



# A guide to portion sizes

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**If you are finding it difficult to lose weight despite always choosing low fat, low sugar alternatives it might not be what you eat, but how much.**

The average plate in the UK has increased from 23 cm (9 inches) to 33cm (13 inches) and our portion sizes have increased with it. Research has shown that the more food that is put in front of us the more we will eat. These extra calories can make it difficult to lose weight.

Portion sizes of everyday foods that we buy in the supermarket have also increased. You can now buy extra thick sliced bread. Cakes, crisps and chocolate bars have also increased in size. Just by changing from medium to thick sliced bread you could put on about 4lbs in a year.

## Tips for having smaller portions

- **Share packaged foods.** Many foods are meant for sharing so if you're eating them by yourself put some in a bowl and put the rest away for another time.
- **Eat a little slower.** It takes time for our brain to register that we are full so try to pace yourself
- **Focus on your food.** Eating while being distracted, such as in front of the TV, means we often eat more without noticing or even enjoying it. Swap the TV for the table.
- **Aim to feel satisfied not uncomfortably full**
- **Use a smaller plate and bowl**
- **Use handy measures**

Restaurants and pubs are doing the same. For example, when McDonald's first opened, it offered only one size of French fries, today that size is the small option. What we now consider to be normal is actually super-sized by comparison. It's not surprising that we are finding it harder and harder to tell what a 'normal' portion is.

| Food group | Daily portions | What is a portion |
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| <p><b>Fruit and vegetables</b></p> <p>(50kcal per portion)</p>               | <p>5+ per day</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3-4 heaped tbsp vegetables (handful)</li> <li>• Side salad (small desert bowl)</li> <li>• 1 piece of fruit (e.g. banana/apple/orange)</li> <li>• 2 small fruits (e.g. kiwi/clementines)</li> <li>• Handful of grapes/cherries/strawberries</li> <li>• Small glass of fruit juice (150ml)</li> <li>• 2 tbsp of stewed fruit</li> <li>• 1 tbsp of dried fruit (15g)</li> <li>• 1 bowl of vegetable soup</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Carbohydrates</b></p> <p>(80kcal per portion)</p>                      | <p>5-14 per day</p> <p>Women 2-3 portions per meal</p> <p>Men 2-4 portions per meal</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 tbsp (15-20g) cereal (e.g. cornflakes)</li> <li>• 2 tbsp (20g) oats/muesli</li> <li>• 1 weetabix or 1 shredded Wheat</li> <li>• 1 medium slice of bread/toast (including fruit loaf)</li> <li>• 1 crumpet</li> <li>• ½ pitta bread or chapatti</li> <li>• 1 tortilla wrap</li> <li>• 25g (1oz) rice/pasta/noodles (raw)</li> <li>• 2 tbsp (1 serving spoon) of cooked rice or pasta</li> <li>• 2 tbsp (1 serving spoon) of cooked Noodles</li> <li>• 2 tbsp (1 serving spoon) of cooked couscous</li> <li>• 3 crackers/ ryvita / rice cakes</li> <li>• 2-3 small new potatoes (100g raw)</li> <li>• 1 large egg sized boiled potato (100g raw)</li> <li>• ½ medium (tennis ball sized) jacket potato</li> <li>• 5-8 (small handful) of thick oven chips</li> <li>• 1 ice cream scoop of mashed potato</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Meat, fish, eggs and alternatives</b></p> <p>(150kcal per portion)</p> | <p>2-3 per day</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 75g (3oz) – palm sized piece of red meat</li> <li>• 75g (3oz) – 2 slices of roast meat</li> <li>• ½ gammon steak</li> <li>• ½ 6oz steak</li> <li>• Small chicken breast (Average = 1½ portions)</li> <li>• 75g (3oz) mince (beef, lamb, chicken)</li> <li>• 2 low fat sausages or veggie sausages</li> <li>• 2 slices of bacon</li> <li>• 1 beef burger (homemade or reduced fat)</li> <li>• 12 slices of wafer thin ham/chicken</li> <li>• 2 slices (50g) of ham</li> <li>• 175g (7oz) – hand size piece white fish</li> <li>• 100g (4oz) – palm sized piece of salmon</li> <li>• 200g (8oz) prawns</li> <li>• 3 fish fingers / 3 Quorn fillets</li> <li>• 1 tin tuna (200g tin)</li> <li>• ½ tin of salmon (200g tin)</li> <li>• 2 medium eggs</li> <li>• 3tbsp (1 small tin) of baked beans</li> <li>• 3 tbsp beans or lentils</li> <li>• 2 tbsp (25g) nuts</li> </ul> |

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| <p><b>Milk and dairy food</b></p> <p>(100kcal per portion)</p>    | <p>2-3 per day</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 200ml (1/3 pint) milk (low fat)</li> <li>• low calorie yoghurt (200g)</li> <li>• low fat yoghurt (125-150g)</li> <li>• 3-4 tbsp (100g) low fat cottage cheese</li> <li>• 2 low fat cheese triangles</li> <li>• 2 tbsp (60g) low fat soft cheese</li> <li>• 1 heaped tbsp (40g) cheese spread</li> <li>• Matchbox size piece of hard cheese (1oz)</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Fatty and sugary foods</b></p> <p>(100kcal per portion)</p> | <p>0-4 per day</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 tsp cooking oil or pesto</li> <li>• 2 tsp butter/margarine</li> <li>• 4 tsp 'light' margarine</li> <li>• 2 level tbsp low fat mayo</li> <li>• 1 tbsp normal mayonnaise</li> <li>• 2 tbsp creamy salad dressing</li> <li>• 4 tbsp low fat salad dressing (not creamy)</li> <li>• 1/3 (200ml) pint gravy (made with granules)</li> <li>• 2-3 tbsp cheese sauce/white sauce</li> <li>• 100g low fat curry sauce</li> <li>• 1 scoop of ice cream (60g)</li> <li>• 1 tbsp of double cream</li> <li>• 2 tbsp single cream</li> <li>• 1 mini chocolate bar/chocolate biscuit</li> <li>• 2 biscuits / 3 rich tea</li> <li>• 4 heaped tsp sugar / jam / honey</li> <li>• 1 cereal bar</li> <li>• 1 baked/reduced fat packet of crisps</li> <li>• 1 small fairy cake</li> <li>• 1 average Yorkshire pudding</li> <li>• 2 mini sausage rolls / 1 mini pork pie</li> </ul> <p>2 portions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A 50g chocolate bar</li> <li>• Packet of crisps (25g)</li> <li>• Small piece of cake</li> <li>• Small sausage roll (60g)</li> <li>• 1 scone or teacake</li> </ul> <p>Pastry on an individual pie 2-4 portions (remember to count the filling)</p> |

Tsp = Teaspoon

Tbsp = Tablespoon

25g = 1oz