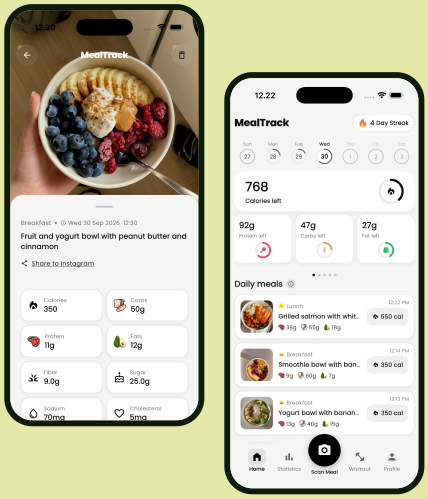
MACROS

How to Track Macros: A Beginner's Guide (2026)

What protein, carbs and fat do, how to set your targets in grams, and how to hit them without weighing every bite.

Updated October 19, 2026 · 7 min read · By the MealTrack team



QUICK ANSWER

To track macros, set a daily calorie target, then split it into grams of protein, carbohydrates and fat. **Set protein first** (about 1.6 g per kg of body weight if you train), give **fat 25–30% of calories**, and **fill the rest with carbs**. Protein and carbs have 4 kcal per gram and fat has 9. Log every meal in an app that shows macros, and aim to land within about 10 g of each target most days.

In this guide

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What macros are

Calories tell you how much you eat. Macros tell you what it's made of. Two days with the same 1,800 kcal can look very different: one high in protein that keeps you full, one mostly snacks that leave you hungry by 4 pm.

Macro	Calories per gram	Main job
Protein	4 kcal	Builds and repairs muscle, keeps you full
Carbohydrates	4 kcal	Fuels your brain and your training
Fat	9 kcal	Hormones, vitamin absorption, flavor
Alcohol (not a macro you need)	7 kcal	Energy with no nutrients

How to set your macro targets

1 **Start with calories**
Use your maintenance calories, minus a deficit if you want to lose weight. Our calorie deficit guide walks through it.

2 **Set protein first**
Multiply your body weight in kg by 1.6 (or pounds by 0.7). This is the macro most people undereat.

3 **Set fat**
Give fat 25–30% of your calories, then divide by 9 to get grams. Don't go much below 20%.

4 **Fill the rest with carbs**
Subtract the protein and fat calories from your total and divide what's left by 4.

Example: 1,800 kcal for a 75 kg person

Macro	Calculation	Daily target
Protein	75 kg × 1.6 = 120 g → 480 kcal	120 g
Fat	1,800 × 30% = 540 kcal ÷ 9	60 g
Carbs	1,800 - 480 - 540 = 780 kcal ÷ 4	195 g

That works out to about 27% of calories from protein, 30% from fat and 43% from carbs.

Typical targets by goal

Goal	Protein	Fat	Carbs
Lose fat	1.6–2.2 g/kg	25–30%	The rest
Maintain	1.4–1.8 g/kg	25–35%	The rest
Build muscle	1.6–2.2 g/kg	20–30%	The rest (usually more)

These sit close to the ranges health authorities recommend for adults: 10–35% of calories from protein, 20–35% from fat and 45–65% from carbs. Low-carb and keto diets go outside those ranges on purpose. They work if you can sustain them, but they aren't required for fat loss.



See macros for every meal

Snap a photo and MealTrack shows protein, carbs and fat next to calories, plus what's left for the day.

Download on the App Store

Get it on Google Play

How to hit your macros without obsessing

- **Build meals around protein.** Pick it first (chicken, fish, eggs, Greek yogurt, tofu, beans), then add carbs and vegetables.
- **Aim for a range, not an exact number.** Within about 10 g of protein and carbs, and 5 g of fat, is a great day.
- **Repeat a few go-to meals.** Familiar breakfasts and lunches make the rest of the day easy to plan.
- **Check what's left before dinner.** It's easier to close a protein gap at 6 pm than at 10 pm.
- **Short on time? Track two numbers.** Calories and protein matter most. Carbs and fat can flex day to day.

Frequently asked questions

What should my macros be to lose weight?

Keep a calorie deficit and set protein high, about 1.6–2.2 g per kg of body weight, with fat at 25–30% of calories and carbs filling the rest. Total calories drive weight loss; protein helps you keep muscle and stay full.

Is tracking macros better than counting calories?

Macro tracking includes calorie counting, plus a breakdown of where the calories come from. If your only goal is weight loss, calories and protein are enough for most people.

Do I need to hit my macros exactly?

No. Landing within about 10 g on protein and carbs and 5 g on fat is close enough. Consistency over the week matters more than perfection on any single day.

What is IIFYM?

IIFYM stands for "if it fits your macros": a flexible approach where any food is fine as long as your daily calories and macros land on target. It works best when most of your food is nutritious and treats fit in around 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

TRACK YOUR MACROS

Set protein, carb and fat targets in 4 steps

4 kcal	4 kcal	9 kcal
per gram of protein	per gram of carbs	per gram of fat

1 Start with calories

Maintenance calories, minus your deficit.

2 Protein first

1.6 g × body weight in kg, or 0.7 g × pounds.

3 Fat: 25–30%

Of your calories, then ÷ 9 for grams.

4 Carbs: the rest

Remaining calories ÷ 4 for grams.

5 Hit a range

±10 g protein and carbs, ±5 g fat is a win.

6 Protein every meal

Pick it first, then add carbs and vegetables.



See macros for every meal you snap.

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