

1,000 Low-Calorie Recipes

Jackie Newgent, RD

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DEDICATION

For my smart and spirited nephews, Aiden and Rhyus
Thank you for inspiring me to do all I can to make a better, healthier, and
tastier future for all. Wishing you good health always.

AUTHOR BIO

Jackie Newgent is a registered dietitian, food and nutrition writer, and cookbook author. Her work has appeared in *Cooking Light*, *Health*, *Glamour*, *Weight Watchers Magazine*, *Fitness*, and other health publications. She has appeared on ABC's *Good Morning America*, NBC's *Later Today*, the *Dr. Oz Show*, Food Network's *Follow that Food* and Lifetime's *Lifetime Live* as well as on the radio including NPR, CNN Radio Network, and WOR. She is a cooking instructor at the Institute of Culinary Education in New York City, and is the author of *Big Green Cookbook* and *The All-Natural Diabetes Cookbook*. Find her at JackieNewgent.com and [Twitter/jackienewgent](https://twitter.com/jackienewgent).

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Introduction

Delicious. Scrumptious. Mouthwatering. Those are some of the first words that will roll off your tongue when cooking and enjoying the recipes in *1,000 Low-Calorie Recipes*.

Yes, finally, an incredible cookbook in which eating healthfully and eating deliciously is now in your hands. In a nutshell, *1,000 Low-Calorie Recipes* features great-tasting “real” cuisine, with each recipe providing less than 500 calories per serving. Trying to lose weight? The compendium of dishes can be considered like a dieter’s recipe “bible.” It will support weight loss books, programs, and plans as a recipe resource. Trying to simply eat healthier? This cookbook is equally ideal for anyone desiring a fit lifestyle—even when weight loss is not a goal. You’ll be able to serve these dishes to everyone.

Most of yesterday’s calorie-conscious and healthy-weight cookbooks forgot nearly everything else that mattered to people. Often filled with nutrient-poor, unsatisfying ingredients, they lacked flavor appeal. I didn’t want to create yet another cookbook with recipes whose main inspiration was that they be low in calories. My goal was to take a fresh approach and create recipes that are both exciting and taste good. In fact, deliciousness is the most important feature of *1,000 Low-Calorie Recipes*. You’ll have so many options, you will be able to focus on eating well to suit your palate.

As a natural culinary nutritionist, my philosophy is that if you prepare a nutritious recipe that’s tasteless or otherwise unsatisfying, chances are you probably won’t make it again. I want you to want to make these recipes again and again—to best help you stay fit and manage weight in the long run. You can and should expect your food to be enjoyable even when—and perhaps especially when—eating healthfully.

In addition to being high-flavored, the enticing, simple-to-follow dishes within *1,000 Low-Calorie Recipes* focus on filling ingredients with a contemporary edge. The recipes are not unrealistically low in calories, fat, or sodium, just cleverly lower in calories than you otherwise might expect. I prefer to call them “calorie friendly”! The health strategy is about adding nutritional richness. This is accomplished mainly by boosting nutrient-dense plant foods—fresh, vibrant, colorful, appealing plant foods. Meats, poultry, fish, and dairy products are featured smartly, in small quantities. The result is mouthwatering cuisine—naturally. You’ll find absolutely nothing artificial in here!

1,000 Low-Calorie Recipes is about making food that’s scrumptious while still keeping calories in check. It’s about what you *can* have! It’s about making sure portion sizes are satisfying and right-sized—not bigger than you really need or want and not too small. It’s not about sacrificing. It’s about balancing luscious ingredients with full-flavored lean ingredients to create wonderfully lean, calorie-friendly cuisine.

Beyond eating deliciously, it’s important to remember why eating nutritious foods is so essential. The main reason is that we have an obesity epidemic in the United States. Yes, an epidemic! Today, according to data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, more than two-thirds of adults in the United States are overweight or obese. According to the Centers for Disease Control, about one-third of

children and teens are, too. And unfortunately, this is a growing problem in far too many other regions of the world.

Facts and Figures

How do you know if you're obese or overweight? There's one measurement called the body mass index (BMI) that's a general guide to determining if you fit into either category. An adult is considered overweight if her or his BMI is 25 to 29.9 or obese if it's 30 or higher. The BMI isn't a direct measure of body fat, so athletes and other muscular individuals may need to rely on more specific measures of body fat. You can determine your BMI by entering your weight and height into the calculator at <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/>.

How'd you do? If you fall into the category of healthy weight, great! If you find you fit into the overweight or obese category, you're not alone. I wish there was a magic recipe that I could whip up for everyone that would miraculously melt all those extra pounds away. But, alas, there's no such recipe. Trust me, if there were, I'd be whipping it up for myself, too!

No doubt, there's absolutely no simple solution to solving these weighty issues. But how you eat can definitely play a key role in your efforts to manage a healthy weight. And though there's no simple answer to the ideal eating plan to follow, the bottom line for maintaining a healthy weight comes down to this calorie equation: you need to balance calories in with calories out.

If you consume more calories than your body needs, you'll gain weight. If you consume fewer calories than your body needs, you'll lose weight. Though very simplified, that's the gist of it all. (Of course, being physically active can play an important role in calorie management, too.) And there's more. Besides quantity, the quality and even the timing of the calories you consume is essential to consider. I'll share how to make calories count a bit later on in this cookbook. In fact, you are what you eat!

