

Fitness with LBIG

NUTRITION PLAYBOOK

Calories, macros, meals timing , and hydration, 6 complete calorie-tiered meal plans (1600–3500 kcal) and real-world guidance on cheat meals, eating out, alcohol, travel, and meal prep.

HOW TO USE THIS PLAYBOOK

This book is built to be used, not just read. Section 1 covers the science in plain language calories, macros, timing, and hydration so you understand why the plans work. Section 2 gives you six complete calorie-tiered meal plans with two sample days each, so you can pick the tier closest to your goal and eat from it immediately. Section 3 covers the real-world situations that derail most people cheat meals, eating out, alcohol, travel, and meal prep with concrete, actionable defaults instead of vague advice.

Suggested path:

- 1. Read Section 1 once to understand the "why" behind the numbers.
- 2. Use the TDEE walkthrough to estimate your own maintenance calories, then pick the closest meal-plan tier in Section 2 for your goal (cut, maintain, or bulk).
- 3. Follow the sample days for 2 weeks, track your weight trend, and adjust up or down using the guidance at the end of each tier.
- 4. Keep Section 3 and the Appendix on hand for cheat meals, travel, and eating out — they're built for quick reference, not one-time reading.

SECTION 1 — NUTRITION BASICS

Calories

A calorie is a unit of energy. Your body burns a certain number of calories per day just to function this is your TDEE (Total Daily Energy Expenditure), made up of:

- BMR (Basal Metabolic Rate) : energy burned at total rest just to keep organs running (~60-70% of TDEE).
- NEAT (Non-Exercise Activity Thermogenesis) : walking, fidgeting, daily movement outside the gym.
- TEF (Thermic Effect of Food) : energy spent digesting food (protein costs the most to digest).
- Exercise Activity : calories burned during structured training or sport.

Weight change is governed by energy balance:

- Calories in < Calories out → weight loss (deficit)
- Calories in > Calories out → weight gain (surplus)
- Calories in = Calories out → maintenance

A practical rule of thumb: roughly 7,700 kcal of accumulated deficit or surplus corresponds to about 1 kg of body weight change. For fat loss, a moderate deficit of 300-500 kcal/day (≈ 0.5 - 0.7 kg/week) preserves muscle and energy levels far better than crash dieting. For muscle gain, a surplus of 200-500 kcal/day minimizes unnecessary fat gain while still supporting growth.

Estimating Your Calories (Mifflin-St Jeor)

The Mifflin-St Jeor equation is the most reliable simple formula for estimating BMR:

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

Multiply BMR by an activity factor to estimate TDEE:

Activity Level	Description	Multiplier
Sedentary	Desk job, little to no exercise	x 1.2
Lightly Active	Light exercise 1-3 days/week	x 1.375
Moderately Active	Moderate exercise 3-5 days/week	x 1.55
Very Active	Hard exercise 6-7 days/week	x 1.725
Extremely Active	Physical job + daily training	x 1.9

Worked example — a 25-year-old man, 80 kg, 178 cm, moderately active:

- $BMR = (10 \times 80) + (6.25 \times 178) - (5 \times 25) + 5 = 800 + 1,112.5 - 125 + 5 \approx 1,793$ kcal
- $TDEE = 1,793 \times 1.55 \approx 2,779$ kcal/day (maintenance)
- Fat loss target: $\approx 2,280$ - $2,480$ kcal/day • Muscle gain target: $\approx 2,980$ - $3,280$ kcal/day

Treat any formula as a starting estimate, not a certainty — actual TDEE varies by individual. Track your weight for 2 weeks at a given intake and adjust up or down by 100-200 kcal based on the real-world trend.

Macros

Macronutrients (protein, carbs, fat) all provide calories, but each plays a distinct role beyond just energy.

Protein

- 1.6-2.2 g per kg of body weight per day is the evidence-backed range for building or preserving muscle.
- Provides 4 kcal/g. Highest thermic effect (10-30% of its calories are burned digesting it) and the most satiating macro.
- Sources: chicken, fish, lean beef, eggs, Greek yogurt, cottage cheese, whey protein, legumes.

Carbohydrates

- Primary fuel for the brain and for high-intensity training; replenishes muscle glycogen.
- Provides 4 kcal/g. Not "fattening" by nature excess total calories are, regardless of source.
- Sources: rice, oats, potatoes, fruit, whole grains, legumes.

Fat

- Essential for hormone production (including testosterone), vitamin absorption (A, D, E, K), and cell health.
- Provides 9 kcal/g — the most calorie-dense macro. Keep at least 0.5-1 g per kg of body weight to protect hormonal health.
- Sources: olive oil, nuts, seeds, avocado, fatty fish, egg yolks.

This playbook's meal plans use a general 30% protein / 40% carbs / 30% fat split as a practical starting point a reasonable default for most people balancing muscle retention, energy, and satiety.

