

How does MyFitnessPal work?

Using MyFitnessPal is very simple. Here's how our basic process works:

1. Based on your fitness profile, we'll recommend a daily Net Calorie target for you to achieve your weight loss (or gain) goals.
2. As you eat and exercise throughout the day, you need to log your meals and exercise in our Food and Exercise diaries. MyFitnessPal will calculate the number of calories you've consumed from food and burned from exercise and let you know how many calories you have left to eat for the day. If you stick within your calorie limits, you should achieve the weight loss (or gain) you're looking for.
3. The best part of our system is that logging gets easier the more you do it. MyFitnessPal remembers the foods and exercises you like most and makes it easy for you to add those items to your diary. In just a few days, logging can be as fast as 30 seconds — it's literally that easy.
4. Periodically (we recommend once a week), you should weigh yourself and check-in your new weight with the site or the app using our Check-In feature (or "Progress" page in the app). Checking in your weight allows us to track your progress over time and also adjust your calorie goals to reflect your new weight.

That's it! Just a few minutes a day can show you so much about what you're eating and how that impacts your health. For the advanced user, we recommend taking the extra step and going Premium. Click [here](#) for a list of our current Premium features.

How does MyFitnessPal calculate my initial goals?

When you create your profile, we ask you for your age, height, weight, gender, and normal daily activity level. We use [these factors](#) to determine the calories required to maintain your current weight. We also ask how much weight you would like to lose or gain per week, and with this goal in mind we subtract calories (for weight loss) or add calories (for weight gain) to determine your daily calorie and nutrient goals.

We ask for your goal weight when you create your profile, but this is only for purposes of reporting how many pounds remain until you meet your goal. Your goal weight does not affect our initial calorie calculations.

We also ask you for your weekly exercise goals (which should not be included in your initial activity level), in order to provide an incentive for you to reach. However, we do not account for additional exercise outside of your reported daily activity level, until you actually perform and log exercise to your diary under the "Cardiovascular" section. Please [see this article](#) to understand why we do not currently calculate calories burned via strength exercises.

Because your daily calorie goal already accounts for your intent to gain or lose weight at a particular rate, you can achieve your goal by eating the specified number of calories per day, with no additional exercise required. If you do exercise, your daily calorie goal will then increase for the day, to stabilize your weight loss or weight gain at the rate you initially specified.

We set your daily calorie goal in Net Calories which we define as:

Calories Consumed (Food) - Calories Burned (Exercise) = Net Calories

This means if you exercise, you will be able to eat more for that day. For example, if your Net Calorie goal is 2000 calories, one way to meet that goal is to eat 2,500 calories of food, but then burn 500 calories through exercise.

Think of your Net Calories like a daily budget of calories to spend. You spend them by eating, and you earn more calories to eat by exercising. We do not recommend women consume fewer than 1200 calories per day, or men fewer than 1500

calories per day. Eating too little can produce negative health effects.

As you continue with the program, if your weight changes, your goals may also change. Please [see this article](#) for more information on how your goals will update.

While the calorie goals we calculate for you are based on statistical averages, our millions of users have demonstrated these goals are accurate enough to provide positive results for almost anyone. For real member success stories please visit our [success forums](#).

If you would prefer a calorie goal that responds to your specific daily activity level, we suggest looking into our [third party integrations](#). Several of our integrations offer solutions for monitoring your calorie burn over the course of the day, and can update your MyFitnessPal calorie goals based on this information.

On the site you can find out more about our integrations [here](#). In our Android and iOS apps, tap "Apps & Devices" in the Menu (or "More" page).

If you are following a guided plan from your doctor or nutritionist, or if you have data you believe is more accurate than our estimated goals, please [see this article](#) for information about customizing your goals. You may also wish to consider [upgrading to MyFitnessPal Premium](#), which allows advanced users or users with very specific nutritional goals to customize their nutrition plan with even greater control.

Can other members see my weight, or my food diary?

Your actual weight is for your eyes only, this is always kept private.