How does this all translate into numbers within *1,000 Low-Calorie Recipes*? Here's the nutrition criteria per serving that applies to all the recipes:

MAXIMUM OF:

500 calories; 20g total fat; 10g saturated fat; 800mg sodium

These are maximums. Don't worry, most recipes will provide far less than these criteria. What's more, every recipe provides zero grams of trans fat.

There are two highlighted categories to help you decide which of the recipes fit best with your other needs. You'll see symbols with the recipes that identify these important nutrition features:

[S] = 250mg sodium or less per serving (and no more than 1mg sodium per calorie—so if a recipe has 200 calories, it has no more than 200mg sodium)

An easy-to-remember goal is to consume no more than 1mg sodium per calorie daily. So for a 1,500-calorie plan, consuming less than 1,500mg sodium is an excellent goal for health (1,500mg sodium is also the suggested maximum daily level if you are age 51 or older, if you're African-American, or if you have high

blood pressure, diabetes, or chronic kidney disease). I used this as a guide for establishing “light in sodium” recipes.

[F] = 5g dietary fiber or more per serving

This level is meaningful since 5g is equivalent to 20 percent of the daily value for dietary fiber, which also means a particular food is an excellent source.

Many people feel that keeping within recommended quantities of calories and sodium or getting enough key nutrients, such as fiber and calcium, requires sacrifice. What better way to stay inspired and make it easy to eat well than to have a seemingly endless supply of recipes? No sacrifice required! Not only should you look to cook any of the 1,000 recipes here, you should consider this book also a guide to being creative in the kitchen and from which you can vary the dishes to suit your unique needs. In fact, I encourage you to truly make this a resource for any cooking needs. Even if you’re following a gluten-free diet, vegan eating plan, or perhaps your very own diet, you’ll be able to find endless ways to personalize and enjoy this recipe compendium. I hope that you, your family, and your friends will savor *1,000 Low-Calories Recipes* as much as I enjoyed putting it together. I’m sure you’ll find these recipes will appeal to your senses and benefit your waistline for years to come.

What to Eat

My basic philosophy for eating well is this: Eat right-size amounts of real food—and relish it. *1,000 Low-Calorie Recipes* is designed for you to be able to do just that.

Here’s a checklist that provides you with general guidelines for following this eating philosophy. The ultimate goal is to be able to check this list off daily (even if it’s just a mental checklist).

Healthy Eating Daily Checklist

- ✓ **FOLLOW THE 5-HOUR RULE.** Healthy eating and weight management don’t require starvation. And in fact, try not to go more than five waking hours without eating so your blood sugar stays level and metabolism stays revved up. Otherwise, you may be more likely to make poor food or drink choices to fulfill cravings.
- ✓ **REACH FOR REAL.** Increase whole foods and decrease overly processed foods. Keep “natural” ingredients in and artificial ingredients out. It will help keep flavors up and fillers out. It will help assure that your body is getting important nutrients it needs and not those it doesn’t. It’s the key aspect of a better eating plan.
- ✓ **BE PLANT FRIENDLY.** Focus your plate on plant foods, especially produce which naturally provides fiber and low-calorie goodness. (See Fill Up on Fiber, page xi.) It heightens volume and overall appeal of your meals while boosting satiety (makes you feel full). Select fresh seasonal produce often. It will be at its peak of ripeness, nutritional value, and flavor. Aim for five total cups of vegetables and fruits daily. Pick various colors, too, including red, orange, and dark-green produce. Every time you eat, plan to fill half of your plate with produce—especially veggies.
- ✓ **MAKE NUTRIENT-RICH CHOICES.** When you’re losing weight, it’s more important than ever to make every calorie count. Choose foods that have significant amounts of key nutrients, naturally. (See Nutrient Full, Calorie Friendly, page xii.) Limit “empty-

calorie” foods that have significant caloric amounts of added sugars and saturated (solid) fats. Always go for zero trans fats. Select whole grains in place of refined grains whenever possible. (See What Counts as a Whole Grain?, page xiii.) When eating sweets, choose those naturally sweetened, such as with fruit, most often. When in doubt, choose real foods with the richest color.