Food Reference — Protein Sources (per 100g, cooked)

Food	kcal	Protein	Carbs	Fat
Chicken Breast	165	31 g	0 g	3.6 g
Turkey Breast	135	30 g	0 g	1 g
Lean Beef (90/10)	205	27 g	0 g	10 g
Salmon	208	22 g	0 g	13 g
Tilapia / White Fish	128	26 g	0 g	2.7 g
Whole Eggs	143	13 g	1.1 g	9.5 g
Greek Yogurt (nonfat)	60	10 g	4 g	0.5 g
Cottage Cheese	98	11 g	3.4 g	4.3 g
Whey Protein (per 30g scoop)	120	24 g	3 g	1.5 g

Food Reference — Carbohydrate Sources (per 100g, cooked)

Food	kcal	Protein	Carbs	Fat
White Rice	130	2.7 g	28 g	0.3 g
Oats (dry)	390	17 g	66 g	7 g
Quinoa	120	4.4 g	21 g	1.9 g

Food	kcal	Protein	Carbs	Fat
Sweet Potato	90	2 g	21 g	0.1 g
Whole Wheat Bread	265	13 g	41 g	4.2 g
Banana	89	1 g	23 g	0.3 g
Apple	52	0.3 g	14 g	0.2 g
Broccoli	35	2.4 g	7 g	0.4 g
Black Beans	132	8.9 g	24 g	0.5 g

Food Reference — Fat Sources (per 100g)

Food	kcal	Protein	Carbs	Fat
Olive Oil	850	0 g	0 g	96.4 g
Avocado	168	1.9 g	8.8 g	15.4 g
Almonds	580	21 g	22 g	50 g
Peanut Butter	588	25 g	20 g	50 g
Egg Yolk (2 yolks ≈ 34g)	108	5 g	0.6 g	9.2 g

Meal Timing

For total fat loss or muscle gain, your total daily calories and macros matter far more than the exact clock time you eat them. That said, timing can fine-tune results:

- Protein distribution: spreading 20-40g of protein across 3-5 meals (roughly every 3-4 hours) maximizes muscle protein synthesis better than the same total in 1-2 meals.
- Pre-workout: a meal with carbs + protein 1-3 hours before training improves performance and reduces muscle breakdown.
- Post-workout: protein within a few hours after training supports recovery the old "30-minute anabolic window" is far more flexible than once believed.
- Intermittent fasting can work well for adherence and appetite control, but it's a tool for consistency, not a metabolic advantage in itself.

Hydration

Water affects performance, digestion, appetite regulation, and even how accurately you can judge hunger vs. thirst.

- General target: 30-40 ml per kg of body weight per day (roughly 2.5-4 L for most adults), more with heavy training or hot climates.
- Add 500-750 ml per hour of intense training, along with electrolytes (sodium, potassium, magnesium) during long or sweaty sessions.
- Signs of under-hydration: dark urine, fatigue, headaches, reduced training performance, and false hunger signals.

- Drinking a glass of water before meals is a simple habit that improves satiety, especially during a fat-loss phase.

Daily Water Target by Body Weight (≈35 ml/kg baseline)

Body Weight	Baseline Target	+ 1 hr Training
50 kg	1.75 L	2.25-2.5 L
60 kg	2.1 L	2.6-2.85 L
70 kg	2.45 L	2.95-3.2 L
80 kg	2.8 L	3.3-3.55 L
90 kg	3.15 L	3.65-3.9 L
100 kg	3.5 L	4.0-4.25 L

SECTION 1B — FIBER, MICRONUTRIENTS & SUPPLEMENTS

Fiber & Micronutrients

Calories and macros drive body composition, but fiber and micronutrients drive digestion, energy, and long-term health — they shouldn't be an afterthought.

- Aim for 25-35g of fiber per day from vegetables, fruit, whole grains, and legumes — it improves satiety, digestion, and blood sugar control.
- Fill at least half your plate with vegetables at lunch and dinner; they add volume and micronutrients for very few calories.
- Eat 2-3 different colors of fruit/vegetables daily — variety in color generally means variety in vitamins and antioxidants.
- Common shortfalls on restrictive diets: fiber, potassium, magnesium, vitamin D, and omega-3s — worth paying deliberate attention to, especially in a prolonged deficit.

Supplements

Supplements are exactly that — supplemental. None of them replace a solid diet and training program, but a small handful have real evidence behind them:

Supplement	What it does	Typical dose
Creatine Monohydrate	Improves strength, power output, and muscle water content	3-5 g daily, any time
Whey / Plant Protein	Convenient way to hit daily protein targets	1-2 scoops as needed
Multivitamin	Covers micronutrient gaps, especially during a calorie deficit	1 daily with food
Fish Oil (Omega-3)	Supports heart, joint, and brain health; anti-inflammatory	1-3 g EPA/DHA daily
Vitamin D	Common deficiency, especially with low sun exposure	1,000-2,000 IU daily
Caffeine	Improves focus and training performance	100-200 mg pre-workout

Skip anything promising dramatic "fat burning" or "muscle building in a bottle" — nothing replaces the fundamentals in this book: consistent calories, adequate protein, training, sleep, and time.

Tracking & Adjusting

A meal plan is a starting point, not a permanent prescription. These habits make it self-correcting:

- Weigh yourself 3-5x per week, same conditions (morning, after bathroom, before food), and track the weekly average rather than any single day.
- Use a food scale for 2-3 weeks when starting a new calorie target — it recalibrates your sense of portion sizes far faster than logging by eye.
- A tracking app (or even a simple notes list) removes guesswork; you only need to log closely for a few weeks at a time, not forever.
- If the weekly average hasn't moved in the expected direction after 2 weeks, adjust calories by 100-200 kcal rather than making a drastic change.

- Judge progress on the trend across weeks — normal day-to-day fluctuation from water and food weight is completely expected and not a sign anything is wrong.

SECTION 2 — MEAL PLANS

Each tier below follows the same 30/40/30 macro split and a consistent 5-meal structure (Breakfast, 2 Snacks, Lunch, Dinner), scaled up or down by portion size. Swap any protein/carb/fat source for an equal-calorie alternative from the food lists in Section 1 without breaking the plan.

1600 kcal — Aggressive Fat Loss

For smaller frames or shorter, less active individuals running an aggressive but sustainable deficit. Prioritize protein to preserve muscle while calories are low.

Target Macros

Protein	Carbs	Fat	Split
120 g	160 g	53 g	30% / 40% / 30%

Sample Day 1

Breakfast

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Oats	50 g	195	9g / 33g / 4g
Banana	85 g	76	1g / 20g / 0g
Almonds	15 g	87	3g / 3g / 8g
Whey Protein	20 g	80	16g / 2g / 1g

Snack 1

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Greek Yogurt	105 g	63	11g / 4g / 1g
Almonds	5 g	29	1g / 1g / 3g

Lunch

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Chicken Breast	105 g	173	33g / 0g / 4g
White Rice	105 g	137	3g / 29g / 0g
Broccoli	150 g	53	4g / 11g / 1g
Olive Oil	10 g	85	0g / 0g / 10g

Snack 2

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Cottage Cheese	105 g	103	12g / 4g / 5g
Almonds	5 g	29	1g / 1g / 3g

Dinner

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Salmon	105 g	218	23g / 0g / 14g
Sweet Potato	145 g	131	3g / 30g / 0g
Broccoli	150 g	53	4g / 11g / 1g
Avocado	50 g	84	1g / 4g / 8g

Daily Totals (approx.)		kcal	P / C / F
Target: 1600 kcal		1594	122g / 153g / 59g

Sample Day 2 (variety)

Breakfast

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Whole Eggs	110 g	157	14g / 1g / 10g
Whole Wheat Bread	45 g	119	6g / 18g / 2g
Peanut Butter	10 g	59	3g / 2g / 5g
Apple	135 g	70	0g / 19g / 0g

Snack 1

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Cottage Cheese	110 g	108	12g / 4g / 5g
Apple	135 g	70	0g / 19g / 0g

Lunch

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Turkey Breast	110 g	149	33g / 0g / 1g
Quinoa	110 g	132	5g / 23g / 2g
Spinach	100 g	23	3g / 4g / 0g
Olive Oil	10 g	85	0g / 0g / 10g

Snack 2

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Whey Protein	20 g	80	16g / 2g / 1g
Peanut Butter	10 g	59	3g / 2g / 5g

Dinner

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Lean Beef	110 g	226	30g / 0g / 11g
Sweet Potato	150 g	135	3g / 32g / 0g
Spinach	100 g	23	3g / 4g / 0g
Avocado	50 g	84	1g / 4g / 8g

Daily Totals (approx.)		kcal	P / C / F
Target: 1600 kcal		1578	131g / 133g / 61g

Portions are a practical starting template — adjust by 10-15% up or down over 2 weeks based on real-world results (weight trend, energy, hunger). Rotate between Day 1 and Day 2, or mix meals from each, to keep variety without recalculating macros.

Training day vs. rest day: on training days, shift carbs up to roughly 184g and fat down slightly to fuel performance. On rest days, shift carbs down to roughly 136g and fat up slightly to compensate — total daily calories stay the same either way.

1800 kcal — Moderate Fat Loss

A comfortable deficit for most people looking to lose fat steadily (~0.5-0.7 kg/week) without excessive hunger.

Target Macros

Protein	Carbs	Fat	Split
135 g	180 g	60 g	30% / 40% / 30%

Sample Day 1

Breakfast

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Oats	55 g	215	9g / 36g / 4g
Banana	95 g	85	1g / 22g / 0g
Almonds	15 g	87	3g / 3g / 8g
Whey Protein	25 g	100	20g / 3g / 1g

Snack 1

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Greek Yogurt	120 g	72	12g / 5g / 1g
Almonds	10 g	58	2g / 2g / 5g

Lunch

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Chicken Breast	120 g	198	37g / 0g / 4g
White Rice	120 g	156	3g / 34g / 0g
Broccoli	150 g	53	4g / 11g / 1g
Olive Oil	10 g	85	0g / 0g / 10g

Snack 2

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Cottage Cheese	120 g	118	13g / 4g / 5g
Almonds	10 g	58	2g / 2g / 5g

Dinner

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Salmon	120 g	250	26g / 0g / 16g
Sweet Potato	160 g	144	3g / 34g / 0g

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Broccoli	150 g	53	4g / 11g / 1g
Avocado	55 g	92	1g / 5g / 8g

Daily Totals (approx.)		kcal	P / C / F
Target: 1800 kcal		1822	141g / 170g / 68g

Sample Day 2 (variety)

Breakfast

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Whole Eggs	125 g	179	16g / 1g / 12g
Whole Wheat Bread	50 g	133	7g / 21g / 2g
Peanut Butter	15 g	88	4g / 3g / 8g
Apple	150 g	78	0g / 21g / 0g

Snack 1

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Cottage Cheese	125 g	123	14g / 4g / 5g
Apple	150 g	78	0g / 21g / 0g

Lunch

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Turkey Breast	125 g	169	38g / 0g / 1g
Quinoa	125 g	150	6g / 26g / 2g
Spinach	100 g	23	3g / 4g / 0g
Olive Oil	10 g	85	0g / 0g / 10g

Snack 2

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Whey Protein	25 g	100	20g / 3g / 1g
Peanut Butter	15 g	88	4g / 3g / 8g

Dinner

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Lean Beef	125 g	256	34g / 0g / 13g
Sweet Potato	165 g	149	3g / 35g / 0g
Spinach	100 g	23	3g / 4g / 0g
Avocado	55 g	92	1g / 5g / 8g

Daily Totals (approx.)		kcal	P / C / F
Target: 1800 kcal		1813	152g / 150g / 71g

Portions are a practical starting template — adjust by 10-15% up or down over 2 weeks based on real-world results (weight trend, energy, hunger). Rotate between Day 1 and Day 2, or mix meals from each, to keep variety without recalculating macros.

Training day vs. rest day: on training days, shift carbs up to roughly 207g and fat down slightly to fuel performance. On rest days, shift carbs down to roughly 153g and fat up slightly to compensate — total daily calories stay the same either way.

2200 kcal — Maintenance

Roughly the average adult maintenance level — used for body recomposition, maintaining current weight, or a gentle lean bulk depending on activity.

Target Macros

Protein	Carbs	Fat	Split
165 g	220 g	73 g	30% / 40% / 30%

Sample Day 1

Breakfast

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Oats	70 g	273	12g / 46g / 5g
Banana	115 g	102	1g / 26g / 0g
Almonds	20 g	116	4g / 4g / 10g
Whey Protein	30 g	120	24g / 3g / 2g

Snack 1

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Greek Yogurt	145 g	87	15g / 6g / 1g
Almonds	10 g	58	2g / 2g / 5g

Lunch

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Chicken Breast	145 g	239	45g / 0g / 5g
White Rice	145 g	189	4g / 41g / 0g
Broccoli	150 g	53	4g / 11g / 1g
Olive Oil	15 g	128	0g / 0g / 14g

Snack 2

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Cottage Cheese	145 g	142	16g / 5g / 6g
Almonds	10 g	58	2g / 2g / 5g

Dinner

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Salmon	145 g	302	32g / 0g / 19g

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Sweet Potato	195 g	176	4g / 41g / 0g
Broccoli	150 g	53	4g / 11g / 1g
Avocado	65 g	109	1g / 6g / 10g

Daily Totals (approx.)		kcal	P / C / F
Target: 2200 kcal		2203	169g / 203g / 84g

Sample Day 2 (variety)

Breakfast

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Whole Eggs	150 g	215	20g / 2g / 14g
Whole Wheat Bread	60 g	159	8g / 25g / 3g
Peanut Butter	15 g	88	4g / 3g / 8g
Apple	185 g	96	1g / 26g / 0g

Snack 1

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Cottage Cheese	150 g	147	17g / 5g / 6g
Apple	185 g	96	1g / 26g / 0g

Lunch

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Turkey Breast	150 g	203	45g / 0g / 2g
Quinoa	150 g	180	7g / 32g / 3g
Spinach	100 g	23	3g / 4g / 0g
Olive Oil	15 g	128	0g / 0g / 14g

Snack 2

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Whey Protein	30 g	120	24g / 3g / 2g
Peanut Butter	15 g	88	4g / 3g / 8g

Dinner

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Lean Beef	150 g	308	41g / 0g / 15g
Sweet Potato	205 g	185	4g / 43g / 0g
Spinach	100 g	23	3g / 4g / 0g
Avocado	70 g	118	1g / 6g / 11g

Daily Totals (approx.)		kcal	P / C / F
Target: 2200 kcal		2175	180g / 180g / 86g

Portions are a practical starting template — adjust by 10-15% up or down over 2 weeks based on real-world results (weight trend, energy, hunger). Rotate between Day 1 and Day 2, or mix meals from each, to keep variety without recalculating macros.

Training day vs. rest day: on training days, shift carbs up to roughly 253g and fat down slightly to fuel performance. On rest days, shift carbs down to roughly 187g and fat up slightly to compensate — total daily calories stay the same either way.

2500 kcal — Lean Bulk / Active Maintenance

A mild surplus for lean muscle gain, or maintenance for more active/larger-framed individuals.

Target Macros

Protein	Carbs	Fat	Split
188 g	250 g	83 g	30% / 40% / 30%

Sample Day 1

Breakfast

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Oats	80 g	312	14g / 53g / 6g
Banana	130 g	116	1g / 30g / 0g
Almonds	20 g	116	4g / 4g / 10g
Whey Protein	35 g	140	28g / 4g / 2g

Snack 1

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Greek Yogurt	165 g	99	17g / 7g / 1g
Almonds	10 g	58	2g / 2g / 5g

Lunch

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Chicken Breast	165 g	272	51g / 0g / 6g
White Rice	165 g	215	4g / 46g / 0g
Broccoli	150 g	53	4g / 11g / 1g
Olive Oil	15 g	128	0g / 0g / 14g

Snack 2

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Cottage Cheese	165 g	162	18g / 6g / 7g
Almonds	10 g	58	2g / 2g / 5g

Dinner

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Salmon	165 g	343	36g / 0g / 21g
Sweet Potato	225 g	203	5g / 47g / 0g

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Broccoli	150 g	53	4g / 11g / 1g
Avocado	75 g	126	1g / 7g / 12g

Daily Totals (approx.)		kcal	P / C / F
Target: 2500 kcal		2451	191g / 228g / 91g

Sample Day 2 (variety)

Breakfast

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Whole Eggs	175 g	250	23g / 2g / 17g
Whole Wheat Bread	70 g	186	9g / 29g / 3g
Peanut Butter	20 g	118	5g / 4g / 10g
Apple	210 g	109	1g / 29g / 0g

Snack 1

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Cottage Cheese	175 g	172	19g / 6g / 8g
Apple	210 g	109	1g / 29g / 0g

Lunch

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Turkey Breast	175 g	236	53g / 0g / 2g
Quinoa	175 g	210	8g / 37g / 3g
Spinach	100 g	23	3g / 4g / 0g
Olive Oil	15 g	128	0g / 0g / 14g

Snack 2

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Whey Protein	35 g	140	28g / 4g / 2g
Peanut Butter	20 g	118	5g / 4g / 10g

Dinner

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Lean Beef	175 g	359	47g / 0g / 18g
Sweet Potato	230 g	207	5g / 48g / 0g
Spinach	100 g	23	3g / 4g / 0g
Avocado	80 g	134	2g / 7g / 12g

Daily Totals (approx.)		kcal	P / C / F
Target: 2500 kcal		2521	210g / 206g / 100g

Portions are a practical starting template — adjust by 10-15% up or down over 2 weeks based on real-world results (weight trend, energy, hunger). Rotate between Day 1 and Day 2, or mix meals from each, to keep variety without recalculating macros.

Training day vs. rest day: on training days, shift carbs up to roughly 288g and fat down slightly to fuel performance. On rest days, shift carbs down to roughly 213g and fat up slightly to compensate — total daily calories stay the same either way.

3000 kcal — Muscle Gain

A solid surplus for dedicated muscle-building phases, especially for larger frames or high daily activity (manual labor, high training volume).

Target Macros

Protein	Carbs	Fat	Split
225 g	300 g	100 g	30% / 40% / 30%

Sample Day 1

Breakfast

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Oats	95 g	371	16g / 63g / 7g
Banana	160 g	142	2g / 37g / 0g
Almonds	25 g	145	5g / 6g / 13g
Whey Protein	40 g	160	32g / 4g / 2g

Snack 1

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Greek Yogurt	200 g	120	20g / 8g / 1g
Almonds	15 g	87	3g / 3g / 8g

Lunch

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Chicken Breast	200 g	330	62g / 0g / 7g
White Rice	200 g	260	5g / 56g / 1g
Broccoli	150 g	53	4g / 11g / 1g
Olive Oil	20 g	170	0g / 0g / 19g

Snack 2

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Cottage Cheese	200 g	196	22g / 7g / 9g
Almonds	15 g	87	3g / 3g / 8g

Dinner

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Salmon	200 g	416	44g / 0g / 26g

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Sweet Potato	270 g	243	5g / 57g / 0g
Broccoli	150 g	53	4g / 11g / 1g
Avocado	90 g	151	2g / 8g / 14g

Daily Totals (approx.)		kcal	P / C / F
Target: 3000 kcal		2983	229g / 272g / 115g

Sample Day 2 (variety)

Breakfast

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Whole Eggs	210 g	300	27g / 2g / 20g
Whole Wheat Bread	85 g	225	11g / 35g / 4g
Peanut Butter	20 g	118	5g / 4g / 10g
Apple	250 g	130	1g / 35g / 1g

Snack 1

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Cottage Cheese	210 g	206	23g / 7g / 9g
Apple	250 g	130	1g / 35g / 1g

Lunch

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Turkey Breast	210 g	284	63g / 0g / 2g
Quinoa	210 g	252	9g / 44g / 4g
Spinach	100 g	23	3g / 4g / 0g
Olive Oil	20 g	170	0g / 0g / 19g

Snack 2

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Whey Protein	40 g	160	32g / 4g / 2g
Peanut Butter	20 g	118	5g / 4g / 10g

Dinner

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Lean Beef	210 g	431	57g / 0g / 21g
Sweet Potato	275 g	248	6g / 58g / 0g
Spinach	100 g	23	3g / 4g / 0g
Avocado	95 g	160	2g / 8g / 15g

Daily Totals (approx.)		kcal	P / C / F
Target: 3000 kcal		2976	247g / 244g / 118g

Portions are a practical starting template — adjust by 10-15% up or down over 2 weeks based on real-world results (weight trend, energy, hunger). Rotate between Day 1 and Day 2, or mix meals from each, to keep variety without recalculating macros.

