

# 40 Ways To Boost Your WEIGHT LOSS EFFORTS

## *Body And Mind*



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# 40 Ways To Boost Your Weight Loss Efforts

Everyone knows packing on the pounds is significantly easier than trying to shed them later, but there are weight loss stories all over the internet, so why couldn't the next big success be your own? Although the weight loss journey can be long and tedious, there are a number of easy ways to boost both your body and mind as you go.

## 1. Set Goals

First and foremost, as you begin your weight loss journey, set achievable and detailed goals. This way, you will know exactly what direction you are headed, as well as how far you have come. And it's not enough just to think of these goals in your mind, instead, take a moment to jot them down as studies have shown those who write down their goals are 60% more likely to achieve them.

## 2. Don't Skip Meals

It's a common thought process that skipping meals, and missing the calories entirely, will help you lose weight faster.

But this isn't true at all. In fact, skipping meals is often counterproductive, as it makes you so hungry you are more willing to reach for non-healthy snacks and meals.

Regularly skipping meals has also actually been found to slow down your metabolism overall, so that your body processes less calories at your next meal. Which means it's fine to eat as many meals as you need in a day, but keep them small, and make sure they are balanced.



### **3. Watch The Amount Of Sugar You Eat**

There are thousands of studies out there which have found added sugar to be one of the main culprits when it comes to weight gain, and the subsequent inability to lose weight. So next time you find yourself craving something sweet, try to reach for something that naturally sweet like a piece of fruit rather than a piece of candy. One nutritionist suggests freezing a handful of grapes and grabbing those whenever your sweet tooth makes a ruckus.

### **4. Eat More Fiber**

Fiber has long been known as the magic ingredient which helps to keep you feeling full for longer. Start incorporating more fiber in your diet, but stick to the fiber that comes from fruit, vegetables, and whole grains whenever possible, such as the fiber found in pears, avocados, broccoli, and bananas.

### **5. Learn To Read Nutrition Labels**

Many people pick up a box to look at the nutrition label, but the truth is, they have no idea what exactly they are actually looking at. Instead of just glancing at the calories and serving size, start learning to read the ingredients. Then google anything which is especially unfamiliar in name and learn what is in that chemical or additive. You might begin to re-think some of the foods you currently perceive as “healthy.”

### **6. Eat More Nuts**

People tend to shy away from nuts because of the large amounts of allergies as well as their high number of calories. But nuts, especially those like Almonds, have actually been shown in studies to help reduce body fat. So, skip the protein bar and eat a handful of almonds before your next meal.

## **7. Know Which Fats Are Good Fats**

In recent years, fat has often been thought of as the reason people gain weight. But this isn't always the case, rather it depends on what fats you eat. Do your research, find out which fats are good or bad, and cut the bad ones from your diet. Some examples of good fats are avocados, eggs, nuts, and fish.

## **8. Drink More Water**

This one is obvious, but if you want the weight to go, it's time to cut the soda and other sugary drinks you may indulge in. Start drinking water as your main drink. Besides just helping you slim down; water also helps keep all your internal organs running smoothly. Mayo Clinic recommends that adult men get at least 15 cups a day of water, while adult women need at least 11 cups to keep their systems running smoothly.

## **9. Eat Healthy Snacks**

It is often during snack time that people tend to break their diets and reach for processed foods like cookies, candy, or chips. Lower your temptation by no longer purchasing these products, as well as prepping your snacks in advance. Stock up on nuts, fruits, or healthy bars which are nut and/or fruit based and keep them within reach for when your next urge to snack hits.

## **10. Invest In Smaller Plates**

Often times when we eat, we like to see a full plate, and plate sizes have done nothing but grow over the past decade. Consider shopping for smaller dishes which will allow you to fill

them up while still remaining within your calorie limit. Even though you'll be eating less, you won't have to face the mental anguish of seeing a half empty plate set in front of you.

### 11. Keep A Food Journal

As you change your eating habits, write down what you are eating, how much you are eating, your energy level after you ate that food, and any other changes you may notice about your body. This will allow you to learn what foods work best with your body and exercise level. You will also discover which times of day keeping your diet is the most difficult for you, as well as which meal times work best for your body. You can even use this journal to write down any new recipes you may find that you want to reference later.



### 12. Check In With Yourself

This goes right along with the food journal, but make sure you are checking in which both your mental and physical well-being as you change your habits.

If you find yourself not feeling well in either of these areas, it might be time to make further changes, or slow down the pace of your changes. If you still struggle after an extended period of time, seek professional help as you may have a nutritional deficiency.

### **13. Sleep More**

In a study carried out by Wake Forest researchers, those who didn't get enough sleep every night (five hours or less) tended to put on more belly fat than those who slept an average of six or seven hours each night. The researchers also found that having a regular bedtime and regular wake up time was extremely beneficial for dieters as it helped them lose more belly fat.

Take the time to create a sleep schedule for yourself, which should include the plan to get seven hours of sleep per night. You may be surprised by the improvements you see just from getting sufficient sleep!

### **14. Cardio**

Whether you love it or hate it, it's time to set aside some time for cardio. No matter what your age, cardio is a crucial part of weight loss, so find an exercise which works for you. Running, jogging, or biking are best, but swimming laps and fast paced walks can also be great forms of cardio for those who are more advanced in age. Whatever you decide to do, do it at least five days a week for thirty minutes each time.

### **15. Be Active In General**

Besides just engaging in cardio five days a week, it's time to work on making your life more active in general. If you work sitting at a desk all day, inquire about the possibility of getting a standing desk, or make sure you take frequent breaks to get up and walk around.

If you spend your weekends sitting on the couch, make plans that involve activity instead. You'll be surprised at how many steps you can add just by adjusting your daily routine to include less down time.



## **16. Look At The Menu Before Going Out**

One of the hardest things about dieting, is sticking to your healthy food choices when you go out to eat. If your friends or business associates agree, see if they will let you pick the restaurant and suggest somewhere where you know there are meals within your diet. Even if they don't let you pick, scope the menu before you show up, and do your research on a meal that works for you.

Most restaurants post calorie counts in the online versions of their menu. Jot down any questions you may have for the waiter, so you know what to ask when you show up. That way you won't feel as if you are slowing everyone down when it comes time to order at the restaurant, and you won't stress about what you can and can't eat.

## **17. Order First When Going Out**

So, you've planned your meal order before you've arrived for lunch at the restaurant. But did you know that in a study carried out by Dan Ariely, that by not ordering your food first, you are more likely to be influenced by your friends and change your order?

You can prevent this by ordering first (but don't be rude about it), or if that's not a possibility, consider writing down your exact order and reading it exactly as you wrote it, no matter what your friends or coworkers may order.

## **18. Monitor Your Stress Levels**

Being overly stressed can lead to weight gain, as well as cause difficulties as you try to lose weight. Take steps to ensure your level of stress is in your control. If you find yourself struggling with this, try engaging in an activity like yoga, deep breathing, or meditation. You may even find that taking a weekend away from work does wonders. If you still find yourself

stressed, step back and take a look at what is causing you stress, then take steps to remove it from your life.

### **19. Spend Time Outdoors**

Now that you no longer binge watch TV, you're probably looking for new ways to pass the time. Numerous studies have shown that people who spend more time outdoors tend to have a lower BMI. So even if it's winter where you live, try to make it an effort to spend some time outdoors each day, even if it's just a brisk walk around the block.

On weekends, try to plan events with friends that are centered around the outdoors, such as a group hike, or a soccer game in the park. And if you have a furry friend, this is a great excuse to get them outside more as well!

### **20. Evaluate What You Wear**

Surprisingly, the American Business Council found in a study, that those who dressed in more business casual type clothing on a daily basis tended to remain more active than those who dressed more formally. If your job is one where what you wear is flexible, try switching from a suit, to jeans and a polo. In the study, on the days the test subjects wore jeans, the participants took 491 more steps than on the days they wore suit pants.

### **21. Encourage Yourself**

You've likely seen at least one movie where the character leaves, or writes, inspiring notes to themselves and puts them in places to find later. This isn't without reason. A study in The Journal of Marketing Research found that people were more likely to remain on their diets, eat healthier, and make overall smarter choices when they left inspiring notes for themselves. So, pick up a pad of sticky notes and don't be afraid to tell yourself how great you are doing.

## 22. Set Down Your Fork

One really easy way to boost your weight loss, is by setting your fork down between every bite as you eat a meal. This is because your stomach experiences a delay in telling the brain that it's full. By pausing between bites, you are less likely to overeat and more likely to stop eating sooner after you become full because you are giving your brain and stomach the proper amount of time to communicate with one another.

## 23. Don't Eat Fast Food

Almost everyone knows that fast food like a burger and fries are loaded with unhealthy amounts of sugars, salts, and fats. But what may really surprise you, is the fact that even the healthy options, like the salads, are often loaded with these too!



It's best practice for your weight loss goals to simply avoid fast food as a whole. Pre-make some meals such as salads and healthy soups for yourself and keep them in the fridge for the days when you are hard pressed for time.

## 24. Park Further Away

When you go to the grocery store, or out shopping, don't waste your time driving around looking for a spot at the front. Rather, pull in to one of those commonly empty spots near the back. This will add more steps to your day doing something you already planned to do, while also saving you from aimlessly driving around waiting for someone to leave near the front. You could also skip the driving as a whole and walk or bike to the store instead!

## **25. Say No To Family Style**

When people have a family style meal, large portions are often brought to the table for everyone to share. Although this can often times be more cost effective (and delicious) this also often results in people indulging in more calories than they need. As you embark on your weight loss journey, just say no to family style meals. Or, if your family insists on eating that way, make your one plate in the kitchen and measure how much of each food you put on it. Then, as tempting as it is, resist the urge to reach for seconds.

## **26. Drink More Green Tea**

Although drinking water is more important, you may consider adding some green tea into your diet, as it has been found by researchers to help boost metabolism and increase weight loss. Just make sure you are drinking it as is, or with a squeeze of lemon. Don't add any sugar otherwise it will defeat the purpose of drinking the green tea in the first place.

## **27. Don't Drink Your Calories**

Americans generally have a tendency to drink their calories, whether that is in juice, soda, or a frilly coffee drink. What you may not know, is that the calories of these beverages can often exceed five hundred calories, which is almost as many calories as you should be eating in a meal. Not only that, but liquid meals don't keep you full for very long so you will tend to eat a full meal shortly afterwards. Avoid this by committing to stop drinking your calories, and just stick to water or green tea.

## **28. Say No To Artificial Sweeteners**

When you're on a diet, it can be tempting to switch over to drinking some sort of diet cola. These diet sodas (or other diet products) are often packed with artificial sweeteners which

actually lead to gaining belly weight, and habitual over eating. It's time to ditch anything with the word 'diet,' and keep all of these products out of your diet for good.

### **29. Try To Switch To Organic**

Most people know that organic food is better for them, but complain about the price, and instead choose the cheaper, non-organic option. Although organic products may be expensive, they are free from a number of toxins and pesticides which could be causing inflammation in your body without you even knowing it.

Some of these pesticides can even lead to hormone deficiencies (or overloads!) which could be a part of why you can't lose weight! So even though it's more expensive, try to eat organic foods whenever possible, your health is worth the investment.

### **30. Record Your Progress**

Besides just keeping your food journal, also keep a visual record of your progress. This doesn't have to be numbers on a scale, but it could be inches around your waist via tape measure, or progress pictures taken at the beginning of each week. The method you choose doesn't necessarily matter, but make sure it's something you can keep up with that works for you. You'll find yourself more encouraged as you see your goal slowly becoming a reality!

### **31. Drink Coffee (Black Only!)**

Coffee, on its own, is actually a fairly diet friendly drink. Without sugar or milk, it is low in calories and can give your metabolism a boost to get going in the morning. So, don't be afraid to occasionally (or even daily) indulge in your coffee habit, just make sure it's limited to one cup, and that you drink it black, with no sugar, or artificial sweeteners.

### **32. Take Screen Breaks**

Even if you can't fully get rid of the screen technology in your life, try to schedule your day to include frequent breaks away from the screen. If you can exercise during these breaks, that's even better! The Clinical Journal of the American Society of Nephrology recommends trying to fit in one two-minute break after every hour of screen time. If your job doesn't leave you many excuses to walk around, even just standing up and doing two minutes of yoga stretches can help in getting your blood moving.

### **33. Consider Intermittent Fasting**

In recent year, intermittent fasting has risen to prominence as an extremely viable weight loss tool. It isn't for everyone though. Before you dive in, look into the details of intermittent fasting, and some of the different types which may work for you.

If you do decide to try it out, make sure you are in tune with your body as you go along. Experts recommend either fasting for two full days a week (which can be quite challenging) or only eating for eight hours a day while fasting for the other sixteen hours each day.

### **34. Watch Alcohol Intake**

Not only is alcohol bad for your liver, but it can also be full of calories and sugars which can further inhibit your weight loss journey. If you must drink, stick to one glass of wine a day, and make sure it is only five ounces. But of course, the best practice recommended by nutritionists is not to drink at all!

### 35. Stretch Daily

As you get older, you become more prone to exercise, and daily activity, -based injuries. Stop these from occurring by preparing your body in advance, by engaging in activities like yoga. Yoga has a wide range of benefits, beyond just keeping you limber, it can also increase core strength, reduce stress, and improve circulation.

And get this, if you struggle with sleeping, yoga has been known to help with that too! Grab a mat, and join a local class, or even spend time just following yoga videos on YouTube, you may just be surprised at how much better you feel!

### 36. Check Your Thermostat

You may be stunned to find out that you can increase your daily fat burning just by turning down your thermostat! A new study published in Diabetes, actually found that

living in a house slightly cooler than what is comfortable, causes the generation of more of the healthy fat (brown fat) which is found in humans. These benefits are further enhanced when you sleep, so save a little money, and turn the heat down a few degrees in those chilly winter months.



### 37. Eat Your Vegetables First

In France, for school lunches, the vegetables are always served first. This is because you tend to eat more of a food, more quickly, when you are hungry. Vegetables are naturally low in calories and high in fiber, so eating them first will help you feel fuller without filling you out! And you'll likely be able to pass on the less healthy foods served later!

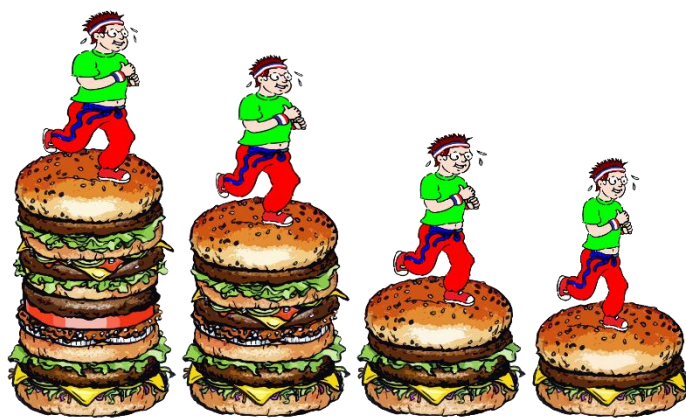
### 38. Don't Forget Strength Training

Even though cardio and yoga are important, it's still critical that you engage in some form of strength training. This will help protect your muscles and joints from exercise injuries, and other damage as you age.

Make sure the strength training you engage in is proper for your age and level of physicality, and never try to lift something that may be too heavy for you—as this can cause more damage to your body than benefits.

### 39. Be Consistent With Yourself

Lots of people who diet have these things called “cheat days” but part of being successful with a diet, is being able to maintain it consistently. In the case of “cheat days”



even if you only have one, once a week, it could still set you back an entire week in calories, and it could make it harder to get back on your diet the next day. Instead of planning cheat days, or cheat meals, design a diet plan which works for you that you can be consistent with. This way you won't have to plan days to break your diet.

### 40. Spend Some Time Each Day Visualizing

Visualizing yourself achieving your dreams has actually been shown to help people actually achieve their dreams better than those who don't spend time visualizing. Make time every day to meditate, picturing how you want to look, how much weight you want to lose, and more importantly, how you will get there.

Besides just helping you achieve goals; meditation has also shown to help with stress management. Even if meditating is not quite your thing, consider creating a vision board and



spending some time each day referencing it, as this will help keep you on path and focused on your ultimate goal.

## **Final Thoughts**

Overall, losing weight is extremely difficult, if it weren't everyone would simply already be at their goal weight. No matter what your goal weight may be, set a goal, and stick to it, don't let foods, or people, lead you astray.

And if you find yourself struggling with weight loss, reference back to this list and consider implicating some of these easy boosts into your journey. If you find a way to apply them all to your life, well, you'll probably find yourself at your goal weight in no time at all.