- ✓ **GET THE RIGHT BALANCE.** Balance meals by selecting good carbs, adequate protein, and healthful fats. (See Getting the Right Balance, below.) Good carbs, like whole grains, are essential for providing energy. Ensure that you’re getting enough protein throughout the day, not just at lunch or dinnertime. Protein can help boost satiety (make you feel full) and maintain your lean tissue (muscle). Choose plant-based proteins, such as beans, more often than animal-based proteins. Include at least 2 teaspoons of healthful oils, such as extra-virgin olive oil, each day within your meals; it can improve health, nutrient absorption, and flavor. Don’t forget other natural flavor enhancers, such as honey or sea salt—but just a drizzle or a pinch, respectively. (See A Note about Sodium, page xiv.)
- ✓ **DRINK RIGHT.** Calories can add up quickly when you’re gulping them down. So, when you’re simply quenching thirst, sip calorie-free or very low calorie, better-for-you beverages—focusing on cold filtered fresh tap water or unsweetened tea. (Try the very low calorie beverage, Spa H₂O, on page 544.) Aim to drink at least six 8-ounce glasses daily of these, especially water like Spa H₂O. When choosing a beverage for enjoyment, make calories count by choosing nutrient-rich beverages, like real fruit smoothies; they do count as part of your fruit servings, after all. (Check out the nutrient-rich beverages beginning on page 541.) And, if you’re able to consume alcohol, plan for the added calories within your meal plan. Generally, up to one drink a day for women or two for men can be included healthfully. What counts as a drink? A 12-fluid-ounce beer, 5-fluid-ounce glass of wine, or cocktail containing 1½ fluid ounces 80-proof spirits. Cocktails can provide a clever way to boost your fruit and vegetable intake. (Check out the cocktails beginning on page 554.)
- ✓ **BE REALISTIC.** You don’t have to give up your favorites! But do try to make wiser, fresher, “cleaner” picks when you do. Look for the dishes that delight your palate the most. I bet you’ll discover most, if not all, of your favorites here.
- ✓ **SAVOR SLOWLY.** How you eat is important, not just what you eat. So eat slowly—whenever possible, sit at a table, use silverware, plates, and bowls. You’ll be able to truly appreciate your food.
- ✓ **KEEP IT DELICIOUS.** Always know that a tasty meal plan is one that’s easiest to stick to. Enjoyment is key to following a good-for-you eating plan for the long term. So when it comes to dishes from *1,000 Low-Calorie Recipes* and beyond, relish them!

GETTING THE RIGHT BALANCE

What’s the right mix of carbohydrates, proteins, and fats within a nutritious diet? Based on the current research available on healthy eating, my recommendations as a registered dietitian are below. *1,000 Low-Calorie Recipes* was planned for you to be able to meet these nutrition criteria. Use them as a guide.

40 TO 60 PERCENT CALORIES FROM CARBOHYDRATES

- Aim for higher fiber choices, little to no refined grains, and only small amounts of added unrefined sugars,

including honey and turbinado sugar.

- Foods that provide healthful or “good” carbs include whole-grain foods and whole-grain food products (see What Counts as a Whole Grain?, page xiii) and fresh or frozen vegetables and fruits (not processed juices).
- If highly active, aim for closer to 60 percent.

20 TO 35 PERCENT CALORIES FROM FATS

- Aim for mostly healthful, unsaturated fats (monounsaturated and polyunsaturated).
- Foods that provide healthful, unsaturated or “good” fats include oils like canola, olive, grapeseed, and peanut, and include foods naturally high in oils, such as nuts, avocados, and salmon.
- If following a Mediterranean-style eating plan rich in healthful fats, it’s okay to aim for closer to 35 percent.

20 TO 35 PERCENT CALORIES FROM PROTEINS

- Aim for mostly plant-based proteins.*
- Foods that are healthful choices of proteins include plant-based foods, like beans, soybeans, nuts, and seeds, and include nutrient-rich animal-based foods, such as plain fat-free or low-fat Greek yogurt and whole eggs.
- Be sure to get proteins at every meal since the body needs a continual supply.

**A vegan diet based on only plant-based proteins can be healthful when properly planned.*

A Healthful Meal Plan

There’s no one right meal plan for everyone. It’s always best that it be individualized. That’s where specialized advice from a registered dietitian (RD) can be especially helpful. (See Seeking RD Advice, page xv.)

But there’s a general guide that can be followed as a baseline for balanced meal planning. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans provides science-based advice on how to eat for health. The guidelines encourage all Americans to eat a healthy diet and be physically active. By improving what you eat and being active, you help reduce your risk of chronic diseases, such as diabetes, heart disease, some cancers, and, yes, obesity.

When it comes to eating well, the guidelines provide basic “rules of thumb” to remember—which fit well within the philosophy of *1,000 Low-Calorie Recipes*. Try these three tips:

- 1. FOR BALANCING CALORIES:** Enjoy your food, but eat less. That’s the basic premise of this cookbook. Recipe portions are already adjusted for you, so simply enjoy.
- 2. FOR FOODS TO INCREASE:** Make half your plate vegetables and fruits. Alternatively, just make half your dish veggies. In *1,000 Low-Calorie Recipes*, I generously incorporate produce into dishes to make this easy for you.
- 3. FOR FOODS TO REDUCE:** Compare sodium in foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals—and choose the foods with the lowest sodium, for instance. Check out all the recipes with the [S] symbol to help you lighten up on sodium without losing out on enjoyment.

For more details about how to plan a healthful plate, MyPlate was developed. It corresponds directly to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010. Check out <http://www.DietaryGuidelines.gov> and <http://www.ChooseMyPlate.gov> for more details.

HOW CAN YOU BE SURE YOU'LL BE SATISFIED?

Fill Up on Fiber

Dietary fiber is the part of plant foods that the body can't digest. Yet it's a vital part of a healthful eating plan. It adds bulk to your diet to help you feel fuller longer, which is a key for managing weight. By boosting high-fiber foods, you'll have less room for high-calorie nutrient-poor (aka "empty-calorie") foods, too. What's more, naturally fibrous foods generally take more time to chew, which may give your body more time to realize that you're satisfied, ultimately preventing you from overeating.

Dietary fiber also plays a key role in the digestion process, can help prevent constipation, and may play a beneficial role in managing blood cholesterol and blood sugar levels.

