

15 EASY LUNCH TIPS

to Help You Lose Weight

15 Easy Lunch Tips to Help You Lose Weight

Your lunchtime habits can make or break your weight loss plans. Fast food burgers and fries often contain more calories than you need for the entire day, but there are many simple options that will satisfy your hunger without putting on extra pounds.

Your midday meal can be delicious and nutritious without requiring a lot of money or time. **Start with these ideas for using your lunch hour to help you slim down.**

Bringing Your Lunch:

1. **Prepare the night before.** If you spend most mornings rushing around to get everyone ready for school and work, give yourself a head start. Look for recipes you can make before you go to bed, like putting your smoothie ingredients in a blender jar in the refrigerator so you can just hit a button in the morning.
2. **Start from scratch. Bringing frozen pizza to work is really just about the same as ordering take out.** Switch to whole foods and home cooking.
3. **Focus on plants.** Try to get at least half your calories from vegetables and fruits. Enjoy a variety of salads, sandwiches, soups, and other dishes.
4. **Master the microwave.** Do you yearn for a hot meal? Pack an insulated lunch bag with thermos containers of chili or lasagna you can quickly heat up at noon.

Going Out for Lunch:

1. **Seek support.** Studies show that we tend to consume more calories at a restaurant if we're with companions who indulge too. **Invite your coworkers to make a pact to order lighter dishes.**
2. **Check the menu.** What if the choices are limited to cheesesteak and Buffalo wings? Go online before you visit a new restaurant to ensure they serve grilled fish or pasta with vegetables.
3. **Eat soup.** Whether you prefer minestrone or clam chowder, you'll find that most lunch spots offer some kind of soup. **Soup helps you to slow down so you may feel full while eating less.**
4. **Inspect your salad.** Some salads turn out to be the most fattening item on the menu. Go easy on the bacon, cheese, croutons, and creamy dressings.
5. **Ask for substitutions.** You might enjoy your favorite lunch dishes just as much with a bit less sugar, fat, and salt. Some restaurants have no substitution policies, but others will be happy to accommodate you.
6. **Bring back leftovers.** Serving sizes are often massive. Push half your food to the side of the plate so you can take it home for dinner or lunch tomorrow.

Other Ideas:

1. **Stay on schedule.** Skipping breakfast or lunch to save calories will probably backfire. You usually wind up so hungry that you raid the vending machine or overeat at your next meal.
2. **Eat mindfully.** **Paying attention to your food encourages you to make healthier choices and enjoy your meals more.** Leave your desk for lunch. Sit

down someplace where you can relax and forget about the office for a while.

3. Walk around. Prolonged sitting contributes to obesity and back pain. Use your lunch hour to stroll around the block or climb the stairs.

4. Visit the gym. Check out the gyms near your office. Your employer might be able to negotiate a group discount if you and your coworkers want to work out during the day when they're less busy.

5. Take a class. Similarly, many fitness centers offer group classes at lunchtime designed to get employees back to work on time. An hour of cycling followed by a smoothie may give you more energy for the rest of the afternoon.

Enjoy a light and scrumptious midday meal each day of the week. Healthy lunch habits will help you lose weight and shape up.