If you add a friend, they will be able to see your [News Feed updates](#), including the amount of weight you've lost, but never your current weight.

Your Food diary is also private, by default, but [you may choose to make this visible](#) to your friends or to all users. [How do I make my diary visible to other users?](#)

To allow others to view your diary, you must adjust your Diary Sharing settings.

On the Web

- Click "My Home" then "Settings" then "Diary settings".

In the Android, iPad and iPhone apps

- In the Menu (or "More" page) tap "Settings" then "Sharing & Privacy" then "Diary Sharing."

Select your preference from "Public," "Friends Only", or "Locked with a key" and save your changes.

At the end of the day, when you have finished logging your diary, select "Complete This Entry." This will create a convenient "View Diary" link on your friends' news feed, if this option has not been changed in your [News Feed Privacy settings](#).

Friends can also visit your profile page at any time and select "View Diary." To visit a friend's profile:

On the Web

- Click "My Home" then "Friends" then click on a friend in the list. Or, enter a profile's URL directly in your browser's address bar: http://www.myfitnesspal.com/<INSERT_USERNAME_HERE>

In the iPhone, iPad and Android apps

- Tap the "Friends" page, and select your friend from the list.

Can I print my diary from the app?

You can view a printable version of your diary by logging into your account on our website at <http://www.myfitnesspal.com> Mobile app users should log in using the same username and password they use in the app.

Once you've logged in, click the "Food" tab. Scroll to the bottom of the page and click "View Printable Report." Choose a date range and click "Change Report."

If using an app, you may also want to try taking a screen shot of the information you'd like to print and then email yourself the screen shot and then print.

As an alternative to printing your diary for your doctor or nutritionist, you may want to also want to consider sharing your diary. Please see: <https://myfitnesspal.desk.com/customer/portal/articles/201687>

If you are a Premium member, one of the features of Premium is data exporting: <https://myfitnesspal.desk.com/customer/en/portal/articles/2457070-data-export-faqs>.

For more info regarding Premium, please see: <https://myfitnesspal.desk.com/customer/en/portal/articles/1935024-what-are-the-features-of-myfitnesspal-premium->

How do I get started using the website?

Thank you for joining MyFitnessPal! It won't take long until you're using the website like a pro.

Based on your profile information, we calculate your daily nutritional goals to allow you to lose (or gain) weight at the rate you've chosen.

You can eat anything you like, as long as you log all of your food and exercise, and stay within your daily goals. You track your items by adding them to your diary. Each item's calories are deducted from your daily goal, providing you with a calorie remainder for the day. If you want to eat more on a given day, you simply need to log cardio exercise to increase your daily totals.

We set your nutritional target in Net Calories which we define as:

Calories Consumed (Food) - Calories Burned (Exercise) = Net Calories

What that means is that if you exercise, you will be able to eat more for that day. For example, if your Net Calorie goal is 2000 calories, one way to meet that goal is to eat 2,500 calories of food, but then burn 500 calories through exercise.

Think of your Net Calories like a daily budget of calories to spend. You spend them by eating, and you earn more calories to eat by exercising.

If you are following a specific guided plan from your doctor or nutritionist (for instance, if you are diabetic or pregnant),

you can also [customize your plan](#) accordingly. Simply go to the "Goals" sub tab, then "Change Goals" then "Customize Goals".

Adding Food to Your Diary

Click the "My Home" tab, then the "Food" tab. This will take you to your Food Diary.

Choose the meal to which you'll be adding food, and click "Add Food" under that meal.

Type the name of the food you're looking for in the box to the left of the "Search" button. You can use keywords, like "turkey sandwich" or brand names. Then click "Search."

When the search results appear, click the item that represents the best match, and information for that item will appear on the right hand side. There, you can adjust the serving size and number of servings to reflect the amount you've eaten. For example, if you are having half of the standard serving size, change the number of servings from "1" to ".5". Finally click "Add"

The item will be added to your diary and the calories for the item will be deducted from your daily allowance. With each item you log, your list of recently for each meal category will update automatically, to make it easier to add your favorite foods quickly.