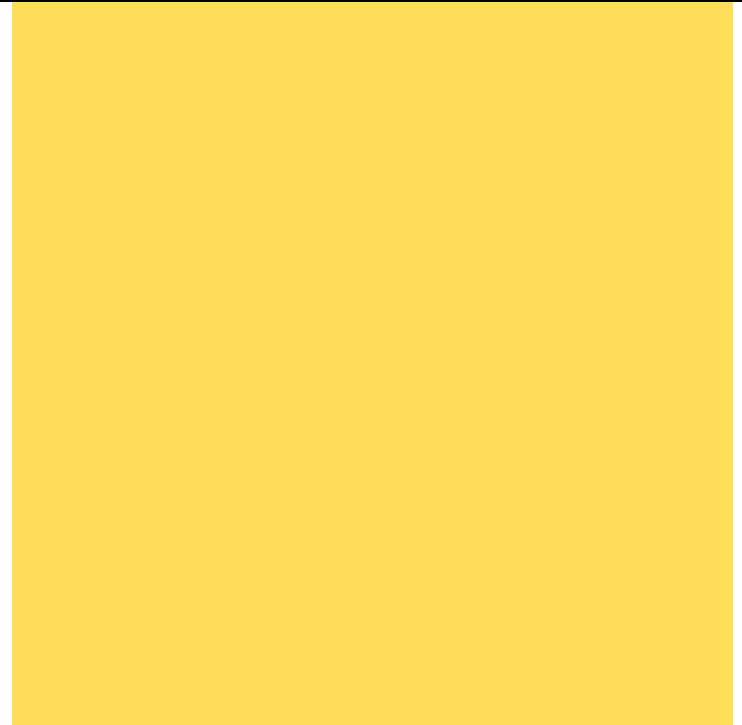




MACRO COUNTING 101

INTRODUCTION TO MACROS

START HERE



WELCOME

My Story

I wish I could say I was a natural born nutrition nerd. Up until about 8 years ago I was anything but that. I was about 20 pounds heavier and an ice cream addict. I hit a rock bottom point for me and decided enough was enough.

In the process of bettering myself I fell in love with nutrition and how what we eat affects our bodies. I began to casually coach people based on what worked for me and being a support system for them.

I decided to make it official and deepen my knowledge by becoming certified as a nutritional coach with Precision Nutrition. I continue to be student and am constantly striving to stay up to date with the latest nutritional science. Yeah, I like to read nutritional studies... I know I'm weird and I'm ok with that!

Having worked with thousands of individuals I've learned that science only takes a person so far. Support, asking the right questions, and actually coaching people how to change is the majority of the battle.

That's why I wanted to create this guide, to help you get started right and avoid some common pitfalls. I truly hope it helps you make the change you've been looking for in your life and health.





MACRO COUNTING 101

MISSION & VALUES

Macro Counting 101 Mission

To simplify the process of managing your weight, improving your health through nutrition, and feel amazing. We strive to educate, support and empower our clients to know the basic principles of nutrition and fitness so that they can achieve the results they desire.

Macro Counting 101 Vision

To change the landscape of diet culture from one of restriction and extremes to one of balance and sustainability.

IS A CALORIE A CALORIE?

If you talk to some in the macro community you will hear the idea of a calorie is a calorie and gram of carbs is gram of carbs. Although some of that is true I take a slightly different approach.

I believe that a calorie isn't just a calorie, a carb isn't necessarily just a carb. I believe in a threefold approach to nutrition involving;

Health • Body Composition • Performance

Of all of these, I believe health to be the most important and should be the driving force behind your food decisions.

While strictly counting macros, the idea that a gram carbohydrate from sugar is the same as a gram of carbohydrate from broccoli equals 4 calories. This approach can possibly help you get an ideal body composition but may not give you optimal health and performance. If you come from a similar viewpoint your goal should be to consume as much of your food from whole foods.



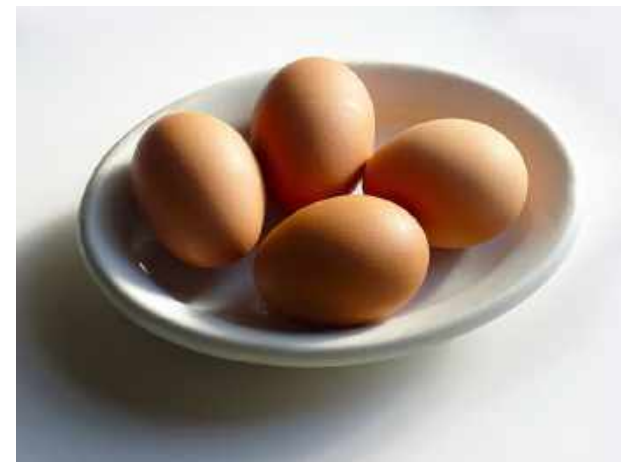
MACRO #1 -PROTEIN

Protein is made up of 21 different amino acids. Of these amino acids 9 of them are essential to be consumed through the food you eat since our bodies can't synthesize them.

Protein is found in most foods even plants. Believe it or not the most protein dense food on the planet is actually a plant, spirulina. However, most protein dense foods typically though come from animal products.

Protein is a key component in your macros whether bulking or cutting. If bulking it will provide the building blocks to repair and grow muscles. When cutting it will also help you maintain your lean body mass and therefore your weight loss will mainly come from fat. It is also a very filling macro, meaning your hunger system won't kick in even though you are in calorie deficit.

One gram of protein contains 4 calories!



MACRO #2 - FAT

**One gram of fat
contains 9 calories!**

Fat is the most energy dense macro at 9 calories per gram. That doesn't mean you need to shy away from it. It is essential for your health and well being. Getting the right amount of fat will help with hormone production, vitamin absorption, brain function, and inflammation. It is however probably the easiest macro to over consume. Fried foods, processed foods and even just using extra cooking oils can lead to over consumption.

Fats are typically broken down into 3 categories, mono-unsaturated (olive oil, avocado), poly-unsaturated (fish, walnuts, flax, chia), and saturated (butter, coconut, fatty meat). Most will suggest that unsaturated fats are healthier but some saturated fat as part of diet likely won't do any harm.





