



Dining with Dan

How to Lose Weight While Dining Out



BODY BY DAN

For most people, going out to eat is a \$50 investment to gain three pounds. I don't like that, and neither should you, so I'm going to show you ways to actually lose weight and save money while eating out. Fortunately for you, this article allows you to gain some insight without actually sharing a meal with this drill sergeant. Now, listen up, here are the rules.

Basic Rules

1. Don't finish your plate—eat a small portion.
2. Have double portions of salads and/or vegetables, and a half portion of carbs.
3. Drink primarily water. If you must have alcohol, only have one glass. If you must have coffee, stop loading it with sugars and creams, and drink it as close to black as possible.
4. Do not order a “more bang for your buck” meal. With most chain restaurants and fast-food joints that's really a “more clog for your arteries” and “more fat for your belly” meal.
5. If possible, eat something healthy at home (or packed from home) before you go out to eat. This is an easy way to prevent you from eating huge quantities when eating out. Snack on protein, vegetables, fruit, and a lot of water. Do not snack on breads, crackers, or other carbohydrate sources. Salads topped with meat and a small amount of dressing are a good choice.
6. Similar to tip #5, drink a lot of water before going out to eat.
7. When trying to “feel full” always focus on eating vegetables, fruit, protein, and water.
8. Eat slowly. From the first bite that enters your mouth it normally takes your body about 20 minutes to start feeling full. Many strength athletes trying to gain weight reverse this tip and eat as quickly as possible within 20 minutes before the feeling of fullness really sets in. Unfortunately, many casual diners use the same trick without realizing it and wonder why their belt needs to be loosened at the end of a meal.
9. When choosing carbohydrate sources, always shoot for a grain option if available.
10. Remember, most of what you eat for dinner is going to be stored in your body because you won't need to use much energy between eating

dinner and going to bed. What you eat for breakfast, however, is used for energy throughout the day. It is far better to have a large breakfast and small dinner, than small breakfast and large dinner.

Fast-Food

1. See Rule #4 above
2. Always choose a sub joint over a greasy burger joint. I happen to like Subway. Never eat a foot long in one sitting if you are trying to lose weight. Eat a 6” sub; most of the 6” subs at Subway are between 250 and 400 calories. Load them up with vegetables, and go very light on your sauce/dressing toppings. It might be a nice money saver to order a foot long, have half for lunch and save the other half for dinner.

Dine-in Restaurants

1. See Rule #4 above, and choose your entrée based on Rule #7 above.
2. Do not eat the bread that comes out before your meal, unless you are positive that your entrée contains no pasta, bread, potatoes, or rice. If you do eat the bread, don't slather it in butter and oil. If you must choose one, go with the olive oil. It is a healthy fat...in moderation. Olive oil is still loaded with calories that can really add up if trying to lose weight.
3. At most dine-in restaurants they give you a meal fit for a sumo wrestler. It is hard to say how much of a meal to eat at any given restaurant, but I would say that a good rule of thumb is to eat half of your plate and take home the rest as leftovers to eat when you're pressed for time.
4. Distinguish what is high calorie from the menu. Avoid dishes with sauces that are cream-based, avoid pasta-based dishes, and avoid fried dishes. If you did not eat the bread appetizers, it is okay to have a side of potatoes (sweet potatoes if possible), rice (brown or grain blend if possible), or pasta. Notice that I said “a side of” those carbohydrates, not “a meal based on” those carbohydrates. If you get an oil-based sauce with a meal, don't try to dunk each piece of food in the oil before sucking it down. You're not having cookies and milk here. Pick each bite up with the fork, let the oil drip off, and then eat it.
5. Treat yourself to dessert occasionally. It is okay to have dessert a few days a week. It is best to eat only half of it in one sitting though, and bring the rest home if possible.

There you have it—some basic and guidelines for dining out. I hope they help!