CALCULATING
YOUR MACROS



What Are Macros?

You've probably heard the term *macros* before. You might even know that they're something you should keep track of, but why and how?

The term macros is short for *macronutrients*. There are three types of macronutrients - **Protein, Fat,** and **Carbohydrates** - and they make up everything we eat.

Why Do Macros Matter?

While we need all three types of macronutrients in our diet, for optimal health, we should be consuming a specific mix of them every day.

Each macronutrient provides different benefits for the body. Proteins are the building blocks for our muscles, fat makes up our cell membranes and cushions our internal organs, and carbohydrates provide the fuel we need for the activities we do each day. Getting the right amount of each nutrient means that your body has the right material to do the jobs it's supposed to do.

So, how exactly do you know what the right combination of macros is? This guide will break it down and teach you how to figure out how much protein, fat, and carbohydrates you should eat each day.

Calculating Your Macros

Calculating your macros starts with knowing how many calories you need to consume each day.

To begin, use the formula below to determine the minimum number of calories you need per day:

> Calories/day = (9.99 x weight (kg)) + (6.25 x height (cm)) - (4.92 x age (y)) + (166 x sex factor) - 161, where sex factor = 1 for biological males, and 0 for biological females

Let's look at an example:

A 35-year-old woman is 5′ 5″ tall and weighs 130 lbs.

(Tip: Google "what is [your weight] lbs in kg" to convert pounds to kilograms. Do the same with your height. It's the easiest way to make the conversions.)

The calculations for our example are:

Minimum calories = (9.99 x 58.967) + (6.25 x 165) - (4.92 x 35) + (166 x 0) - 161
Minimum calories = 589.08 + 1031.25 - 172.2 + 0 - 161
Minimum calories = 1,287.13

Go ahead, calculate your daily minimum caloric intake:

Remember, this is how many calories you need just to meet your basic energy needs. You'll need to factor in your activity level to get the actual amount of calories you should aim for.

To do that, take the number of calories you got from the previous equation and multiply it by the activity factor that corresponds with your level of activity.

Level of Activity	Description of Activity	Activity Factor
Sedentary	Little or no exercise; Sitting at a desk all day	1.2
Lightly Active	Light exercise 1 -3 days/week	1.375
Moderately Active	Moderate exercise 3 - 5 days/week	1.55
Very Active	Heavy exercise 6 - 7 days/week	1.725
Extremely Active	Very heavy exercise or a physically active job	1.9

Let's go back to the example:

The 35-year-old woman is moderately active, so multiply 1,287.13 by 1.55.

Calories needed per day = 1,287.13 x 1.55
Calories needed per day = 1,995.05

For simplicity, round this to 1,995 calories per day.

Go ahead, calculate your daily minimum caloric intake:

How Much of Each Macronutrient Should You Eat?

Phew, that was a lot of math. But you're almost there!

Now that you know how many calories are needed each day, you can divide those calories into the three macronutrient categories. To do this, you need to know the recommended daily intake of each macro.

For healthy adults, the daily range of each macronutrient is:

- Protein 10- 35%
- Fat 20 - 35%
- Carbohyrdates 45 - 65%

Ok, now you're ready for the next step! It's time to determine how many calories and grams of protein, fat, and carbohydrates you'll aim for each day.

Protein

Let’s start with your protein intake. You want 10% - 35% of your daily calories to come from protein.

To determine what’s right for you, consider your fitness goals. If you’re very active or trying to build muscle, you’ll fall closer to the high end of the range. If building muscle isn’t a goal for you and you're not very active, you could be closer to the low end of the range.

For this example, let’s pick 20%:

> The 35-year-old woman wants 20% of her 1,995 calories to come from protein.
>
> Multiply 1,995 by 20% (or by .2) and you get 399 calories. Then divide this number by 4 because protein has 4 calories per gram.
>
> 399 divided by 4 is **99.75 grams of protein per day.**

Go ahead, calculate your daily minimum caloric intake:

Fat

Next, let's decide on your fat intake. Remember, the recommended range for fat is 25% - 35% of your daily caloric intake.

To determine what's right for you, consider your health goals. Those who are active and relatively healthy might make different choices than those who are sedentary and have a history of cardiovascular disease.

For this example, let's pick 30%:

The 35-year-old woman wants 30% of her 1,995 calories to come from fat.

Multiply 1,995 by 30% (or by .3) and you get 598.5 calories. Then divide this number by 9 because fat has 9 calories per gram.

598.5 divided by 9 is **66.5 grams of fat per day.**

Go ahead, calculate your daily minimum caloric intake:

Carbohydrates

Now that you know what your protein and fat intake goals are, you can determine your carbohydrate intake. You simply use the remaining percentage to make this calculation.

In our example, 20% of the woman's daily caloric intake came from protein and 30% from fat, so 50% is remaining:

50% of 1,995 calories comes from carbohydrates.
Multiply 1,995 by 50% (or by .5) and you get 997.5 calories.

Then divide this number by 4 because carbohydrates have 4 calories per gram.

997.5 divided by 4 is **249.4 grams of carbohydrates per day.**

Go ahead, calculate your daily minimum caloric intake:
