



# Charlotte's guide to calories and weight loss plans

## Calories provide us with energy!

A calorie is a unit of energy and our brains, muscles as well as every cell in our body, require energy to function in their optimal state. The average woman with a moderate level of activity needs 2,000 calories a day to maintain her weight. Men need 2,500 calories a day because they tend to be heavier and more muscular. The calorie requirements vary based on age, weight, height and activity levels.

### Lashings of Vegetables

**200g / 120 calories**  
(about the size of your hand)

Vegetables are generally low in calories and high in volume and this helps to keep you feeling full. They are also bursting with vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. A win win! Good for both weight control and health! Aim for as wide a variety as possible with a weight of roughly 200 - 250g (about the size of your hand).

### A balanced serving of carbs (whole grains or potatoes)

**100g cooked weight / 150 calories**  
(the size of the palm of your hand)

The carb serving should be about the same size as your protein serving. Wholegrains are a ready source of energy and B vitamins and they contain fibre which is essential for gut health. Depending on your preference you might not want to eat carbs at every meal, in which case you can replace them with an additional vegetable and an extra teaspoon of fat.

## Charlotte's 500 calorie plate



### Add flavour with a perfectly proportioned serving of fat

**10g / 80 calories (2 teaspoons)**

Fats are a powerhouse of energy and add flavour to our foods. You can use olive oil, butter or a fat of your choice to cook or season your food. You can also add nuts and seeds to your meals and they are a source of 'good fats', such as omega 3 and omega 6.

### A moderate serving of protein

**100g - 150g / 150 calories**  
(about the size of a pack of cards)

Protein rich foods are digested slowly and help to provide a stable source of energy. Animal sources include meat, poultry, fish and eggs. Beans, lentils and tofu are sources of vegetable protein.

## Quality v Quantity

The quantity of calories that we eat plays a key role in controlling our weight while the quality of the foods we eat (known as their nutrient profile) is important for our health. 50g of milk chocolate contains 250 calories which is the same energy value as 40g of nuts. Their nutrient profile though is very different with nuts containing protein, healthy fats, fibre, vitamins, minerals and antioxidants (high nutrient profile) and milk chocolate containing a high proportion of added sugar but very little else! (low nutrient profile).

## Charlotte's tips

- ◆ Healthy food should be colourful, tasty and fun!
- ◆ Use fresh herbs, spices and cooking methods such as roasting and stir-frying to add taste and texture to your food.
- ◆ Keep it as varied as possible and make it as easy as possible!
- ◆ Don't hesitate to use frozen vegetables, bags of salad and prepared vegetables if you are short on time.
- ◆ It can be helpful to plan your menus 2-3 days ahead and prepare food in advance.
- ◆ Put the focus on your health. It's about nourishing yourself as opposed to punishing yourself!
- ◆ Allow yourself a little (!) flexibility at the weekends such as a meal out with friends, 2-3 glasses of wine or a dessert.

## The recommended calorie split across the day

	Based on 2,500 calorie a day maintenance plan for men	Based on 2,000 calorie a day maintenance plan for woman or a 2,000-calorie weight loss plan for men	Based on 1,500 calorie a day weight loss plan for woman
Breakfast	500	400	300
Lunch	750	600	500
Supper	750	600	500
Snacks	500	400	200
<b>Total calories</b>	<b>2,500</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>1,500</b>

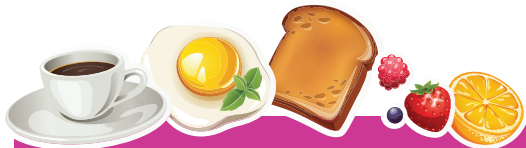
## Calories and Weight Loss

The average weight loss on a 1,500 calorie a day diet is 2-3 kilos a month and the general recommendation is not to go below 1,200 calories a day. Some diet plans are based on 1,000 calories a day or lower and these are known as very low-calorie menu plans. The issue with very low-calorie diet plans is that they are difficult to follow for a long period of time and there can be a risk of nutrient deficiency as you are only consuming 50% or less of your daily energy intake.



# FOOD PLAN

Example of a  
1,500 calorie  
menu plan



## BREAKFAST

300 calories

Coffee or Tea

- 125 ml natural or Greek yoghurt
- 1 bowl of fresh berries/seasonal fruit
- 20g nuts (about 12 almonds)

Or

- 1 egg (boiled/scrambled/poached)
- 1 teaspoon butter for cooking if necessary
- 1 slice of whole grain toast
- 1 portion of fruit

Or

- 40g oats/cereal of your choice
- 125 ml milk (plant or vegetable)
- Pinch of cinnamon
- 10g seeds of your choice
- 1 portion of fruit



## LUNCH

500 calories

- 100g protein (fish, meat, vegetable proteins such as lentils and beans)
- 100g cooked weight wholegrains or potatoes (about 2 large tablespoons- quinoa/rice/ buckwheat/couscous/pasta)
- 200 - 250g vegetables
- 1 teaspoon olive oil/butter for cooking or dressing
- 1 teaspoon of seeds or nuts

Example: Grilled salmon with brown rice and stir-fried vegetables



## SNACK

200 calories

Choice of:

- 30g hummus or a similar dip with raw vegetables
- 1 piece of fruit with 10g nut butter (eg sliced apple and peanut butter)
- 2 rice cakes with 20g cheese or soft cheese
- 50g popcorn (lightly salted or natural - no added sugar)
- 2 squares of dark chocolate



## DINNER

500 calories

- 100g protein (fish, meat, vegetable proteins such as lentils and beans)
- 100g cooked weight wholegrains or potatoes (about 2 large tablespoon of quinoa/rice/ buckwheat/couscous/pasta)
- 200 - 250g vegetables
- 1 teaspoon olive oil/butter for cooking or dressing
- 1 teaspoon nuts or seeds
- Ex: Lentil and quinoa salad with roasted vegetables