Most Americans don't consume enough dietary fiber, with averages of only 15 grams per day. For wholesome eating and a fit body, the Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend a daily fiber intake of 25 grams for women and 38 grams for men. After age 50, daily fiber needs drop to 21 grams for women and 30 grams for men. A simpler tip: the National Fiber Council suggests an average of 32 grams of fiber per day for adults in general. Determine your specific daily fiber recommendation based on your gender and age by using the Fiber Calculator at <http://www.nationalfibercouncil.org>.

The best way to meet dietary fiber needs is by eating a variety of fiber-rich foods, including beans, whole grains, nuts, fruits, and vegetables. Beans are the best—and found liberally sprinkled throughout the recipes within 1,000 Low-Calorie Recipes! Keep in mind that it's advisable to boost fiber in your diet slowly since too much too quickly can contribute to gas, bloating, and cramps.

Discover the fiber-rich dishes in 1,000 Low-Calorie Recipes by looking for the [F] next to the recipe titles.

Good Sources of Dietary Fiber

Food: Beans (navy, pinto, black, kidney, white, Great Northern, lima), cooked

Portion: 1/2 cup

Calories in Portion: 104–149

Dietary Fiber in Portion (G): 6.2–9.6

Food: Split peas, lentils, or chickpeas (garbanzo beans), cooked

Portion: 1/2 cup

Calories in Portion: 108–134

Dietary Fiber in Portion (G): 5.6–8.1

Food: Artichoke, cooked

Portion: 1/2 cup hearts

Calories in Portion: 45

Dietary Fiber in Portion (G): 7.2

Food: Pear

Portion: 1 medium

Calories in Portion: 103

Dietary Fiber in Portion (G): 5.5

Food: Soybeans, mature, cooked

Portion: 1/2 cup

Calories in Portion: 149

Dietary Fiber in Portion (G): 5.2

Food: Asian pear

Portion: 1 small

Calories in Portion: 51

Dietary Fiber in Portion (G): 4.4

Food: Green peas, cooked

Portion: 1/2 cup

Calories in Portion: 59–67

Dietary Fiber in Portion (G): 3.5–4.4

Food: Whole-wheat English muffin

Portion: 1 muffin

Calories in Portion: 134

Dietary Fiber in Portion (G): 4.4

Food: Bulgur, cooked

Portion: 1/2 cup

Calories in Portion: 76

Dietary Fiber in Portion (G): 4.1

Food: Mixed vegetables, cooked

Portion: 1/2 cup

Calories in Portion: 59

Dietary Fiber in Portion (G): 4.0

Food: Raspberries

Portion: 1/2 cup

Calories in Portion: 32

Dietary Fiber in Portion (G): 4.0

Food: Sweet potato, baked in skin

Portion: 1 medium

Calories in Portion: 103

Dietary Fiber in Portion (G): 3.8

Food: Blackberries

Portion: 1/2 cup

Calories in Portion: 31

Dietary Fiber in Portion (G): 3.8

Food: Soybeans, green, cooked

Portion: 1/2 cup

Calories in Portion: 127

Dietary Fiber in Portion (G): 3.8

Food: Figs, dried

Portion: 1/4 cup

Calories in Portion: 93

Dietary Fiber in Portion (G): 3.7

Food: Apple, with skin

Portion: 1 small

Calories in Portion: 77

Dietary Fiber in Portion (G): 3.6

Food: Pumpkin, canned

Portion: 1/2 cup

Calories in Portion: 42

Dietary Fiber in Portion (G): 3.6

Food: Greens (spinach, collards, turnip greens), cooked

Portion: 1/2 cup

Calories in Portion: 14–32

Dietary Fiber in Portion (G): 2.5–3.5

Food: Almonds

Portion: 1 ounce

Calories in Portion: 163

Dietary Fiber in Portion (G): 3.5

Food: Whole wheat spaghetti, cooked

Portion: 1/2 cup

Calories in Portion: 87

Dietary Fiber in Portion (G): 3.1

Food: Banana

Portion: 1 medium

Calories in Portion: 105

Dietary Fiber in Portion (G): 3.1

Food: Orange

Portion: 1 medium

Calories in Portion: 62

Dietary Fiber in Portion (G): 3.1

Food: Potato, baked, with skin

Portion: 1 small

Calories in Portion: 128

Dietary Fiber in Portion (G): 3.0

NUTRIENT FULL, CALORIE FRIENDLY

When foods are high in nutrients compared to the calories provided, they're considered to be nutrient-rich or nutrient-dense foods. (When especially nutrient rich, they may be called "superfoods.") These are the foods that are celebrated as ingredients within 1,000 Low-Calorie Recipes.

Why are nutrient-rich foods key for you? Eating nutrient-rich foods means you're making your calories count, which is especially important when you're eating fewer calories. You need to pack as much nutrition into the calories you consume to keep your overall meal plan a good-for-you one—and one that provides the best boost for your healthy eating or weight loss goals.

