a steep incline	n/a	1	Core tight!
	Calf Raises Holding Dumbbells	20	3	(10-20lbs)
	Oblique Crunches Holding Round Bar Weight	15 per side	4	(20-45+lbs)
Mat Work		10	4	(30+ lbs)
	Leg raises	12	4	n/a
	Crunches	15	4	n/a
	Weighted Russian Twist	50	3	10-25lbs
	Plank Alternating Centre, Right, Centre, Left	15 seconds per position	1 - till failure	

Day 5	45 Minutes - Speed 10
Cardio: Stairmaster. I've found that if I break it up into 5 minute increments that it helps the time go by much faster. As far as the speed goes, I do a speed of 10 the whole time. A lot of times people will say that they can't do the stairmaster for 45 minutes, and that 10 is way too fast! Well, it was the same for me too in the beginning! Guys, when I first tried the stairmaster I could last about 5 minutes. I'm serious. I thought it was the hardest thing ever. *If you don't have a stairmaster, you can use the treadmill! Turn the incline up as high as it will go and then speed walk for 45 minutes.	-5 minutes: walking forwards -5 minutes: walking sideways -5 minutes: walking sideways (opposite side) -5 minutes: walking backwards (Jump off treadmill for about a minute to rest) -5 minutes: walking forwards, skipping 1 step + kickback w/ each leg -5 minutes: walking sideways -5 minutes: walking sideways (opposite side) -5 minutes: walking backwards -5 minutes: walking forward (decrease speed & use as cool down)

GETTING STARTED WITH MY FITNESS PAL



STEP 1: Go to MyFitnessPal.com to make your free account or download the app (below you will see initial photos from the website when it comes to setting up your account but I will also provide screenshots of what it will look like on your phone's app).

Tell Us About Yourself

We will use this information to create a personalized diet and exercise profile for you.

Change units to weight and height (e.g. kg, cm)

Current Weight: 100

Height: 5 9 in

Goal Weight: 80

Gender: ☐ Male ☒ Female

Date of Birth: 1/1/1990

Location: United States

ZIP/Postal Code:

Description: 400 characters, no space

How would you describe your normal daily activities?

☒ Sedentary: Spend most of the day sitting (e.g., bank teller, desk job)

☐ Lightly Active: Spend a good part of the day on your feet (e.g., teacher, salesperson)

☐ Active: Spend a good part of the day doing some physical activity (e.g., foot server, postal carrier)

☐ Very Active: Spend most of the day doing heavy physical activity (e.g., bike messenger, carpenter)

How many times a week do you plan on exercising?

3 Workouts/Week

min./Workout

How do you want to lose experienced energy?

☒ Calories ☐ Fat grams

What is your goal?

Lose 1 pound per week

By signing up for MyFitnessPal, you are agreeing to our [Terms](#) and [Privacy Policy](#).

STEP 2: Fill in the form above. If you don't know your current weight it's okay to just guess roughly and if you don't have a goal weight you can set it to your current weight! This form doesn't affect what your macros will be but MFP WILL calculate it's own macros for you. They aren't very accurate LOL. So basically don't stress about filling in everything exactly if you aren't sure.

Your Suggested Fitness And Nutrition Goals

Congratulations! Your personalized diet and fitness profile is now complete. Based on your answers, here are your suggested nutrition and fitness goals.

Nutritional Goals	Target
Net Calories Consumed* / Day	1,960 Calories / Day
Carbs / Day	245.0 g
Fat / Day	65.0 g
Protein / Day	98.0 g

*Net calories consumed = total calories consumed - exercise calories burned. So the more you exercise, the more you can eat!

Fitness Goals	Target
Calories Burned / Week	1,190 Calories / Week
Workouts / Week	4 workouts
Minutes / Workout	60 minutes

If you follow this plan...

Your projected weight loss is 0 lbs/week

You should lose 0 lbs by January 1

Get Started Now!

STEP 3: Pretty much ignore all of these numbers!! *Note: If you pay for a premium version you CAN enter your own macros but I've never done that and it works just fine without it. Within the app if you are just starting to count it can be helpful to set your calories to zero to make it easy to see your numbers (will show you below how to set your calories/macros to zero if you're unsure! So hang tight). As you enter food through the day your totals will just increase and you can look at that as your guide.

Search our food database by name [Quick add calories](#)

Or, add your favorites for: **Breakfast** [Sort by: Default](#)

You have not added any Breakfast foods yet.