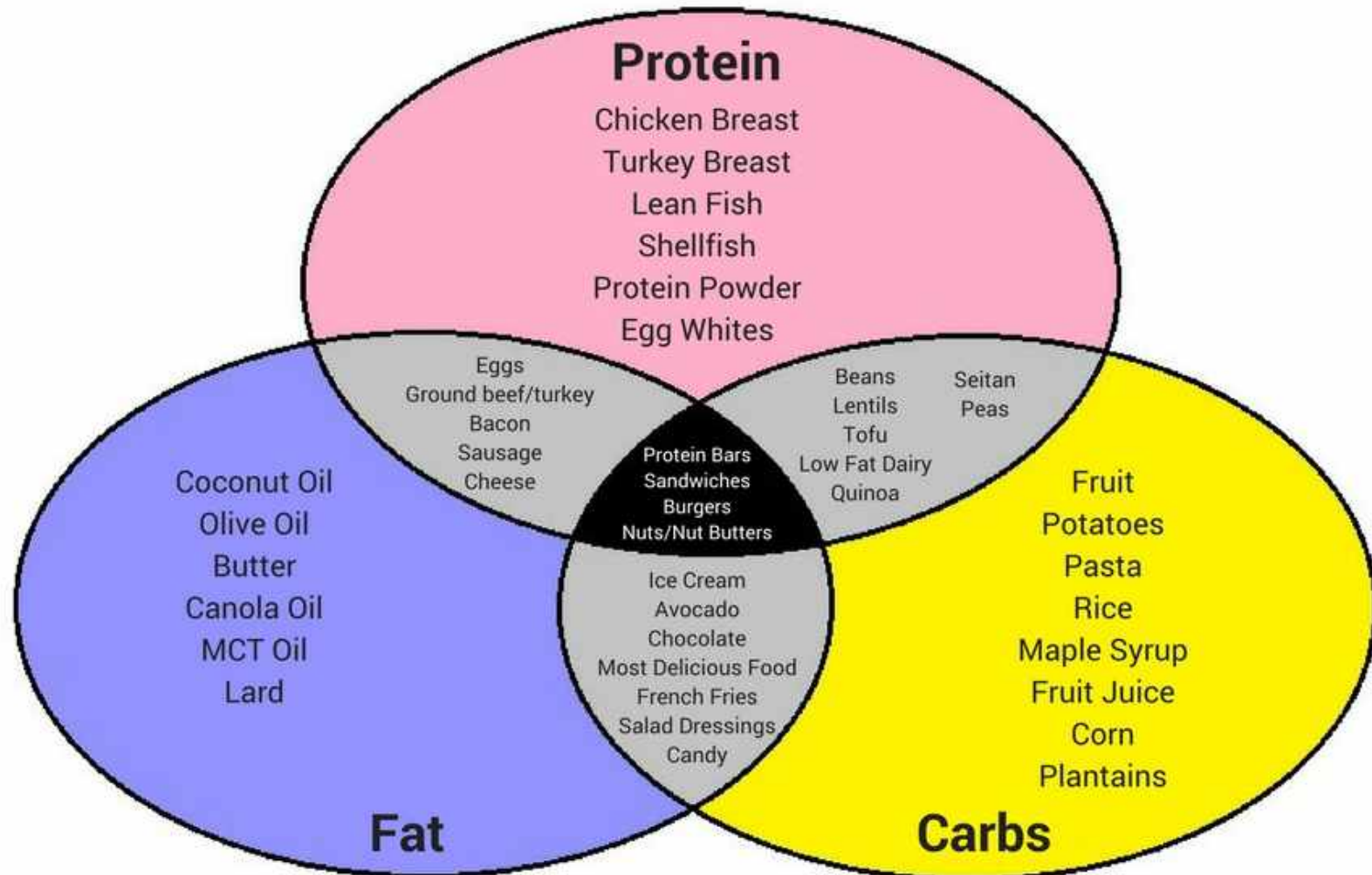
MACRO #3 - CARBS

One gram of carbohydrate contains 4 calories!

Carbohydrates can come in some healthy forms and some unhealthy ones. They have recently gotten a lot of bad press with the high fat movement that is out there. Carbs when consumed as part of a healthy, balanced diet do not inherently cause you to gain body fat.

Carbs are broken down into 4 main categories, mono-saccharides, di-, oligo-, and poly. Mono and disaccharides are going to be your sugars versus oligo and polysaccharides are going to be your starches and fiber. Choose your carbohydrate sources wisely as most processed foods are incredibly carb dense and nutrient poor. This can lead to energy crashes and never feeling full. The last thing you want to experience if trying to lose weight is a constant state of hunger.

HOW DO THEY ALL FIT INTO YOUR DIET?



TOOLS YOU WILL NEED

TECHNOLOGY

- You will need to download a calorie and macro tracking app. My favorite is My Fitness Pal. Some other popular ones are Lose It and My Macros +.



- You also have the option to use the website versions of these applications.

FOOD MEASURING TOOLS

- Food Scale - this will help tremendously in the accuracy of your food measurements.
- Measuring cups - these will come in handy when you don't have access to your scale.
- Tbsp & tsp - you will use these with oils, nut butters, syrups and other smaller items.
- Water bottle - It isn't technically a macronutrient but getting the adequate amount is key for your health, performance and also feeling satiated if in a calorie deficit.

