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# The How Many Calories Should I Eat CHEAT SHEET!

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# The "How Many Calories Should I Eat" Cheat Sheet

Eating for fat loss doesn't have to be complicated. In fact, it can become totally intuitive and unconscious fairly quickly if you understand a few basic principles of energy balance and rules of nutrition. By putting yourself into a feedback loop and using results-based thinking, it's possible for calculating or counting calories to eventually become optional.

All you need to do is acknowledge the energy balance equation, become aware of your portion sizes and then increase or decrease your portions based on your weekly results (or alternately, adjust your activity level to produce the calorie deficit you need). However, that doesn't mean calories don't count!

I can't emphasize enough the importance of maintaining a calorie deficit as an absolute requirement of burning fat. If you're going to track numbers, calories are the most important number to know.

Here are four simple methods to calculate your caloric needs. Depending on whether you're the analytical type or the "ballpark figure" type, select the method that suits your style the best.

## 1. THE AVERAGES METHOD

Use this method if you want a general ballpark estimate and you don't like math!

### For fat loss:

Men: 2100-2500 calories per day

Women: 1400-1800 calories per day

### For maintenance:

Men: 2700-2900 calories per day

Women: 2000-2100 calories per day

\* NOTE: These are average numbers, so they'll be reasonably accurate if your body size or activity level are average. If you're a statistical "outlier", ie, if you're very small-framed and or very sedentary, your calorie needs will be in the lower end of these ranges. If you're very large and or very active, your calories needs will be in the upper end of these ranges or even higher.

## 2. THE QUICK METHOD

Use this formula if you want a personalized ballpark estimate with one quick calculation. Use the lower number for lightly active, the middle number for moderately active and the higher number for very active.

### Fat loss:

10 - 12 calories per lb. of bodyweight

### Maintenance:

14 - 16 calories per lb. of bodyweight

### 3. THE HARRIS-BENEDICT FORMULA

Use this formula for a very accurate estimate of your maintenance level if you know your body weight but not your body fat percentage. For fat loss, create a 20-30% deficit below maintenance.

Note: BMR = basal metabolic rate, which is the amount of energy you require for normal body functions at rest (does not include activity).

Men:  $BMR = 66 + (13.7 \times wt \text{ in kg}) + (5 \times ht \text{ in cm}) - (6.8 \times age \text{ in years})$

Women:  $BMR = 655 + (9.6 \times wt \text{ in kg}) + (1.8 \times ht \text{ in cm}) - (4.7 \times age \text{ in years})$

#### Conversions

1 inch = 2.54 cm.

1 kilogram = 2.2 lbs.

Example:

You are female

You are 30 yrs old

You are 5' 6 " tall (167.6 cm)

You weigh 120 lbs. (54.5 kilos)

Your BMR =  $655 + 523 + 302 - 141 = 1339$  calories/day

Now that you know your BMR, you can calculate your maintenance level, (also known as total daily energy expenditure or TDEE), by multiplying your BMR by your activity multiplier from the chart below:

#### Activity Multiplier:

Sedentary =  $BMR \times 1.2$  (little or no exercise, desk job)

Lightly active =  $BMR \times 1.375$  (light exercise/sports 1-3 days/wk)

Mod. active =  $BMR \times 1.55$  (moderate exercise/sports 3-5 days/wk)

Very active =  $BMR \times 1.725$  (hard exercise/sports 6-7 days/wk)

Extr. active =  $BMR \times 1.9$  (hard daily exercise/sports & physical job

Or 2X day training, i.e marathon, competition etc.)

#### Example:

Your BMR is 1339 calories per day

Your activity level is moderately active (work out 3-4 times per week)

Your activity factor is 1.55

Your TDEE =  $1.55 \times 1339 = 2075$  calories/day

For Burn The Fat Inner Circle Members:

[Click here for the interactive Harris-Benedict Online calculator for women](#)

For Burn The Fat Inner Circle Members:

[Click here for the interactive Harris-Benedict Online calculator for men](#)

## 4. THE KATCH-MCARDLE FORMULA

Use this formula for a very accurate estimate of your maintenance level if you know your body fat percentage and lean body mass. For fat loss, create a 20-30% deficit below maintenance.

BMR (men and women) =  $370 + (21.6 \times \text{lean mass in kg})$

Example:

You are female

You weigh 120 lbs. (54.5 kilos)

Your body fat percentage is 20% (24 lbs. fat, 96 lbs. lean)

Your lean mass is 96 lbs. (43.6 kilos)

Your BMR =  $370 + (21.6 \times 43.6) = 1312$  calories

To determine TDEE from BMR, you simply multiply BMR by the activity multiplier:

Your BMR is 1312

Your activity level is moderately active (working out 3-4 times per week)

Your activity factor is 1.55

Your TDEE =  $1.55 \times 1312 = 2033$  calories per day

[Click here for the interactive Katch-Mcardle Online calculator \(men and women\)](#)

## WHICH METHOD IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

Depending on your disposition, you can either crunch numbers or you can take a "ballpark figure" type of approach. Either way, the goal is the same: You have to be in a calorie deficit to burn fat. I hope you found the flexibility offered from these different formulas helpful and it put the whole "calorie calculating thing" in perspective for you.

I have written two books about fat loss. [Burn The Fat, Feed The Muscle \(e-book\)](#) is based on bodybuilding, fitness and figure methods of fat loss. It is a highly structured, by-the-numbers program designed for maximum precision. If you are an accountant, engineer, programmer, math whiz, or any other analytical or detail-oriented type (or a bodybuilder/physique athlete, of course), you will be in 7th heaven on Burn The Fat, Feed The Muscle.

[The Body Fat Solution \(hardcover, Avery/Penguin Books\)](#), is based on lifestyle methods for the average male or female who is not a physique athlete, but has excess body fat and wants to get lean. It is a more general-guideline, ballpark-figure type of approach. While not as precise, its flexibility will appeal more to the intuitive person, especially those who are busy, stressed, emotional eaters who don't have the patience or personality for crunching numbers.

**Your friend and coach,**

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