TIP: As you enter foods to your food diary, the foods you've eaten most recently will appear in this list so that you can quickly add them to your meals.

STEP 4: Search for the item.

Search our food database by name:

Banana

Search

Matching Foods:

Bananas, raw	✓
4.2 ounce, 89 calories	
(Small)	✓
Banana, 6 - 6.9 inches, 90 calories	
Banana	✓
Big, 118 g, 105 calories	
Banana	✓
Chiq., 1 piece, 105 calories	
Banana	✓

1.0 servings

4.2 ounce
 1 extra small (less than 6" long)
 1 large (8" to 8-7/8" long)
 1 medium (7" to 7-7/8" long)
 1 cup, mashed
 1 small (6" to 6-7/8" long)
 1 extra large (9" or longer)
 100 g
 1 NLEA serving
 1 serving
 1 lb(s)
 1 cup, sliced
 1 ounce
 1 gram
 119 gram
 1 g
 1 kg(s)
 100 grams
 1 g(s)
 1 mg(s)

Add Food To

Can't find what you're looking for? [Add a food to the](#)

STEP 5: Click the option that fits the best. On the right hand side you can edit the serving size from 4.2oz. I always measure in grams so I either choose 1g or 100g depending on what makes sense! In this case I'd chose 1g.

Search our food database by name:

Banana

Search

Matching Foods:

Bananas, raw	✓
4.2 ounce, 89 calories	
(Small)	✓
Banana, 6 - 6.9 inches, 90 calories	
Banana	✓
Big, 118 g, 105 calories	
Banana	✓
Chiq., 1 piece, 105 calories	
Banana	✓

Bananas, raw✓ [Learn more](#)**How much?**

86.6 servings of 1 gram

To which meal?

Breakfast

Add Food To Diary

Nutrition Info

Can't find what you're looking for? [Add a food to the database](#)

STEP 6: Because I like measuring by the gram not serving size I changed the How Much to 1g and since I measured by banana on my food scale at 86g I enter 86.0 servings.

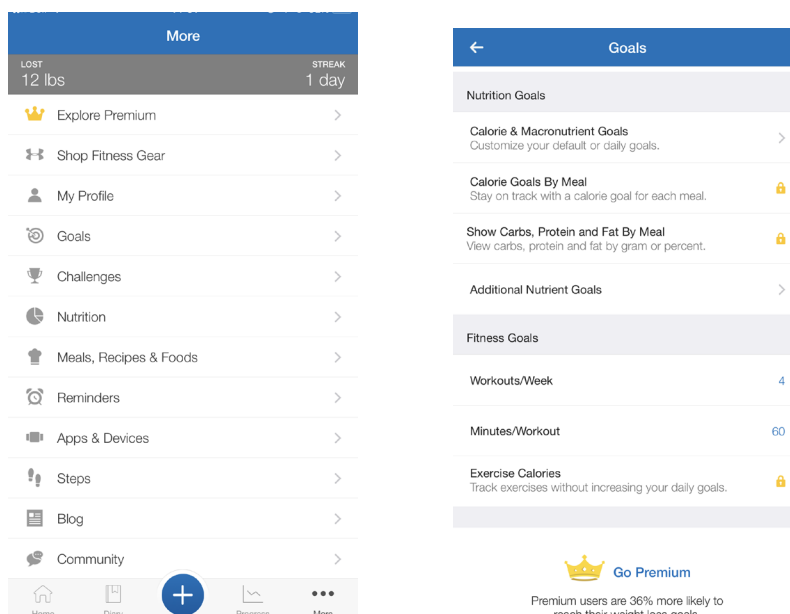
Breakfast		Calories kcal	Carbs g	Fat g	Protein g	Sodium mg	Sugar g	
Bananas, raw, 86 gram		65	17	0	1	1	9	+
Add Food	Quick Tools	65	17	0	1	1	9	
Lunch								
Add Food	Quick Tools							
Dinner								
Add Food	Quick Tools							
Snacks								
Add Food	Quick Tools							
Totals		65	17	0	1	1	9	
Your Daily Goal		1,960	245	65	98	2,300	74	
Remaining		1,895	228	65	97	2,299	65	
		Calories kcal	Carbs g	Fat g	Protein g	Sodium mg	Sugar g	

STEP 7: Click 'add to Food Diary' and you will see your food item appear here!