Below are a dozen of my favorite nutrient-rich ingredients in 1,000 Low-Calorie Recipes:

1. Garlic:

- is one of the simplest ways to boost flavor

- may be beneficial for reducing risk of heart disease

2. Onions:

- provide texture, color, and an occasional touch of sweetness
- may help maintain a healthy immune system and suppress unwanted inflammation

3. Beans:

- impart a wonderful creaminess, especially when pureed into recipes
- provide a sustained energy source with their coupling of plant-based protein and fiber

4. Mushrooms:

- are rich in umami and provide savoriness, “meatiness,” and earthiness
- are the only natural food source of bone-friendly vitamin D in the produce aisle

5. Leafy greens:

- add volume, crispness, freshness, color, taste, and more
- are a nutritional powerhouse that may help to protect you from heart disease

6. Tomatoes:

- come in many forms and nothing beats their rich redness
- contain lycopene, which is associated with reduced risk of certain cancers

7. Fresh herbs:

- are way more than garnishes and give dishes lovely aroma
- count as veggies; can potentially help you use less salt in cooking

8. Spices:

- offer an easy way to create intrigue and international flair; a pinch adds pow
- have antioxidants; sweet spices can potentially help you use less sugar in baking

9. Avocado:

- has a buttery texture that’s unsurpassed
- has heart-healthy fat; may reduce “bad” cholesterol levels

10. Nuts:

- provide crunchiness, richness, and, of course, nuttiness
- may reduce the risk of heart disease without causing weight gain

11. Plain almond milk:

- can be used just like regular milk
- has fewer calories than regular milk

12. Plain fat-free or low-fat Greek yogurt:

- makes recipes creamy with distinct tang
- its protein boosts satiety; its active cultures boosts the immune system

WHAT COUNTS AS A WHOLE GRAIN?

Whole grains contain all edible parts of the grain, including the bran, germ, and endosperm. Refined grains have been processed to remove the outer bran and inner germ—which removes many nutrients, including B vitamins, iron, and dietary fiber. So it’s important to focus grain intake on whole grains for whole benefits.

Examples of whole grains include whole-wheat flour, brown rice, and whole-grain corn. Examples of refined grains include white flour, white rice, and degermed cornmeal.

Sometimes there’s confusion about what’s considered a whole grain. One example is wheat bread. Wheat bread is only made with the whole grain when it says “whole-wheat flour” on the ingredient list. Otherwise it simply means it was made with refined wheat flour—or white flour that simply isn’t bleached. So look for the word “whole” often.

There are so many whole grains and whole-grain products available today. Some whole grains are actually ancient grains that have gained newfound popularity. Below is a sampling of the myriad whole grains you’ll find in *1,000 Low-Calorie Recipes* along with why you should enjoy each. When you do enjoy, aim for no fewer than 3 servings of whole grains a day. A serving—or 1-ounce equivalent—counts as 1/2 cup cooked whole grain, such as brown rice or oatmeal, 3 cups popped popcorn, 1 cup whole-grain cereal flakes, or 1 slice whole-grain bread.

Amaranth	Creamy, mildly earthy flavor. Tiny seed yet packed with protein. Rich in phytosterols that are beneficial for a healthy heart and immune system.
Brown Rice	Light brown, nutty, and chewy grain. Excellent source of manganese, which helps you produce energy from protein and carbohydrates.
Buckwheat	Rich earthy flavor. Despite its name, it’s not related to wheat; it’s a seed of a fruit. Contains rutin, which acts as an antioxidant and anti-inflammatory.
Bulgur	Steamed, dried, crushed wheat kernels—from fine to coarse. Taste pleasantly nutty, like wheat, since it is wheat. Chewy yet tender and quick cooking.
Farro	Deep nutty flavor and extra chewy. Ancient whole grain that’s a member of the wheat family and looks like spelt. Choose it for a satiating protein and fiber boost.
Millet	Tiny and round seed that’s as much bird seed as it is people seed. Good source of magnesium, which can be beneficial for healthy bones and blood pressure.
Quinoa	Subtly nutty flavor. A seed that looks similar to sesame seed. A complete source of protein as it containing all essential amino acids. Cooks in 15 minutes.
Oats	Oat groats (steel-cut oats) and rolled oats (old-fashioned oats) provide beta-glucan, a soluble fiber that’s beneficial for managing blood sugar and cholesterol.
Spelt	Mild nutty taste and extra chewy. Ancient whole grain that looks like farro. Rich in manganese and ultimately may help to fight free radicals.
Teff	Mildly molasses-like taste. Whole grain from the lovegrass plant group. Super tiny yet super nutritious. Especially notable for its calcium and iron.
Whole-grain barley	Nutty flavor and chewy texture. Loaded with dietary fiber to help maintain a healthy colon. Loaded with selenium, which has cancer preventative properties.
Whole-grain corn	Whole grain grown as “ears.” Various colors, not just yellow. Yellow corn provides high concentrations of lutein and zeaxanthin, which are important for eye health.
Whole-wheat	Found in many foods. Can play key role in weight loss as it provides insoluble fiber, which provides bulk. High in gluten, which is why it works well in making bread.

Why Eat Nutritiously?

Reasons why you want to eat well may differ from someone else’s reasons. Some people may want to lose weight to look better. Others may want to feel better. And yet others may need to eat right for management of a health condition.

However, for those who need extra motivation to stick to a nutritious eating plan for weight loss, here’s info about obesity that is useful to know:

When obese, it means that you have so much body fat that it has a negative effect on

your health, placing you at higher risk of developing several diseases, including type 2 diabetes, heart disease, hypertension (high blood pressure), some cancers, sleep apnea, and osteoarthritis. You also have a greater risk of dying younger than a non-obese person.

Yes, it is serious. So take a minute to digest.

