

8 ways to stay on track at the weekend

HEALTH HUB



8 WAYS TO STAY ON TRACK ON ANY GIVEN WEEKEND

Most dieters know weekends present a challenge. On one hand, you want to take part in all the fun things your friends and family are doing; but, on the other, you want to stay within your calorie goals. Often, it can feel difficult to do both.

Of course, the answer isn't to stay home like a hermit all weekend. There should always be room in our lives for some indulgences, but during weight loss, it's too easy to go overboard if we don't plan.

While it's not so bad to go off plan over the weekend occasionally, it can add up over time.

Even if you're someone who consistently hits their calorie goals and does the same workout most days, you could gain up to 12 pounds in one year just by eating 400 extra calories on Saturdays and Sundays. What's more, overindulgence during the weekend can make it more difficult to get back on track come Monday. It's best to stay as consistent as possible, seven days per week.

But how can you accomplish that?

1. PLAN AHEAD

When you know you're going out to eat with friends and family, look at the menu in advance. That way, you can decide and stick to it when ordering. This helps reduce anxiety you might feel about going to a restaurant and what to choose. However, I really stress that you should enjoy the foods that you eat, especially when you're with friends and family, so don't overthink it!

2. SCHEDULE WEEKEND WORKOUTS

Even if your weekend workouts aren't as intense as your weekday ones, they could help you make better food choices. No one wants to feel sluggish when working out. This commitment to your fitness will help you slow down the rounds at happy-hour and scale your food choices to set yourself up for feeling good. Working out on weekends creates structure that will set a tone for the rest of the day.

3. MAKE NON-EATING SOCIAL PLANS

Think outside the restaurant when meeting up with friends. Having an active social life is so important for overall health, but it's more difficult to stay on track when eating at restaurants. If you regularly eat out with friends, suggest meeting up for coffee, a walk, a museum tour, or a workout class instead.

4. CHOOSE ALCOHOLS WISELY

Alcohol doesn't have to be off-limits when you're trying to lose or maintain your weight, but it's not something you want to consume a lot of. If you are drinking, choose single alcohols with non-caloric mixers like seltzers. If you have wine, make it a spritzer to expand the volume without extra calories.

5. TRACK YOUR FOOD

Lots of people track what they eat during the week, but come the weekend, they let the habit lag. Don't break a winning streak. The fact is, tracking keeps you accountable. If you're the type who doesn't track your weekdays because you always eat the same things and do the same activities, it's even more important for you to track what you eat and do over the weekend.

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6. LEGALISE ALL FOODS

One way to make eating healthy on the weekend easier is to allow yourself to have indulgences all week long. Throughout the whole week, it's important to remember that you're allowed to eat anything.

When we restrict ourselves completely from foods by labelling them as 'bad' or 'illegal,' things tend to go downhill. Eating a food, we've told ourselves not to sends us into a tailspin. We figure if we've already broken our rule, we might as well just go full steam ahead and start over on Monday.

Sound familiar? Instead, consider taking away the rules. Eaten a chocolate bar that put you over your calorie goals? It's OK. You're not defeated. You're just ready to move on. Legalising food takes some temptation away and can help prevent a restricting-and-binging cycle.

7. USE THE THREE-BITE RULE



Practice moderation by allowing yourself to have and enjoy indulgences without eating the whole thing. Especially when it comes to dessert, three bites should be enough to savour the flavour without overdoing it.

8. GO INTO THE WEEKEND PREPARED

Having nothing in the fridge is a common reason for ordering takeout or eating out several times in one weekend. Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday are easy to stay on track because what you prepped for the week is around and fresh. By Thursday and certainly

Friday, you are out of prepped foods or you're tired of the leftovers. Plan easy, no-prep dinners for Thursday and Friday that can be made simply with basic, non-perishable ingredients that you can keep stocked in the pantry or freezer.

You may even want to plan a mid-week trip to the grocery store so you have appealing options at home over the weekend. Plus, if you're not able to pick up fresh dinner supplies for the week on Sunday, you'll be set for Monday.