



Carbs & Cals

Bestselling Book & Award-winning App for Diabetes & Weight Loss



Type 1 Diabetes

Type 2 Diabetes

Weight Loss

5:2 Diet

Healthy Meal Planning

You may find it easier to eat a healthy balanced diet and lose weight if you **plan your meals** at least one or two days ahead and prepare meals at home more often. It could also help to save you time and money, especially if you're eating fewer takeaways and convenience foods.

To prepare a healthy meal takes a little planning. Making more **meals from scratch** is the best way to be certain they are nutritionally balanced, but it is also possible to improve convenience meals with a few simple changes.

This guide will give you suggestions on how to plan healthy meals.

Aim for balanced meals

Include foods from the **3 main food groups** in each meal:

- **Protein:** lean meat, fish, eggs, pulses, tofu.
- **Starchy Carbohydrate:** pasta, rice, potatoes, yam.
- **Vegetables or Salad**

If you need to use **ready meals**, choose the healthier option by reading the label and add frozen vegetables to make the dish more balanced and filling.

Plan your meals

Plan ahead at least 1 or 2 days of meals and healthy snacks.

Decide **how many meals** you need to make and how many people each meal will need to serve, so that you won't waste food or cook more than you need.

Keep a stock of **store cupboard items** that are commonly used in your favourite dishes. E.g. herbs and spices, stock cubes, vinegar.

Make use of **leftovers** to avoid waste, for example leftover roast chicken makes a great salad or stir-fry the next day.

Build up a **collection** of quick, easy, tasty and healthy recipes that all the family enjoys.

Shop smart

Make a list and stick to it. Don't be tempted by special offers on high-calorie snack foods that you didn't plan to buy.

Check the fridge and food cupboards to plan dishes around what you already have.

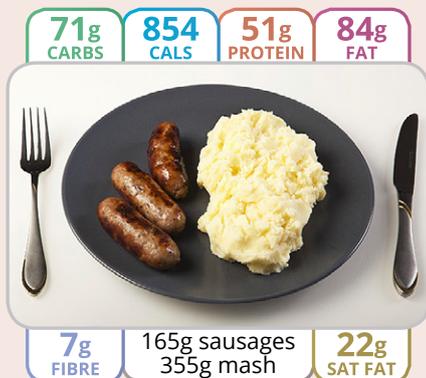
Don't shop when you're **hungry**.

Adapt your favourite meals

Instead of abandoning your favourite dishes, by adjusting the portion size and adding vegetables it is possible to improve the balance of the meal and lower the calorie content. Here are a few examples...

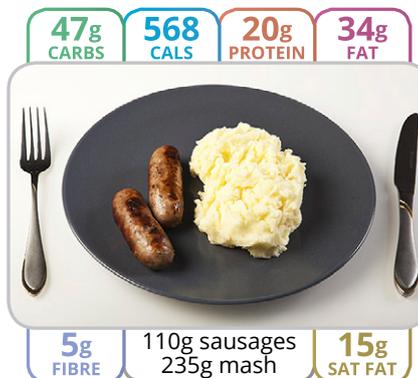
Instead of:

3 Sausages & Mash



Try:

2 Sausages & Mash



+

Carrots



+

Broccoli



Instead of:

Pasta Bake

51g CARBS 437 CALS 26g PROTEIN 16g FAT



3g FIBRE Weight: 355g 8g SAT FAT

Try:

Pasta Bake

41g CARBS 351 CALS 21g PROTEIN 12g FAT



3g FIBRE Weight: 285g 6g SAT FAT

+

Mixed Salad Leaves

0g CARBS 3 CALS 0g PROTEIN 0g FAT



0g FIBRE Weight: 20g 0g SAT FAT

Instead of:

Shepherds' Pie

50g CARBS 708 CALS 33g PROTEIN 43g FAT



6g FIBRE Weight: 485g 20g SAT FAT

Try:

Shepherds' Pie

37g CARBS 526 CALS 25g PROTEIN 32g FAT



4g FIBRE Weight: 360g 15g SAT FAT

+

Peas

8g CARBS 55 CALS 5g PROTEIN 1g FAT



5g FIBRE Weight: 80g 0g SAT FAT