Now, let's get back to the other kind of digestion. Whatever your reason for wanting to eat better, it's a valid reason—especially when it is that reason that motivates you to eat well. And when eating right, always remember this: While keeping it nutritious, make sure it's delicious. That's where this cookbook really comes into play. So start eating better today . . . there's no time like the present.



Healthy Weight Tips

Everyone has a personal calorie limit. Staying within the right calorie level for you can help you reach or maintain a healthy weight. Seek the advice of a registered dietitian (RD) to identify the specific calorie level and eating plan best for you. (See Seeking RD Advice, page xv.) You can also go to <http://www.ChooseMyPlate.gov> to find your daily calorie limit.

Or, try this tip. For losing weight, my easiest rule of thumb is to add a 0 to your weight (in pounds) and use that as a guideline (if you're moderately active). So if you weigh 160 pounds, then aim to eat 1,600 calories for an eating plan for weight loss. Going too far below that number may result in a greater loss of lean muscle tissue (muscle helps you burn calories!), it may not be sustainable, and it may not allow you to meet your overall nutritional needs. If you're focused on maintaining instead of losing weight, add about 400 to 500 calories per day to the "weight + 0" rule of thumb. Also, keep in mind, the more active you are, the more calories you'll need—even when losing weight. So the daily calorie level you follow will actually vary based on activity. One caveat: Be sure to not consume less than 1,000 calories daily—even if you're small-framed and say 90 pounds; it's important to assure basic nutrient needs are met.

A NOTE ABOUT SODIUM

When using this cookbook, know that all of the recipes are under 800mg sodium per serving. Most fall well under that mark. This sodium level is well within the daily recommendations for most people, 2,300mg sodium per day. What's more, the recipes that are especially light in sodium are indicated by the symbol: [S]. Keep your eye out for them.

Keys to Weight-Management Success

Even if you know what to eat and how many calories to eat, weight management still provides many, many challenges. But knowing some of the keys to success—especially from people who have lost weight and kept it off—will help give you a greater chance at long-term weight management.

Habits of Highly Successful Losers

In addition to modifying food intake in some way to lose weight, being a successful loser (which also means keeping lost weight off), based on the majority of participants' habits within The National Weight Control Registry (NWCR), includes:

- Eating breakfast daily
- Weighing themselves at least once weekly
- Watching less than 10 hours of television weekly
- Exercising (especially walking), on average, about 1 hour daily (Hint: It can be broken up into increments, like 20 minutes three times daily.)

Three Rules to Remember

What about what goes onto your plate? There seems to be a new study every day touted by the media about what to eat for weight loss. Some of it gets downright confusing, especially when what was supposedly “good” yesterday is “bad” today, and vice versa. But filtering through all of the research, there are some common denominators that you can rely on to help you beat the battle of the bulge. Here are three rules to remember—and put into practice:

- 1. DON'T EAT TOO MUCH.** Steer clear of portion distortion. Aim for just-right-size portions.
- 2. DON'T EAT TOO OFTEN.** Have a plan of a snack, don't just give in to any snack attack.
- 3. DO EAT NUTRIENT-RICH FOODS.** That means vegetables, fruits, whole grains, yogurt, and nuts.

SEEKING RD ADVICE

While the Dietary Guidelines can help to provide a framework for a balanced eating plan, you may need to follow a more specialized diet for weight loss or for other health reasons. This is where a registered dietitian (RD) can play a key role as a vital member of your health team. A dietitian can design an individualized meal plan to meet your specific needs—weight-wise, health-wise, taste-wise, lifestyle-wise, and otherwise. If you prefer to follow a popular diet, an RD can also help you appropriately utilize it and make it uniquely fit you. Popular diet approaches that are based on solid nutrition principles include the Mediterranean Diet (I'm a big fan of it!), the Dash Diet, and Weight Watchers. What's more, an RD can help you determine which recipes within this cookbook can be part of any meal plan. If you don't already have a dietitian, you can find one at <http://eatright.org>.

Counting Sheep

Besides eating right and moving around often, is there anything else that can help with weight loss efforts? Possibly! According to recent research, getting restful sleep may help. So count your sheep and aim for getting Zs 6 to 8 hours a night.

Diet Dos and Don'ts

In addition to the basic guidelines I've provided for eating right, weight loss takes additional tools, which eventually will become second nature to you. Being a dietitian for so many years, I've learned which dieting tips actually work for people. Below is a list of a handful of the most helpful—from the mainstream to the quirky. Pick a few that seem to speak to you if weight loss is your goal.

- **THINK BEFORE YOU BITE.** Count to three before you take your first bite. If you didn't plan for it, ask yourself this while counting: "Is this worth the calories?"
- **SLOW DOWN.** Enjoy every morsel of your healthful, high-flavor, homemade dishes from *1,000 Low-Calorie Recipes*. Faster eating seems to translate to greater weight. So savor flavors and focus only on your food when eating. One study finds that cutting up food into smaller pieces may lead to more satisfaction than eating one large piece. Another study even suggests that chewing each bite of food 40 times may be a key to eating less. That's a lot of savoring . . . but it may work for you!
- **DON'T LET THE CLOCK TELL YOU WHEN TO EAT.** Listen to your internal hunger cues. Follow this approach: Eat when you're hungry and stop when you're satisfied, not full. Also, consider using my 3 Hs: hungry, happy, or hurting. You should be hungry *before* you're satisfied; you're happy when you're satisfied (satiated); and you're hurting when you've eaten too much. The goal is to feel hunger and reach a happy place, while you avoid hurting as a result of overeating.
- **THINK "NEW PLATE SPECIAL."** Choose new, smaller plates when starting on your new and nutritious eating plan. Consider using a salad-size or a more petite-size dinner plate as your dish of choice (no more than 10 inches). When you pull out the "special" plate for each meal, it'll be a reminder of your better-for-you diet.
- **DON'T BE MATCHY-MATCHY.** Plate color can be key. The higher the contrast of the food you're eating to the color of the plate, the more likely it is that you'll eat less. So, basically, if your food is red, serve it on a white plate, not a red plate.
- **HAVE A GAME PLAN.** Lay out your own plan to win at weight loss. Store the plan in your hand-held device or use a mobile app. And be sure you have the foods on hand for your plan.
- **KEEP A COUNT.** Track what you're eating and drinking at mealtime—and everything in between. When you see what you're consuming, it can help you consume less.
- **DO THE MATH.** Check calories on food labels. And compare the serving size listed to the actual amount you'll consume. If you eat double the servings, you get double the calories. Simple, but effective.
- **EAT "SEE" FOOD.** Have good-for-you eats, like fresh seasonal produce, on hand for snack attacks. Place in plain sight so you'll reach for it instead of not-so-good treats. Research suggests that keeping unhealthful food out of sight may be a key to keeping your appetite in check.
- **DON'T SAY NEVER.** If you say you'll never eat something, it sets you up for problems when you actually do eat it. Rather, incorporate appropriate amounts of favorites into your fit eating plan from the get-go. Hint: If you want to eat a sweet, plan for it immediately after a workout or a walk where it'll do double-duty—please your palate and refuel your muscles.
- **EAT BREAKFAST—EVEN IF YOU DON'T HAVE TIME.** It helps rev up your metabolism for the day. You don't have to stick with "breakfast" food. How about a leftover veggie pizza slice? It takes only 30 seconds to reheat it in the microwave. Or top it with a poached egg and you've got a breakfast to boast about.
- **USE UTENSILS ANYWAY.** Even if it's something that you can pick up (think burger or burrito), use a fork and knife. You can then savor it slowly instead of gobbling it up

mindlessly. You'll potentially be eating less while gaining satisfaction.

- **EAT BEFORE YOU EAT.** If you're headed to a fabulous dinner or festive food gathering where there will be an abundance of food, enjoy a piece of fruit or a small handful of nuts right before you go. Think mini-snack. It'll keep your appetite in check—and ultimately help you consume fewer overall calories.
- **DON'T STOP AT SKIM.** Switch from whole to 2 percent to 1 percent to skim (fat-free) milk. Then switch from skim milk to plain almond milk, unsweetened coconut milk beverage, light soy milk, or unsweetened sunflower beverage, at least from time to time. They tend to average around 50 calories a cup.
- **TRY LOOK-ALIKES.** Don't go fake. But do go for the fake-out on occasion. Try savory spaghetti squash instead of spaghetti. Enjoy summery strings of zucchini instead of linguine. Sink your teeth into a bodacious grilled portabella cap instead of a grilled burger.
- **SEE SHELLS.** You're likely to eat fewer nuts—and fewer calories—by choosing a snack-size portion of in-shell nuts, such as pistachios, instead of those already shelled. The visual cue provided by the empty shells, along with the extra time to shell the nuts, can help you realize you're satisfied.
- **BE BORING, IF NECESSARY.** Not in terms of flavor, but in terms of how many different recipes or dishes you try to eat or prepare. Sometimes the exciting array of too many dishes can cause the appetite to go into overdrive. So it's okay to stick to a handful of recipes for a period of time and repeat or vary them, at least to get you on the right track. But boring and bland don't go hand in hand.
- **(FOR LADIES ONLY!) PARTY IN STYLE.** These are shared a bit tongue in cheek but what you wear can impact how you eat. Think about wearing slimming shapewear and lip gloss! Shapewear, like Spanx, not only makes you appear slimmer, it's rather tight. That'll help keep you from overeating. Your glossy lips will keep you from eating anything crumbly that can stick to your lips. But it'll also remind you to keep kissable-ready.

What does the trick for one person doesn't always work perfectly for all. So if you find that one of these tips isn't working that well for you, choose another. I have no doubt you'll find that several of these strategies will boost your own efforts at successful weight management.

ARE LOW-CARB APPROACHES HEALTHFUL?

For calorie reduction, eating plans that slightly reduce total carbs or suggest elimination of only refined carbohydrates, such as white rice and white bread, can be a good thing, especially if you're an over-avid carbohydrate consumer. I'd consider that to be a carb-friendly approach. However, approaches that come in and out of style that are considered either low-carbohydrate diets or high-protein diets, like the Dukan Diet or the original Atkins Diet, are not a good thing. Just because something is trendy and you hear a lot about it, that doesn't make it a beneficial approach to weight management. Low-carb diets may help you lose weight in the short run, mainly due to a low calorie level, but they're not ideal for weight management in the long run. A diet that is a temporary fix or that doesn't enable you to obtain all important nutrients through foods is never a healthful approach to good health. (A vitamin-mineral supplement does not replace the hundreds and hundreds of nutrients found naturally within plant foods, by the way.) And any diet plan that suggests you avoid healthful foods, like fruits or other plant foods, at any point, is not one that should be followed; it may ultimately have

health-harming effects.

