



HOW TO CALCULATE CALORIE DEFICIT FOR WEIGHT LOSS

A simple guide to estimate how many calories you need, create a realistic deficit, and adjust it based on your progress.

UNDERSTAND YOUR NUMBERS. EAT WITH PURPOSE. LOSE WEIGHT SUSTAINABLY.

01 THE BASIC IDEA

Weight loss requires your body to use more energy than you consistently consume. That difference is your **calorie deficit**.

Your daily calorie target is not a magic number. It is an estimate that gives you a starting point. Your actual progress over several weeks tells you whether the target is appropriate.

THE 3 NUMBERS YOU NEED

1	BMR Calories your body needs at rest.
2	TDEE Estimated calories you burn in a normal day.
3	DEFICIT The gap between TDEE and your calorie intake.

Simple rule: estimate → choose a reasonable deficit → track → adjust.

02 CALCULATE YOUR BMR

BMR (Basal Metabolic Rate) is an estimate of the energy your body uses to maintain basic functions such as breathing, circulation and temperature regulation.

A commonly used equation is the **Mifflin–St Jeor equation**:

$$\text{Men: BMR} = (10 \times \text{weight kg}) + (6.25 \times \text{height cm}) - (5 \times \text{age}) + 5$$

$$\text{Women: BMR} = (10 \times \text{weight kg}) + (6.25 \times \text{height cm}) - (5 \times \text{age}) - 161$$

EXAMPLE

Sex	Male
Age	35 years
Weight	80 kg
Height	170 cm
Calculation	$(10 \times 80) + (6.25 \times 170) - (5 \times 35) + 5$
Estimated BMR	$\approx 1,723 \text{ kcal/day}$

Important: BMR is not your daily calorie target. You still need to account for your normal activity.

03 ESTIMATE YOUR TDEE

TDEE (Total Daily Energy Expenditure) is an estimate of the calories you burn across a normal day, including activity.

$$\text{TDEE} = \text{BMR} \times \text{Activity Factor}$$

ACTIVITY FACTORS

Level	Typical description	Factor
Sedentary	Little exercise; mostly sitting	1.20
Lightly active	Light exercise 1–3 days/week	1.375
Moderately active	Moderate exercise 3–5 days/week	1.55
Very active	Hard exercise 6–7 days/week	1.725
Extremely active	Very hard training / physical job	1.90

Example: $\text{BMR } 1,723 \times 1.375 \approx 2,369 \text{ kcal/day estimated TDEE.}$

04 CREATE YOUR CALORIE DEFICIT

Once you have an estimated TDEE, choose a calorie intake below it. A practical starting point for many adults is a **10–20% deficit**, or roughly **300–500 kcal/day** depending on the person.

$$\text{CALORIE TARGET} = \text{TDEE} - \text{DEFICIT}$$

EXAMPLE

Estimated TDEE	2,369 kcal
10% deficit	≈ 237 kcal
Starting target	≈ 2,132 kcal/day
20% deficit	≈ 474 kcal
Alternative target	≈ 1,895 kcal/day

You do not need the largest possible deficit. The goal is a level you can follow consistently while still supporting adequate nutrition, training and daily life.

Avoid treating the calculator as a prescription. Individual calorie needs vary, and people with medical conditions, a history of eating disorders, pregnancy, or other special circumstances should seek individualized professional guidance.

05 TRACK YOUR PROGRESS

Your calculation is only the starting point. Your real-world trend is more useful than a single weigh-in.

USE A 3–4 WEEK FEEDBACK LOOP

01

Set your starting calorie target

Use your estimated TDEE and a reasonable deficit.

02

Track consistently

Record food, drinks and portions as accurately as practical.

03

Watch the trend

Use several weigh-ins across the week rather than reacting to one day.

04

Adjust gradually

If your trend is not moving after several consistent weeks, review intake, activity and tracking accuracy before changing calories.

REMEMBER

Body weight can change from water, sodium, carbohydrates, digestion and hormonal fluctuations. Look at the trend over time, not one morning's number.

06 YOUR QUICK CALCULATOR

Fill in these numbers to estimate your own starting point.

1	Age	_____ years
2	Sex	Male / Female
3	Weight	_____ kg
4	Height	_____ cm
5	Activity level	Sedentary / Light / Moderate / Very / Extreme
6	Estimated BMR	_____ kcal
7	Estimated TDEE	_____ kcal
8	Chosen deficit	_____ kcal
9	Starting calorie target	_____ kcal/day

THE BIG PICTURE

Calories matter for weight loss, but food quality, protein intake, fibre, sleep, resistance training, daily movement and consistency all influence how manageable the process feels.

A calorie deficit creates the energy gap. Your habits determine how well you can maintain it.



READY TO TAKE THE GUESSWORK OUT OF WEIGHT LOSS?

Knowing your calorie deficit is only the starting point.

The next step is building a plan you can actually follow — with the right training, nutrition and consistency.

BOOK YOUR CONSULTATION

UNSEEN PRIVATE FITNESS

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**START WITH A CONVERSATION.
BUILD A PLAN THAT WORKS FOR YOU.**