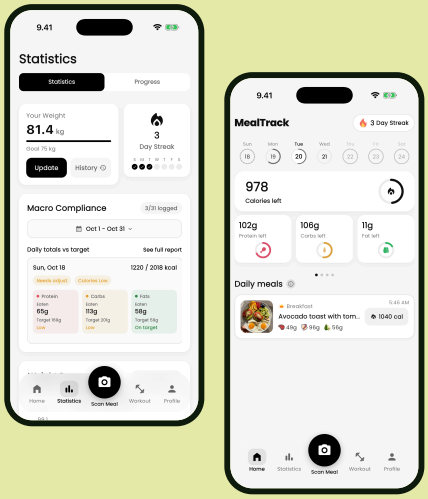
WEIGHT LOSS

How to Lose a Lot of Weight: A Realistic Plan for 50–100 lb (2026)

How long it really takes, the habits that carry you through a year or more, and what to do when the scale stops moving.

Updated October 21, 2026 · 8 min read · By the MealTrack team



QUICK ANSWER

To lose a lot of weight (50–100 lb, roughly 23–45 kg) and keep it off, eat about **500 kcal below your maintenance calories**, get **1.2–1.6 g of protein per kg** of your goal weight, lift weights 2–3 times a week, and log your food and weight consistently. At a safe pace of 0.5–1 kg (1–2 lb) a week, that takes **roughly 12–24 months** for most people. Recalculate your calories after every 5–10% you lose, judge progress by weekly averages and photos rather than single weigh-ins, and treat maintenance as part of the plan, not the finish line.

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How long it takes to lose 50, 70 or 100 pounds

A safe, sustainable pace is **0.5–1 kg (1–2 lb) a week**, and no more than about 1% of your body weight a week. Here's what that means for a big goal:

To lose	At 0.5 kg (1 lb) a week	At 1 kg (2 lb) a week
50 lb (23 kg)	≈ 12 months	≈ 6 months
70 lb (32 kg)	≈ 16 months	≈ 8 months
90 lb (41 kg)	≈ 21 months	≈ 10 months
100 lb (45 kg)	≈ 23 months	≈ 12 months

Most people land somewhere between the two columns: faster at the start, when there's more to lose, and slower near the goal. If you plan for 12–24 months, a slow month feels like part of the plan instead of a failure.

Transformation videos skip the middle

A 20-second before-and-after compresses a year or two of ordinary days. Compare yourself with your own photos from three months ago, not with someone else's after shot.

The plan: six habits that do the heavy lifting

1 **Eat about 500 kcal under maintenance**

With a lot to lose, up to 750 kcal can work. Don't go below about 1,200 kcal (women) or 1,500 kcal (men) a day without medical supervision. The calorie deficit guide walks through the math.

2 **Put protein in every meal**

Aim for 1.2–1.6 g per kg of your **goal** weight, not your current weight. Protein keeps you full and protects muscle. See the protein guide for a chart.

3 **Lift weights 2–3 times a week**
Strength training keeps your muscle while you're in a deficit, so more of what you lose is fat. That's what changes your shape, not just the number on the scale.

4 **Walk every day**
Daily walking adds up over a week, it's easy to recover from, and it's something you can keep doing for a year or more.

5 **Log food and weight consistently**
Log every meal you can, by photo, barcode or voice, and weigh yourself at least three mornings a week. Consistency beats precision.

6 **Sleep 7–9 hours**
Short sleep is linked to more hunger and cravings the next day, which makes a deficit much harder to hold.

What to expect, phase by phase

Phase	What usually happens	What to do
Weeks 1–4	The fastest drop. Part of it is water and stored carbs, not fat.	Enjoy it, but don't set expectations by it. It will slow down.
Months 2–6	Steady loss, often 0.5–1 kg (1–2 lb) a week.	Keep logging. Take progress photos every 4 weeks.
Months 6–12	Slower, with the first real plateaus.	Recalculate your calories. Consider 1–2 weeks at maintenance.
The last 5–10 kg	The slowest stretch.	Smaller deficit, more strength training, more patience.



Track the whole journey in one place

MealTrack shows calories left every day and your weight against your goal over time, so you can see the trend instead of guessing. Free on iPhone and Android.

Download on the App Store

Get it on Google Play

Why weight loss stalls, and what to do

Every long weight loss has flat stretches. Before changing anything, check which of these is behind yours:

- **You need fewer calories now.** A smaller body burns less. Recalculate your target after every 5–10% you lose.
- **Tracking has drifted.** Portions grow, bites and drinks go unlogged, weekends get skipped. Log everything for one strict week and compare.
- **It's water, not fat.** A new workout, a salty meal or the days before a period can hide fat loss on the scale for a week or two.
- **It's a real plateau.** If your weekly average has been flat for 3–4 weeks, lower your target by 100–200 kcal or add daily steps.

Take a planned break

After months in a deficit, some people do better with 1–2 weeks eating at maintenance, then picking the deficit back up. It's a break from the diet, not from logging.

Track more than the scale

Body weight swings 1–2 kg a day from water and salt alone, so single weigh-ins are noisy. These show progress the scale can hide:

- **Weekly average weight.** Compare averages, not days.
- **Progress photos every 4 weeks.** Same spot, same light, same clothes.
- **Waist measurement.** At the belly button, once a month.
- **How clothes fit, and what you can lift.** Both change even when the scale is stubborn.

In MealTrack, tap **Update** under Statistics to log your weight with an optional progress photo. Later, open any entry in your weight history and pick another one to see the two side by side as a before and after.

Keeping it off

Reaching your goal is the start of maintenance, not the end of the plan. Raise your calories by 100–200 kcal a week until your weight holds steady: that's your new maintenance.

- **Keep weighing in.** Studies of people who kept off large losses, like the US National Weight Control Registry, find most weigh themselves at least once a week and stay active most days.
- **Set a trigger range.** If your weekly average climbs 2 kg (5 lb) above your goal, go back to logging every meal for a couple of weeks.
- **Keep the protein and the weights.** They're what keeps the muscle you worked to hold on to.

When to get extra support

Talk to a doctor before starting, especially with a lot to lose. If your BMI is 30 or more, or 27 or more with a condition like type 2 diabetes or high blood pressure, ask about medical options too, including medication. They work best alongside the habits above, not instead of them.

If dieting starts to feel all-consuming, through skipping meals, bingeing, or letting the scale decide your mood for the day, tell a doctor. That matters more than any number in this guide.

Frequently asked questions

How long does it take to lose 90 pounds?

At a safe pace of 0.5–1 kg (1–2 lb) a week, about 10–21 months. Most people land in between: faster at the start and slower near the goal. Plan for 12–24 months.

How many calories should I eat to lose a lot of weight?

Start about 500 kcal below your maintenance calories. With a lot to lose, up to 750 kcal can work, but don't go below about 1,200 kcal (women) or 1,500 kcal (men) a day without medical supervision. Recalculate after every 5–10% you lose. The **calorie deficit guide** shows how.

Why did my weight loss stop?

Usually because you weigh less and now need fewer calories, or because portions and untracked snacks crept back in. Check 3–4 weeks of weekly averages first. If they're flat, lower your target by 100–200 kcal or add daily steps.

Should I weigh myself every day?

You can, as long as you look at the weekly average rather than single days, because daily weight swings 1–2 kg with water, salt and hormones. If daily weigh-ins upset you, weigh 2–3 times a week and use progress photos too.

Will I have loose skin after losing 50+ pounds?

Possibly. It depends on how much you lose, your age, genetics and how long you carried the weight. Strength training builds muscle underneath, and some people choose surgery once their weight has been stable for a while. No cream reliably prevents it.

This guide is general information, not medical advice. Calorie and nutrient figures are typical values and estimates. Talk to a doctor or registered dietitian before making big changes to your diet, especially if you are pregnant, under 18, or managing a medical condition.

MealTrack

CHEAT SHEET

LOSING 50+ LB: THE LONG GAME

A realistic plan for big weight loss that lasts

0.5–1 kg
a week (1–2 lb): a pace you can keep

12–24 mo
realistic timeline for 50–100 lb

2–3×
strength sessions a week

1 Moderate deficit

≈500 kcal under maintenance. Not below 1,200 / 1,500 kcal.

2 Protein every meal

1.2–1.6 g per kg of your goal weight.

3 Lift 2–3× a week

Keeps muscle, so you lose fat and change shape.

4 Recalculate

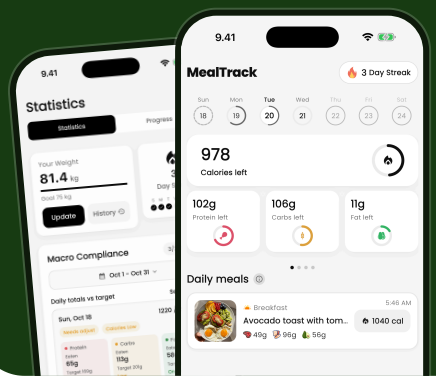
After every 5–10% lost. A smaller body needs fewer calories.

5 Photos every 4 weeks

Same spot, light and clothes. Waist tape too.

6 Judge weekly averages

Flat for 3–4 weeks? -100–200 kcal or more steps.



Track the whole journey with MealTrack.

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