Training day vs. rest day: on training days, shift carbs up to roughly 345g and fat down slightly to fuel performance. On rest days, shift carbs down to roughly 255g and fat up slightly to compensate — total daily calories stay the same either way.

3500 kcal — Aggressive Bulk

For very active, large-framed, or hard-gaining individuals pushing a significant surplus for maximum muscle gain — expect some fat gain alongside it.

Target Macros

Protein	Carbs	Fat	Split
263 g	350 g	117 g	30% / 40% / 30%

Sample Day 1

Breakfast

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Oats	110 g	429	19g / 73g / 8g
Banana	185 g	165	2g / 43g / 1g
Almonds	30 g	174	6g / 7g / 15g
Whey Protein	45 g	180	36g / 5g / 2g

Snack 1

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Greek Yogurt	235 g	141	24g / 9g / 1g
Almonds	15 g	87	3g / 3g / 8g

Lunch

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Chicken Breast	235 g	388	73g / 0g / 8g
White Rice	235 g	306	6g / 66g / 1g
Broccoli	150 g	53	4g / 11g / 1g
Olive Oil	20 g	170	0g / 0g / 19g

Snack 2

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Cottage Cheese	235 g	230	26g / 8g / 10g
Almonds	15 g	87	3g / 3g / 8g

Dinner

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Salmon	235 g	489	52g / 0g / 31g

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Sweet Potato	315 g	284	6g / 66g / 0g
Broccoli	150 g	53	4g / 11g / 1g
Avocado	105 g	176	2g / 9g / 16g

Daily Totals (approx.)		kcal	P / C / F
Target: 3500 kcal		3410	265g / 312g / 128g

Sample Day 2 (variety)

Breakfast

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Whole Eggs	240 g	343	31g / 3g / 23g
Whole Wheat Bread	95 g	252	12g / 39g / 4g
Peanut Butter	25 g	147	6g / 5g / 13g
Apple	295 g	153	1g / 41g / 1g

Snack 1

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Cottage Cheese	240 g	235	26g / 8g / 10g
Apple	295 g	153	1g / 41g / 1g

Lunch

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Turkey Breast	240 g	324	72g / 0g / 2g
Quinoa	240 g	288	11g / 50g / 5g
Spinach	100 g	23	3g / 4g / 0g
Olive Oil	25 g	213	0g / 0g / 24g

Snack 2

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Whey Protein	50 g	200	40g / 5g / 3g
Peanut Butter	25 g	147	6g / 5g / 13g

Dinner

Food	Portion	kcal	P / C / F
Lean Beef	240 g	492	65g / 0g / 24g
Sweet Potato	325 g	293	7g / 68g / 0g
Spinach	100 g	23	3g / 4g / 0g
Avocado	110 g	185	2g / 10g / 17g

Daily Totals (approx.)		kcal	P / C / F
Target: 3500 kcal		3471	286g / 283g / 139g

Portions are a practical starting template — adjust by 10-15% up or down over 2 weeks based on real-world results (weight trend, energy, hunger). Rotate between Day 1 and Day 2, or mix meals from each, to keep variety without recalculating macros.

Training day vs. rest day: on training days, shift carbs up to roughly 402g and fat down slightly to fuel performance. On rest days, shift carbs down to roughly 298g and fat up slightly to compensate — total daily calories stay the same either way.

SECTION 3 — REAL-LIFE NUTRITION

Cheat Meals

A planned cheat meal isn't a failure — it's a tool for long-term adherence and a mental reset, as long as it's controlled.

- Follow the 80/20 rule: if roughly 80% of your weekly meals support your goal, one flexible meal will not derail progress.
- Plan it in advance (day and meal), rather than reacting impulsively to a craving — this prevents it from snowballing into a full binge day.
- Keep it to one meal, not a full "cheat day" — a single meal is easy to recover from; a full day of unstructured eating often isn't.
- Eat as you normally would earlier in the day; don't "save up" calories by starving yourself beforehand, which increases binge risk.
- The day after, go straight back to your normal plan — no guilt, no extra restriction to "make up for it."

Smart Cheat Meal Ideas

Craving	Better-Structured Option
Pizza	Thin crust, extra protein topping, pair with a side salad instead of garlic bread
Burger & Fries	Single patty, skip the second bun half, share the fries or take half home
Dessert	One portion eaten slowly after a normal, protein-forward meal — not on an empty stomach
Fast Food	Grilled over fried, regular size over "large," water or diet drink over regular soda

Eating Out

Restaurants can absolutely fit your plan with a few simple habits:

- Check the menu online beforehand and decide what you'll order before you're hungry and staring at options.
- Build the plate around a protein source (grilled, baked, or roasted rather than fried or breaded).
- Ask for sauces and dressings on the side — restaurant portions are often 2-3x what you'd use at home.
- Swap fries/bread for a side salad or vegetables when possible, or simply eat half and take the rest home.
- One meal out will not undo a week of consistent eating — don't stress-eat around the anxiety of an imperfect meal.

Smart Swaps at Restaurants

Typical Order	Smarter Swap	Approx. Saved
Fried chicken	Grilled chicken	~200-300 kcal
Fries	Side salad or steamed vegetables	~250-350 kcal

Typical Order	Smarter Swap	Approx. Saved
Creamy pasta sauce	Tomato-based sauce	~200-400 kcal
Regular soda	Water, soda water, or diet drink	~150-250 kcal
Full dressing/sauce	Dressing on the side, use half	~100-200 kcal

Alcohol

Alcohol provides 7 kcal per gram — almost as calorie-dense as fat — with zero nutritional value, and it slightly suppresses fat oxidation and muscle protein synthesis while it's being processed.

- It doesn't have to be avoided completely; moderation and planning are what matter for a physique goal.
- Favor lower-calorie options: spirits with a zero-calorie mixer, dry wine, or light beer over sugary cocktails and regular beer.
- Alternate alcoholic drinks with water to reduce total intake and next-day recovery cost.
- Budget it into your day's calories in advance rather than treating it as "free" — a few drinks can easily add 400-600 kcal.
- Training performance and sleep quality both suffer after drinking — avoid heavy sessions the day after a night out.

Alcohol Calorie Comparison (approx.)

Drink	Serving	kcal
Light Beer	355 ml	~100
Regular Beer	355 ml	~150
Dry Wine (red/white)	150 ml	~125
Spirit + Zero-Cal Mixer	45 ml shot	~100
Sugary Cocktail (margarita, piña colada)	1 glass	~250-450
Craft/High-ABV Beer	355 ml	~200-300

Travel

Travel disrupts routine, but a few defaults keep nutrition on track without obsessing over it:

- Prioritize protein at every meal — it's the easiest macro to under-eat while traveling and the one that most protects muscle.
- Pack portable staples: protein bars, jerky, protein powder sachets, nuts, and fruit for flights and layovers.
- If a hotel room has a fridge/kettle, a quick grocery run (yogurt, fruit, eggs, oats) covers breakfast and snacks easily.
- At buffets, do one lap to see all the options before filling your plate, then build it protein-first.
- Stay hydrated on flights — cabin air is dry, and dehydration is often mistaken for hunger or fatigue.

- Aim for "good enough, consistently" over trying to hit exact macros on the road — a short trip won't undo your progress.

Travel-Friendly Snacks (approx. per serving)

Snack	kcal	Protein
Protein Bar	~200	~20 g
Beef / Turkey Jerky (30g)	~90	~15 g
Mixed Nuts (30g)	~180	~6 g
Whey Protein Sachet (1 scoop)	~120	~24 g
Fresh Fruit (1 piece)	~90	~1 g
Rice Cakes + Peanut Butter (2)	~220	~7 g

Travel Packing Checklist

- Protein bars / jerky / protein powder sachets
- Resealable bag of nuts or trail mix
- Reusable water bottle (fill after airport security)
- Shaker cup for protein powder
- A digital food scale if staying somewhere with a kitchen for more than 3-4 days

Sleep & Recovery Nutrition

Sleep is a nutrition variable, not just a training one — poor sleep increases hunger hormones (ghrelin), reduces satiety signals (leptin), and impairs glucose control, making fat loss harder and muscle gain less efficient regardless of how well you eat.

- Aim for 7-9 hours per night; even a consistent short-fall of 1-2 hours measurably increases next-day appetite and cravings for high-calorie food.
- Avoid large meals within 1-2 hours of bedtime if they disrupt your sleep, but don't go to bed hungry either — a small protein/casein-based snack can help overnight recovery.
- Limit caffeine within 6-8 hours of bedtime; it has a longer half-life than most people expect.
- Alcohol may make you feel drowsy but reduces sleep quality (especially REM sleep) — factor this in on nights before important training sessions.

Social Events & Holidays

Holidays and social events are not the enemy of progress — unplanned, repeated abandonment of your routine is. A few defaults keep them from derailing months of consistency:

- Treat a holiday like an extended cheat meal, not a reason to abandon structure entirely — enjoy the event, then resume your normal plan immediately after, without a "start over Monday" mentality.
- Stay active around big events (a walk, a light session) — it doesn't offset the calories but keeps the habit alive and makes returning to routine easier.

- At multi-day trips or holidays, don't try to track perfectly — aim to hit protein and stay reasonably active, and let precision return once you're home.
- One indulgent week does not erase months of consistent progress — the data consistently shows short-term fluctuations average out over a longer timeframe.

Meal Prep

Meal prep removes decision fatigue and is the single biggest lever for long-term consistency.