LET'S TALK ABOUT TRACKING



IMPORTANT METRICS TO TRACK

- 1** Weight - when combined with these other metrics it is a good tool to measure your progress.
- 2** Girth Measurements - Sometimes the scale doesn't move but our measurements do. This usually means you losing fat and maintaing/gaining muscle.
- 3** Pictures - Just like girth measurements, pictures can tell a different story. I recommend you take them wearing a bathing suit from the front, back and side.
- 4** Body Fat - This one isn't absolutely necessary if you don't have the tools to do it. However it is THEE critical piece a lean look. You can get a body fat caliper and measure yourself.
- 5** Non Physical Attributes - These would include how your clothes fit, your energy levels, your sleep quality and duration, digestion, bloating, etc.

How often do you track these? The physical markers (weight, girth, body fat) I would recommend measuring everything 2 weeks. Pictures should be done monthly. The non physical attributes should be on an ongoing basis. I highly recommend keeping a journal where you can not only track food but some of these items too.



GETTING STARTED RIGHT - TIP #1

Eat Foods, Not Dishes

There is a reason the stereotypical bodybuilder meal is chicken, rice and broccoli. It's simple, it's easy to measure and it hits all your macros.

Early on, one of the things that trip people up is eating complex meals. Meals that are elaborate with many different components and sauces are a lot harder to measure and will just cause confusion.

KEEP IT SIMPLE!!!



GETTING STARTED RIGHT - TIP #2

Divide your Macros up Evenly throughout the day

It's happened to everyone that has ever tracked their macros. They sit down for dinner and realize all they can eat is protein. Or they have 150 grams of carbs left to eat. Yeah you can chug some maple syrup but let's work on a better approach.

The best way to avoid that is to make sure you are eating an equal share of protein, fat, and carbs with each meal.

For example if you are to consume 1,500 calories and you eat 3 meals per day. Each meal should be roughly 500 calories. If your macro breakdown is 33.3% from each macro then you should shoot for 166 calories from each macro at each meal.

Breakfast



Lunch



Dinner





GETTING STARTED RIGHT - TIP #3

Pre-log Your Meals

This one kind of relates to the last tip in that it comes down to planning. By pre-logging your meals into your calorie tracker app it will help you avoid any surprises.

I recommend having a game plan for the day. In the morning add your meals and snacks into the app and see how your numbers come out and make adjustments from there.

THE MICRO MACROS

Why are these important?

WATER

Drinking the appropriate amount of water is critical to your overall health. Being properly hydrated allows your body to operate efficiently, improves physical performance, better digestion, and helps with satiety.

By hitting both of these numbers on daily basis it will help you not only improve your health, but feel full and satiated throughout the day. When you are full you are less likely to binge on foods not part of your plan. Meaning better compliance and faster results!



FIBER

Fiber is also a key component in your health. It has been tied to better digestion, lowered cholesterol, controlling blood sugar levels, and helps with satiety and weight loss.



NUTRIENT TIMING

Is it Important?

For the average person looking to just lose some fat and get healthy, specific nutrient timing doesn't matter to a large enough degree to add another nuance to what is likely already slightly complicated.

As mentioned in Tip #2 the beginner strategy to nutrient timing would be to just focus on spreading out your macros evenly throughout the day.

The one area that specific nutrients can be beneficial is around your workouts. Prior to working out, 30-60 minutes, you might see more energy throughout your workout if you consume a serving of carbs. A half to full serving of protein has also been shown to help with muscle recovery. Also post workout is another time where there has been some benefits shown that consuming 40-60 grams of carbohydrate along with 20-40 grams of protein help with muscle repair and synthesis.

Generally, eat a little carb and protein before your workout and a little after, keep fat a little lower during this time period. If that's too complicated don't worry about nutrient timing. It's not going to be the deal breaker on your fat loss.



MACRO COUNTING FAQ'S

1

Where do I find out what my macro breakdown needs to be?

