



USOC
SPORTS NUTRITION

WEIGHT LOSS FACTSHEET

THE UNITED STATES OLYMPIC COMMITTEE

Weight Loss in Sport

An athlete's desire to lose weight should be rooted in achieving the ideal body composition for performance. A realistic weight loss goal is one that does not compromise performance and maturation, but leads to a gradual decrease in weight of 0.5 – 1.5 pounds per week.



Getting Started on Your Weight Loss Goals

1. **Consult a sport dietitian** to assist you with an individual plan to meet your goals while maximizing energy and performance.
2. **Get a baseline assessment** to determine current weight and body composition and to set realistic goals.
3. **Plan ahead** and outline meals and snacks for the week. Make a grocery list and stick to it while shopping at least once per week to ensure access to the appropriate foods.
4. **Manage portion sizes** using the Weight Management Athlete Plate as a guide.
5. **Listen to your body** and stop eating when you are satisfied rather than “stuffed”. Eat slowly to give your body time to recognize the feeling of fullness.
6. **Focus on meals** to avoid mindless eating and minimize distractions like the TV and reading.
7. **Logging your food and fluid intake** is a great way to create awareness, identify areas for improvement, and ensure accountability.
8. **Consistency is key** when making food choices. At each meal and snack choose foods that support your weight loss goals.
9. **Have a plan** when you enter a dining hall or buffet. Start by filling half your plate with veggies and then add a lean protein and grain or carb source.



Weight Loss Checklist

- **Prioritize protein** by including an appropriate serving size in every meal and snack.
 - Skinless poultry, fish, lean meat, low-fat dairy products, eggs, tofu, beans
- **Make ½ your carbs whole grains** by including a ¼ to ½ cup or 1-2 slices at meals.
 - Brown/wild rice, quinoa, oatmeal, corn tortillas, whole wheat breads/pasta/crackers
- **Add color** by filling half your plate with veggies and snack on fruit and veggies.
 - ≥ 3 servings of veggies + 1-2 servings of fruit per day
- **Add healthy fats** in small amounts at meals to slow digestion and keep you full for longer.
 - Nuts, seeds, oily fish, avocado, plant oils
- **Rethink your drink** by choosing water, low-fat milk, or tea instead of sweetened drinks.
 - Always carry a water bottle
- **Minimize or avoid alcohol** to avoid unwanted calories.
 - ≤ 0-2 drinks per day
- **Avoid skipping meals** and include small snacks to help with recovery & avoid overeating at meals.
- **Nutrient-filled desserts** are an easy way to curb cravings while staying within a calorie budget.
- **When dining out** watch portion sizes. Include veggies and a lean protein, and ask for sauces on the side. Choose grilled, baked, roasted, broiled, and steamed foods to limit extra calories.

Low Calorie Snacks & Ideas

- 1 cup baby carrots + 1-2 Tbsp. hummus
- ¼ cup dried mangos + 1-2 hard-boiled eggs
- 1 cup popcorn + 1 low-fat string cheese
- 8-12 oz. soy or low-fat milk
- ½ cup shelled sunflower seeds
- 1-2 oz. jerky + medium apple
- 6-8 oz. low-fat Greek yogurt
- 1 rice cake + 1 Tbsp. peanut/almond butter
- 2-4 oz. turkey/ham/roast beef + medium orange
- 1 ½ c Kefir
- 1 oz. almonds, peanuts, walnuts, pistachios
- 6 celery sticks + 1-2 Tbsp. peanut/almond butter
- ½ - 1 cup edamame
- ½ cup beans + ½ cup brown rice + salsa
- 1 cup low-fat chocolate milk
- ½ turkey & veggie wrap with ½ Tbsp. hummus
- ¼ cup trail mix
- ½ whole wheat English muffin + 1 Tbsp. peanut butter + 1 tsp. honey

Easy Ways to Cut 100-200 Calories

- Choose water instead of juice or soda at meals
- Choose oil-based dressings over creamy
- Add only 1 Tbsp. of nut butter instead of 2 Tbsp.
- Choose fruit instead of candy for dessert
- Pick Greek yogurt over frozen yogurt or ice cream for dessert
- Pick an English muffin or toast in place of bagel
- ↓ Portion sizes of carbs from 1 cup to ⅔ cup

Athlete Recommendations: