

★★★ PA ONLY PANS



NUTRITION FUNDAMENTALS

THE FEEDBACK LOOP

I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.

Proverb, adapted from Xunzi

A nutrition plan should not be followed blindly. It should be heard, seen, practiced, evaluated, and refined based on how you respond.

01

HEAR

Listen to the principles, explanations, and purpose behind each decision. Hearing the reasoning gives you a starting point, but information alone is not enough.

02

SEE

Observe the examples and patterns in action. Seeing a method performed helps turn abstract ideas into something clear and practical.

03

DO

Put the plan into practice with enough effort and consistency to create useful feedback. Application is where information becomes experience.

04

UNDERSTAND

Review your performance, progress, recovery, limitations, and execution. Through practice, you learn what works for your body, goals, and capabilities.

05

ADAPT

Keep what works. Remove what does not. Adjust the plan to better fit your needs.

06

BUILD

Develop neglected areas. Improve strength, control, resilience, and overall capacity while reducing avoidable risk.

07

REPEAT

Your body, goals, and circumstances will continue to change. Return to the process, reassess the system, and continue refining it as you evolve.

HEAR → SEE → DO → UNDERSTAND → ADAPT → BUILD → REPEAT

LISTEN TO LEARN. WATCH TO CLARIFY. DO TO UNDERSTAND.



UNDERSTAND THE INPUTS.

CONTROL THE OUTCOME.

This page is the map. Every listing points to the exact page where that lesson begins, so the method can be learned in order or used as a quick reference.

WHAT THIS GUIDE COVERS

PAGE 05

CUT. MAINTAIN. BUILD.

Choose the job before you choose the numbers. The same foods can serve all three goals; portions, frequency, and the surrounding choices change.

PAGE 07

KNOW WHAT EACH GRAM COSTS.

Calorie-per-gram values are fixed conventions. Food labels and daily totals can vary slightly because of rounding and mixed ingredients.

PAGE 09

THE LABEL IS ONLY USEFUL IF THE SERVING MATCHES.

Start with the amount you will actually eat. Then read the calories and nutrients that apply to that amount.

PAGE 11

GIVE EVERY PLATE A JOB.

Choose the structure first, then scale the portions to the goal, appetite, schedule, and work the meal needs to support.

PAGE 06

CALORIES ARE A BUDGET.

Treat the day like a spending account, with each dollar standing for one calorie. Every meal, drink, sauce, snack, and taste comes from the same allowance.

PAGE 08

USE RANGES. EARN PRECISION.

A useful target is specific enough to guide choices and flexible enough to survive normal life.

PAGE 10

BUILD SATIETY INTO THE PLAN.

Calories and macros create the frame. Food quality, fiber, fluids, variety, and intentional portions make the frame easier to live inside.

PAGE 12

ONE DAY IS NOISE. THE PATTERN IS DATA.

Daily weight reflects water, stored carbohydrate, sodium, digestion, inflammation, and measurement conditions. Long-term direction requires repeated observations.

THE OUTCOME

Read the numbers, build a balanced meal, track the portion consistently, and adjust intake using results rather than guesswork.

KNOW THE INPUTS. MAKE THE DECISION. REVIEW THE RESULT.



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CUT. MAINTAIN. BUILD.

Choose the job before you choose the numbers. The same foods can serve all three goals; portions, frequency, and the surrounding choices change.

01

CUT

Average intake sits below current energy needs. Look for a downward trend without sacrificing training, recovery, or sanity.

02

MAINTAIN

Average intake stays near current needs. Bodyweight is broadly stable while health, skill, and performance improve.

03

BUILD

Average intake sits above current needs. Bodyweight and performance rise without treating unlimited gain as progress.

DEFINE SUCCESS BEFORE THE MENU

- ☐ Choose one primary direction for the next several weeks.
- ☐ Track two or three useful signals: weight trend, waist, performance, hunger, sleep, or adherence.
- ☐ Respect the real constraints: budget, schedule, cooking access, preferences, allergies, and medical needs.

COMMON SENSE CHECK

If the plan only works during a perfect week, it is not ready. Work, family, travel, training, and restaurant meals are part of the system.

CALORIES ARE A BUDGET.

Treat the day like a spending account, with each dollar standing for one calorie. Every meal, drink, sauce, snack, and taste comes from the same allowance.

THE \$2,600 DAILY ALLOWANCE

MONEY LEFT	TIME	CHOICE	DEDUCTION
\$2,600	START OF DAY	FULL ALLOWANCE	—
\$1,800	BREAKFAST	COFFEE + MUFFIN	– \$800
\$1,500	MIDMORNING	SWEETENED COFFEE	– \$300
\$200	LUNCH	BACON CHEESEBURGER + FRIES	– \$1,300
–\$250	AFTERNOON	RED BULL + POTATO CHIPS	– \$450
OVER			
–\$1,250	DINNER	BURRITO	– \$1,000
OVER			

ILLUSTRATION ONLY — RECIPES, PORTIONS, AND PREPARATION CHANGE THE COST.

THE LINE TO REMEMBER

Calories tell you how much you spent. Macros and food quality tell you what you bought.

WHAT THE RED MEANS

The allowance was nearly gone at lunch. The afternoon snack crossed the line, and dinner finished the day 1,250 calories over target. One day is not automatic fat gain. Repeating a true calorie surplus over time is what drives the weight-gain trend.



KNOW WHAT EACH GRAM COSTS.

The calorie-per-gram values below are fixed conventions. Food labels and daily totals can vary slightly because of rounding and mixed ingredients.

PROTEIN

4

CAL / GRAM

Muscle support, repair, meal structure, and fullness.

CARBOHYDRATE

4

CAL / GRAM

Flexible fuel for training, recovery, and daily activity.

FAT

9

CAL / GRAM

Essential fatty acids, absorption, signaling, flavor, and satisfaction.

ALCOHOL

7

CAL / GRAM

Energy that counts toward intake but is not a required nutrient.

A COHERENT STARTING ORDER

- 1 Set a calorie target that matches the direction.
- 2 Set a realistic protein range.
- 3 Set a practical fat range.
- 4 Use remaining calories for carbohydrate.
- 5 Translate totals into repeatable meals and usable ranges.

Chef X's Deep Dive

At 2,400 calories: 180 g protein = 720 calories; 70 g fat = 630; 1,050 calories remain. Divide by 4 for 262.5 g carbohydrate — round to a usable 263 g.

USE RANGES. EARN PRECISION.

A useful target is specific enough to guide choices and flexible enough to survive normal life. The trend decides whether the start was correct.

01

ESTIMATE CALORIES

Choose a reasonable TDEE estimate, then place intake below, near, or above it according to the current goal.

02

PRIORITIZE PROTEIN

For many healthy exercising adults, roughly 1.4–2.0 g/kg/day is a defensible working range. Individual needs and medical conditions vary.

03

SET FAT + CARBOHYDRATE

Use enough fat for food quality and preference. Put remaining calories into carbohydrate, then adjust for training demand, appetite, and adherence.

THE TARGET IS A HYPOTHESIS

Do not confuse a calculated number with a biological fact. Your actual intake, bodyweight trend, training, recovery, and consistency determine whether the number fits.

DO NOT OVERTHINK THIS

One gram over or under a macro is not failure. Build useful ranges, hit the major priorities, and judge the pattern.

COACH NOTE

Kidney disease, pregnancy, eating-disorder history, diabetes, medication interactions, and other clinical concerns require appropriately qualified care.



THE LABEL IS ONLY USEFUL IF THE SERVING MATCHES.

Start with the amount you will actually eat. Then read the calories and nutrients that apply to that amount.

01

SERVING SIZE

What amount does one listed serving represent?

02

SERVINGS PER CONTAINER

How many of those servings are in the package?

03

YOUR ACTUAL PORTION

Did you eat one serving, half, two, or the entire package?

04

CALORIES + PRIORITIES

Multiply first; then review protein, fiber, fat, sodium, or other nutrients relevant to the goal.

THE WHOLE-BAG CHECK

150

CAL / SERVING

 $\times 4$ $= 600$

CALORIES IN THE BAG

RAW VS. COOKED

Choose one measurement state and stay consistent. Water loss changes food weight; it does not create or destroy the batch calories.



BUILD SATIETY INTO THE PLAN.

Calories and macros create the frame. Food quality, fiber, fluids, variety, and intentional portions make the frame easier to live inside.

PROTEIN ANCHOR

A dependable portion of chicken, lean beef, eggs, yogurt, tofu, legumes, fish, or another useful source.

PRODUCE + FIBER

Fruits, vegetables, beans, and whole grains add volume, variety, and fiber. A general reference is 14 g per 1,000 calories; increase gradually.

FLUIDS

Drink across the day. Adjust for climate, sweat, body size, work, and training instead of forcing a universal gallon rule.

INTENTIONAL EXTRAS

Oil, cheese, dressing, nuts, butter, sauces, and drinks can fit. They are concentrated, so count the amount you actually use.

WHEN THE PLAN FEELS HARD, TEST THE FIRST LEVER

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| NOT FULL | Add protein, produce, fiber, or food volume before adding random snacks. |
| NIGHT EATING | Move a meaningful meal or snack earlier instead of saving nearly everything for night. |
| CRAVING | Plan a satisfying portion or use a swap that preserves the experience you actually want. |

COMMON SENSE CHECK

A craving does not always need a protein version. Sometimes the useful choice is a normal portion of the actual food, eaten deliberately, followed by moving on.



GIVE EVERY PLATE A JOB.

Choose the structure first, then scale the portions to the goal, appetite, schedule, and work the meal needs to support.

1 PROTEIN

What anchors the meal?

2 CARBOHYDRATE

What supports the next several hours?

3 PRODUCE

What adds volume, fiber, and variety?

4 FAT + FLAVOR

Which concentrated extras are intentional?

5 FRICTION

Can you buy, store, carry, and reheat it?

ONE STRUCTURE. THREE DIRECTIONS.

CUT Reduce the least useful added fat, starch, or liquid calories.

MAINTAIN Hold the dependable meal and watch the trend.

BUILD Add a measured carbohydrate, protein, or fat lever.

REAL WORLD TRANSLATION

Chicken, rice, and broccoli is one version — not the definition. A turkey wrap with fruit and yogurt, eggs with potatoes and vegetables, or a burrito bowl can do the same jobs.

ONE DAY IS NOISE. THE PATTERN IS DATA.

Daily weight reflects water, stored carbohydrate, sodium, digestion, inflammation, and measurement conditions. Long-term direction requires repeated observations.



01

TREND ON TARGET

Hold the plan. Check recovery, hunger, performance, and adherence.

02

NO CHANGE

Audit weekends, portions, restaurant estimates, steps, and consistency before making one modest change.

03

LOSS TOO FAST

Increase intake or reduce training stress when performance and recovery fall.

04

GAIN TOO FAST

Remove the least useful calories: drinks, excess fats, or unplanned meals.

THE STANDARD

Do not change calories, macros, cardio, steps, and training together. Change one meaningful lever so the result can teach you something.



REAL FOOD. REAL FLAVOR. REAL RESULTS.

YOUR NEXT 14 DAYS

You have the framework. Now prove that it works in your real schedule before you chase more complexity.

- ☐ Choose Cut, Maintain, or Build—and write down why.
 - ☐ Set one calorie and macro range. Do not rebuild it after one difficult meal.
 - ☐ Choose two breakfasts, two lunches, two dinners, and two backup snacks.
 - ☐ Track portions using the same food state and the serving you actually ate.
 - ☐ Review weight trend, waist, training, hunger, recovery, and adherence.
- After 14 days: hold, simplify, or change one meaningful lever.

THE FIELD CHECK

PLAN	What did you intend to eat?
REALITY	What did you actually eat?
EVIDENCE	What does the 14-day pattern show?
NEXT MOVE	What single adjustment is justified?

COACH QUESTION

What did the plan predict, what happened in practice, and what evidence supports the next adjustment?