I provide people with a custom macro plan on my site if you are willing to fill out a quick form.

www.macrocounting101.com/free-macro-plan.html

2

When should I adjust my macros?

This varies quite a bit on the person, your current body fat, and how compliant you've been with your current macros. I would recommend recalculating your calorie needs when you lose roughly 5% of your current body weight.

Adjusting your macros is a personal thing to some degree. Some people find they do better with higher fat diets versus higher carb. Some can get great results and maintain lean body mass with lower protein numbers. This is where tracking and working with a knowledgeable coach helps. They can help make these adjustments and ask the right questions.

FAQ'S CONTINUED...

3 *How do I log food when I go out to eat?*

My Fitness Pal has a lot of menus preloaded in it from chain restaurants that report their menus. Simply search for "Chipotle" or whatever restaurant and you can select from their menu items.

For non-chain restaurants, the best you can do is estimate what you consumed. Either try to find an equivalent dish that someone else logged or piece together the components of the dish. For example if you had a Philly Cheesesteak Sandwich you could search for that sandwich and find 10 different entries for it. All of those entries will range from low calorie options to higher calorie ones. I would recommend choosing something in the middle unless you know you had a lighter version or more indulgent one. . Or you could add in the steak, the cheese, the bread all separately.

4 *Should I log my exercise in My Fitness Pal?*

I don't recommend it, my macro plans already account for activity and exercise. The amount of calories that you need to consume on a daily basis if you used my calorie calculator already takes into account your exercise. So just ignore the "Remaining" calories that you see on your home screen and hit your goal number.

I also recommend turning off the step tracker in My Fitness Pal, it defaults to add calories needed based on your step activity. To turn off click More > Steps > Don't track steps.

FAQ'S CONTINUED...

5

How do I have leftover protein/fat/carbs even though I've hit my calorie numbers?

If you've logged all your food for the day and you still have some leftover macros, one of the entries that you logged likely wasn't complete. Meaning you chose an item that only had calorie information but not macro information. Double check your entries to see that they all have Protein, Fat and Carbs.

If you consumed alcohol that could also be the reason. My Fitness Pal doesn't have a category for alcohol calories, 7 kcal/gram.

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What should I do if I can't eat all my food?

If you are new and your calorie numbers are a lot higher than what you are used to consuming it might take some time to be able to work up to those calorie numbers. Do your best make progress to hit your numbers within the first two weeks.

Also look to make sure you are spreading your food out throughout the day so you aren't left with a bulk of your calories at the end of the day.

If you are trying to gain weight, EAT!!!

FAQ'S CONTINUED...

7

I consumed too much today, do I need to make up for that?

Most likely no... it would really depend on your goals and timeline to complete them. Going over your calorie numbers by 500 or less calories isn't going to have a substantial impact on your results. More than 500 calories depending on your daily needs may set you back a day or two but still isn't a big deal. If you are 3 weeks out from a physique competition you might want to strategically reduce calories over a few days. I don't recommend doing this without guidance from a coach.

My advice, go back to eating on plan tomorrow and don't worry about. Don't try to up your exercise to compensate or reduce calories on purpose.

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I went over on carbs what should I do?

This also goes for fat or even protein. Although I find it a lot harder to go over on protein. My advice is if you go over on either fat or carbs, continue to aim to hit your protein number for the day AND your total calorie number. Essentially you are swapping carb calories and fat calories. Both of these are your main energy sources so there won't be much effect by swapping calories between these two categories. Just try not to make it a habit!

If you go over on your protein, still aim for hitting daily calorie needs and limit either fat or carbs based on what makes more sense given what you have left to consume for the day.

FAQ'S CONTINUED...

9

How long should it take to lose weight?

First off I would encourage you to think weight loss differently, you don't want to lose weight, you likely want and need to lose body fat. Your goal should be to maintain as much lean mass as possible if your trying to improve your body composition. I wrote up a [whole blog post on this topic](#), you can check that out for specific details.

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Will I lose weight faster if I eat fewer calories then what your plan says?

Maybe... eating less then the plan I sent you likely isn't a great idea. There is a chance you will lose weight faster but there is a good chance that you will increase the % amount of lean mass that you lose. If you read the blog post in the previous FAQ you will know that lean mass is your friend and you want to keep as much as possible. The slower you can lose weight usually will maximize the amount of lean mass that you keep. So be patient, it took you a lot longer then 1 month to put on the 20 lbs, so don't expect it to come off in less time.

FAQ'S CONTINUED...

11

I'm not losing weight/fat on your plan, what should I do?

This happens and could be because of a few different reasons. I would start with an honest assessment of whether you tracked everything accurately. Did you weigh and measure nearly all food that you ate? At least all the calorie dense stuff. If you miss a leaf of spinach, not a big deal. Miss a tbsp of olive oil or salad dressing that's 200-300 calories.

If you feel like you have been very diligent with your food tracking, the next thing I would look at is your activity and exercise. Are you exercising like you said you would when you submitted your form, both quantity and intensity? Are you getting your daily activity in as you stated on your form? If it's different then you might need to adjust calories and maybe macros.

If food and tracking is good, your exercise and activity is as you said the next place I would have you look is your sleep and stress. These two areas are often overlooked in the weight loss world but play a huge part. Stress is going to be subjective and only you can tell if you are feeling more or less stress than normal. Sleep I recommend getting 7+ hours of quality sleep per night in order to keep hormones and body systems in check. Higher stress, poor sleep address those first before worrying about calories. You'll thank me later.



FAQ'S CONTINUED...

11

I'm not losing weight/fat on your plan, what should I do?, cont'd

If all of that is good and you still aren't seeing results, then my next question would be how long have you been "dieting" or in a calorie deficit? If the answer is over 4 months, I would encourage you to take a break and slowly consume more calories, for up to a month. Then reduce calories back down.

If none of the things mentioned above are an issue then chances are you need to lower calories or possibly adjust your macros. If you need help with this, I help people with this type of thing through my [coaching services](#) and also members of my [Macro Bootcamp](#).

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Is there one macro more important than others?

Kind of... obviously the goal is to hit your numbers consistently but if you are off a day here is what I would recommend focusing on. First number to stay as close to is your calorie number. Then I would recommend hitting your protein number if possible. Protein is the most important because it will help with satiety, help maintain lean mass, and increase daily calorie burn. After that carbs and fat are interchangeable for most.

FAQ'S CONTINUED...

13

I'm really struggling with details of this, what should I do?

Counting macros is just one tool to improve your health, body composition and performance, it isn't the only one. My first piece of advice if you want to give macros a solid try is to hire a coach. I personally help people manage this getting started process along with fine tuning a person's body composition. A coach will be able to remove some of the frustration so that you can see if the process works for you.

If you continue to struggle grasping the concepts of macros, I would be happy to chat with some other forms of portion control and/or lifestyle changes that can help you optimize your health, body composition and performance.

I've found that people that tend to be more analytical or type A do better with macro tracking, so don't be discouraged if it doesn't fit your personality and lifestyle. There's plenty of other ways to get healthy and lose weight.



NEXT STEPS...

Take in the information in this document and the email series that I send out with your Macro Plan.

Join a Macro Bootcamp where I go more in depth on the topics covered here, provide coaching and accountability so you can get some solid reps in.

Connect with my Facebook Group, [Macro Counting 101](#)



Have you done all of that and still feel like you need some direction? I also offer coaching services to help people get started properly, answer questions, make adjustments, provide a layer of accountability, and just generally be there for you. My coaching works on a monthly membership program for a very reasonable fee.

If you are interested in my coaching services or just have questions feel free to email me at, dan@macrocounting101.com.