You can IGNORE the green numbers beside 'Remaining' as these aren't your calculated macros. We want to focus on the Totals and make sure those numbers match our macronutrient goals!

Keep in mind you don't have to set your numbers to zero. As long as you're looking at your totals column, you will know how many macros of proteins, carbs, & fats you've consumed that day. Sometimes setting it to zero just makes it easier to visualize!

Now, this is how you set your numbers to zero and then add food through the phone app.



STEP 1: Click 'More' in the bottom right hand corner. Then select 'Goals' > Calories & Macronutrient Goals.

Calories & Macros

Default Goal

Calories0

Carbohydrates 0 g0%

Protein 0 g0%

Fat 0 g0%

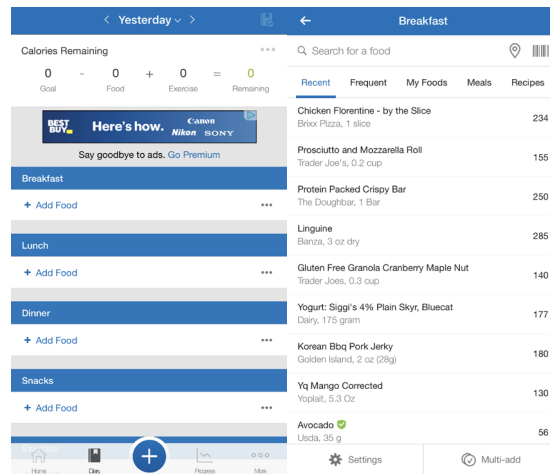
Set Daily Goals

Create custom goals for different days of the week

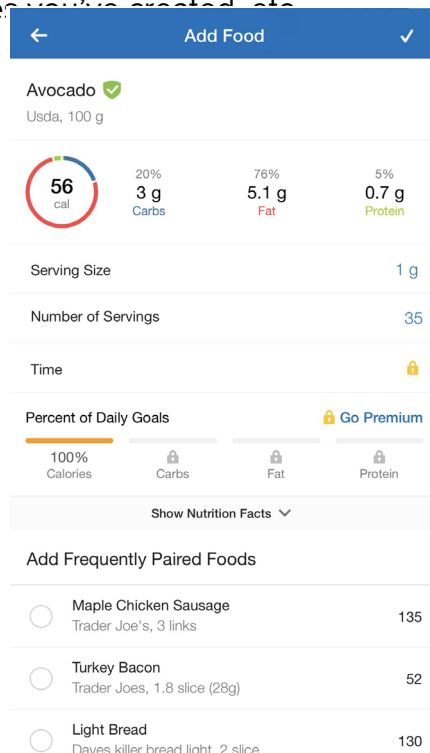
Add Daily Goal

STEP 2: Select calories and set to 'O' then put Carbohydrate, Protein and Fat to 0% as shown on the left screen above. Once you start adding food you'll see the negative number in grams as shown in the right screen above. So if your carbohydrate macro is 200g you want it to say -200 at the end of the day! You can also look at the total column to see what you've eaten so far from each macronutrient. Also keep in mind that setting your calories to zero is not mandatory; you can always look at your total column through the day to see how many grams you've eaten of each macronutrient. For some people though it is easier to just set everything

to zero. Either way is fine!



STEP 3: To add food through your app, click the “Diary” tab at the bottom and the screen above on the left will appear. You can see that your calories remaining at the top of your screen says “0” from when we set it to zero previously. Then just click “+Add Food” to whatever meal you’re eating. After you click add food the screen on the right will appear. You can then search for the food you’re eating (ie. Avocado), search from previous foods you’ve eaten, or input your own recipes you’ve created, etc.



STEP 4: Once you’ve selected a food item the above screen will appear. Simply select the

proper serving size and number of servings. Then click the check mark in the top right hand corner and it will save that item to the meal you preselected.

CONCLUSION

Hey, you made it!! I want to say again how proud I am of you for committing this time to yourself. I'm confident that if you use just one or all of the tips from the guide you'll be setting yourself up for success moving forward. I want to reiterate one last time that everything health, fitness, wellness, diet, exercise, etc. is part of a balanced life, and it's definitely not all or nothing! Your schedule, budget, and desires are unique to you and all I hope is that you can use these tools to create routines rooted in your values that make you happy.

Once again I'd LOVE to have you in the Claire Guentz Community on Facebook and if you have any questions or comments don't hesitate to reach out to me claireguentz@gmail.com.