Stocking the Low-Cal Kitchen

Top Equipment Essentials

There are gadgets I use on a regular basis which make my calorie-conscious cooking efforts simpler, more satisfying, and more successful. Consider stocking your kitchen with these helpful tools.

HIGH-QUALITY CHEF'S KNIFE. Make sure your knife feels good as you hold it—and you're comfortable with the size. Since many dishes within *1,000 Low-Calorie Recipes* include plenty of fruits, veggies, and fresh herbs, it'll make chopping up fresh produce easier and more enjoyable. Keep your knife well sharpened, too.

NONSTICK OR STICK-RESISTANT PANS. Choose at least one large sauté pan or skillet and one stockpot. They brown well without sticking and without the need to add excess fat, which helps to keep calories in check. A nonstick pan isn't always required; but it's ideal for most recipes when significantly less oil or other fat is used in the cooking process. Look for PFOA-free nonstick pans, which don't contain the potentially harmful chemicals of the old Teflon-coated nonstick pans.

CAST IRON GRILL PAN. This pan cooks evenly and retains significant heat for incredible grill marks—indoors, all year round. Plus, the food is elevated on ribs, so extra grease collects between them for better lower-calorie cooking.

PANINI GRILL. No added fat calories are required when grilling—or panini-grilling. Grease drips away from food rather than sitting in it, too. A panini press evenly grills and toasts quickly since you're cooking both sides of the food at once. The cooking plates of the press adjust to the height of the food and the grill works especially well for quickly browning sandwiches, chicken, or fish. Browning means more taste without more calories.

12-CUP CAPACITY FOOD PROCESSOR. There's no other single piece of equipment that can chop, grate, and puree—and do it all well. It helps reduce prep time for dishes within *1,000 Low-Calorie Recipes*. Most importantly, it helps speed up prep of produce, making you want to cook with produce more often. And more produce means more volume and satisfaction . . . and fewer calories.

5-CUP CAPACITY BLENDER. It'll crush ice, blend smoothies, and puree soups and sauces until perfectly smooth, creating a rich texture. It works better than a food processor for liquid ingredients, too. I find the skinnier the container, the quicker and creamier the result. And that creamy consistency lends mouth-feel and enjoyment to low-cal cuisine. Choose a blender that has a clear container so you can see how well your food is being blended.

IMMERSION BLENDER. This handheld blender is an easy-to-use and convenient choice over a tall food and beverage blender, and ideal for blending hot ingredients. It purees soups and sauces into velvety, creamy concoctions (without heavy cream) in seconds—right in the pots or pans in which they're cooked. And no heavy cream means significantly fewer calories!

HINT: Let friends and family help build your culinary tool collection. It will benefit them, too! Add the

essentials that you don't already have to your birthday, holiday, or other gift wish lists. Consider using an online universal gift registry.

SILICONE UTENSILS. Silicone or silicone-coated cooking utensils are versatile and can be used with very high heat without worry. Additionally, they easily scrape up food that sticks (without scraping the pan), which occasionally happens when using leaner foods or less added fat in cooking. What's more a silicone pastry brush is fabulous. Using it rather than a bristle brush ("mop") will help you more lightly baste or brush oil, melted butter, or sauces onto foods before toasting, oven-browning, or grilling, rather than mopping them on. Ideally, choose three sizes: short pastry brush, medium basting brush, and long barbecue brush.

GRATER/ZESTER. You'll love this tool for finely grating ingredients that add so much flavor appeal to healthful dishes, including citrus peels (for zest), fresh gingerroot, nutmeg, and Parmesan, Romano, or other hard cheeses. A little goes a long way.

COFFEE GRINDER. Actually, I recommend this not for grinding coffee beans, but for grinding spices. Buy whole spices, pan-toast until aromatic, then grind. You'll get the most flavor and fragrance from spices—and make low-cal cuisine that much tastier. Consider grinding nuts, seeds, or whole grains in a coffee grinder, too.

REAMER. The quickest and easiest way to juice a citrus fruit is by using a reamer. And when you only need to extract a small amount, it's the absolute best way. Lemon and lime juices are an essential ingredient in so many healthful recipes—including those in this cookbook. That makes this tool a definite must.

COOKING OIL SPRAY BOTTLE. Instead of using a commercial oil spray can with propellants, choose a spray bottle and fill with your heart-healthy oil of choice—especially one that best fits with the flavor profile of the recipe, such as extra-virgin olive oil for Italian dishes.

HOMEMADE COOKING SPRAY

When I suggest "homemade" cooking spray in *1,000 Low-Calorie Recipes*, filling a spray bottle with your cooking oil of choice is what I'm referring to. You'll be able to spritz the oil onto foods to help them brown whether prepared on the stovetop or in the oven—with a little rather than a lot of oil. I prefer the Misto oil bottle sprayer.



The Portion-Pleasing Pantry

Take this checklist over to your pantry. Check to be sure you have these staples on hand. They help make good-for-you cooking and baking—and preparing the properly portioned recipes in this cookbook—a breeze. These are foods that I recommend to help maintain or lose weight but also be your healthiest. That's why you don't see refined sugar and flour and other common pantry items. If you don't have all the ingredients below, try adding a few at a time from this collection so you can introduce variety and intriguing flavors to your everyday cooking: