



1 cup
vegetables
(or have more—with veggies,
that's fine)

1/2 cup
berries

1/2 cup
starchy
vegetables

2 cups
leafy greens

1 cup of
asparagus
is six spears!

1 cup
strawberries
(they're mostly water)

1/4 cup
dried fruit,
since it's higher
in sugar

FRUITS
&
VEGGIES

PROP STYLIST: CARLA GONZALEZ-HART, FOOD
STYLIST: CHRIS LANIER AT APOSTROPHE

Exactly how to *FILL* your *PLATE*

Our couldn't-be-simpler plan is designed to help you choose the components of any meal, and these photos of real-life portion sizes will show you how much to have. This, friends, is eating demystified.

BY MARYGRACE TAYLOR PHOTOGRAPHED BY MIKE GARTEN

Before you settle for a bunless turkey burger or dressing-free salad, know this: A gal cannot live on vegetables and poultry alone. Proteins, fats, and carbs all act as fuel for your body and influence chemical messengers that help keep you satisfied until your next meal, says registered dietitian nutritionist Georgie Fear, author of *Lean Habits for Lifelong Weight Loss*. That virtuous feeling you get from your low-calorie lunch? It might just be hunger.

Not that you've got a license to pile on as much bread and cheese as you want, of course. Maxing out your calorie budget before your toddler takes his afternoon nap won't get you through the day, and certainly not to a glass of wine at the end of it. That's why this guide also includes true-to-size portions—the amount of food you can have at a meal—that you can use to gauge what's on your plate. Pick two portions of fruits or veggies and one portion from each of the other

PROTEINS



3/4 cup
beans, cooked

1/4 cup
protein-
rich nuts

3-4 oz
fish, cooked

3 oz
meat or
poultry, cooked

1 cup
Greek yogurt, milk, or
cottage cheese

categories and you'll end up filling about half your dish with produce, a quarter with protein, and a quarter with carbs, with fats mixed in, says registered dietitian nutritionist Torey Armul, spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. The same goes for meals like soups and casseroles: Use the formula when you're cooking, just as you would if you were laying ingredients out on a plate, says registered dietitian nutritionist Frances Largeman-Roth, author of *Eating in Color*.

Slip up and have a cheese pizza? "That's okay—the magic is in keeping up this pattern week after week," Armul says. You'll feel so good that it'll be easy.

Start with a base of fruits and vegetables

They take up more space on your plate—and in your belly—for fewer calories than other foods, triggering the receptors in your stomach that tell your brain you're full *before* you can Hoover down extra portions of bread or pasta. Aim for at least two types of veggies, or a vegetable plus a fruit.

► The color in produce comes courtesy of compounds called phytonutrients—and each hue offers different disease-fighting benefits. Make sure you have *at least* two colors on your plate: maybe a salad with leafy greens and red peppers.

► If you choose a starchy vegetable like potatoes, green peas, squash, or corn, pair it with a fiber-rich whole grain, like quinoa or couscous, to avoid loading up on carbs.

► Not feeling veggies for breakfast? It's fine to double up on fruit. You might start with yogurt and fresh berries, and add a medium-size fruit like an orange or a pear.

Pick your protein

Lean protein is best at reducing levels of the hunger hormone ghrelin, and it also helps your blood sugar rise and fall at a steadier rate than, say, a bowl of carb-y oatmeal. Add these to your grocery list: poultry, fish, lean meat (like sirloin, flank steak, or pork tenderloin), low-fat dairy, eggs, beans, and soy-based tofu or tempeh.

► Some nuts and nut butters have enough protein to count as your source. Reach for almonds or almond butter (have just a tablespoon of the latter), pistachios, and cashews—and treat other nuts and seeds, like walnuts, as fats. ►

● Figure out your fat

Fats take longer to digest than both carbohydrates and protein, keeping you full for hours after your meal is finished. Plus, if you've ever cooked with oil or butter, you *know* they make everything taste better. Stick with heart-healthy unsaturated fats as much as possible: things like olive oil, avocado, and higher-fat nuts or seeds like walnuts, pecans, or flaxseeds.

- ▶ Limit yourself to half a portion of healthy fat when eating higher-fat proteins like eggs, skin-on poultry, lean meat, or fatty fish like salmon or tuna.
- ▶ Cheese has some protein, but not enough. So consider it a fat (*sigh*) and pair it with a full portion of protein—like a salad with chicken and feta, or a burrito with cheddar and beans.
- ▶ Hankering for more? It's fine on occasion to have up to three portions of healthy fat in a single meal (such as a salad with half an avocado, pecans, and olive oil dressing). If you do, best to cut back on your portions of protein and carbs.

● Finish with carbs

Refined carbs, like white bread, white pasta, and white rice, cause a drastic spike in blood sugar. (That's why you get the crash, too.) Complex carbs are much better. These foods have more fiber, which is absorbed slowly, providing a steady stream of energy. Having them with protein and fat does even more to keep your body on an even keel. Look for whole grains on the label of breads, pastas, and cereals, as well as grains like quinoa and brown rice.

- ▶ You don't have to swear off refined carbs completely, but limit yourself to one portion per day, and be sure to get fiber from another source. You can find it in foods like beans or vegetables.

FATS

2 Tbsp
reduced-fat or
vinaigrette dressing

1 Tbsp
olive oil

1 Tbsp
mayo, ranch,
blue cheese,
or Caesar

1 tsp
butter

¼ cup
shredded cheese
or fatty nuts

2 oz
cheese, sliced

½ cup
cooked grains

CARBS

For bread,
1 baseball-size roll, a 2-inch cut
of a baguette, or 2 slices

1 cup
pasta (cooked)
or cereal