- Pick 1-2 prep days per week (e.g. Sunday and Wednesday) and batch-cook proteins, carbs, and vegetables separately so they can be mixed and matched.
- Cook 2-3 protein sources and 2 carb sources per batch to avoid flavor fatigue across the week.
- Use a kitchen scale for the first few weeks on a new calorie target — it trains portion recognition far faster than guessing.
- Cooked chicken, rice, and roasted vegetables keep 4-5 days refrigerated; freeze portions you won't eat within that window.
- Reheat rice and starches with a splash of water to restore moisture, and always cool food before sealing containers to avoid condensation/sogginess.
- Keep a rotating list of 5-6 "go-to" meals so prep becomes a fast routine instead of a fresh decision every week.

Shelf Life Guide (Refrigerated / Frozen)

Food	Fridge	Freezer
Cooked chicken / turkey / beef	3-4 days	2-3 months
Cooked fish	1-2 days	1-2 months
Cooked rice / quinoa	4-5 days	1-2 months
Roasted vegetables	4-5 days	2-3 months
Cooked eggs	3-4 days	Not recommended
Overnight oats / yogurt bowls	3-4 days	Not recommended

Sample Weekly Prep Schedule

Day	Task
Sunday	Batch-cook 2 proteins + 2 carb sources + roast vegetables; portion into containers for Mon-Wed
Wednesday	Quick 30-40 min re-prep to refresh proteins/veggies for Thu-Sat
Daily	Grab-and-go breakfast items (oats, yogurt, eggs) prepped the night before

BONUS — COMMON NUTRITION MYTHS

"Carbs after 6pm make you fat"

Fat gain is driven by total daily calorie surplus, not the clock. Your body doesn't apply different rules to a gram of carbohydrate eaten at 5pm versus 9pm — what matters is your total intake across the day and week.

"Eating small, frequent meals boosts metabolism"

Meal frequency has minimal effect on total calories burned. Eating 3 larger meals or 6 smaller ones burns essentially the same amount through digestion — choose the frequency that fits your schedule and appetite control best.

"You need to eat protein within 30 minutes post-workout or lose your gains"

The "anabolic window" is far wider than once believed — likely several hours around training. Total daily protein intake matters far more than precise post-workout timing for most people.

"Fat makes you fat"

Dietary fat and body fat are not the same thing. Weight gain comes from a sustained calorie surplus regardless of which macronutrient it comes from — dietary fat is also essential for hormone production and nutrient absorption.

"Detox teas/juice cleanses remove toxins"

Your liver and kidneys already filter toxins continuously and effectively. These products typically cause water loss and sometimes diarrhea — a scale change that has nothing to do with fat loss and reverses once you resume normal eating.

APPENDIX — QUICK REFERENCE

A fast substitution guide: swap any item below for another in the same row at roughly equal calories, so any meal plan in this book can be adapted to your taste without recalculating macros.

Protein Swaps (per ~150g cooked portion)

Swap freely between

Chicken Breast • Turkey Breast • Tilapia / White Fish • Lean Beef (90/10) • Salmon (slightly higher fat)

Carb Swaps (per ~150-200g cooked portion)

Swap freely between

White Rice • Quinoa • Sweet Potato • Oats (breakfast only) • Whole Wheat Bread (adjust portion for density)

Fat Swaps (per ~1 tbsp / 15g)

Swap freely between

Olive Oil • Avocado (~70g) • Almonds (~15g) • Peanut Butter (~15g)

Vegetable Options (fixed portion, low-calorie — swap freely)

- Broccoli • Spinach • Green Beans • Zucchini • Bell Peppers • Cauliflower • Asparagus

No-Scale Portion Guide (using your hand)

When a scale isn't available, your hand is a surprisingly reliable portion tool:

Hand Reference	Roughly Equals
Palm (thickness + size)	1 protein portion (~120-150g cooked meat/fish)
Cupped hand	1 carb portion (~1 cup rice, oats, or potato)
Thumb	1 fat portion (~1 tbsp oil, nut butter, or a small handful of nuts)
Fist	1 vegetable portion (~1 cup)

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I have to eat exactly what's in the meal plans?

- No — use the Appendix swap tables to substitute any food for another in the same category at roughly equal calories.

What if I'm hungry between meals on a lower-calorie tier?

- Add extra volume from the vegetable list (very low calorie) or shift a snack earlier — total daily calories still matter most, not the exact meal count.

Should I do cardio to speed up fat loss?

- Cardio helps create the calorie deficit and supports heart health, but the deficit itself is what drives fat loss — cardio is a lever for calories out, not a requirement.

Can I switch between plan tiers as my goal changes?

- Yes — move to an adjacent tier (e.g. 2200 → 2500) when transitioning from maintenance to a lean bulk, or step down when starting a cut.

These are general estimates, not lab-grade values — use them to build consistent habits, not to chase decimal-point precision.

Final Message

This is Book 03 in the Growth Fit Systems series. Pair it with Book 02 — Training Manual — for a complete framework covering both what you eat and how you train.

Let's get to work.

FITNESS WITH — LBIG