

DINING OUT

When a weight loss journey going out for meal sometimes gives you an excuse to go mad? However, Try following some of our tips below that will help you enjoy yourself without effecting your weight loss journey to much.

Read the menu online: If you know which restaurant you're going to, look up their menu online to work out the lower-calorie options and figure out your expected calorie intake. Planning ahead like this will help you make better choices and avoid temptation.

Don't skip a meal: Don't skip breakfast or lunch to build calorie credits for your evening out. Stick to your daily meal routine to keep your appetite under control throughout the day. If you go over your calories simply reduce the calories the following days or do a bit more exercise.

Stick to one course: It's perfectly acceptable to have just a main course. Don't feel the need to finish the plate. Try to stop eating before you feel overly full. If you can't resist having a dessert, find someone to share it with.

Avoid deep-fried: Avoid food that is deep or shallow fried, battered, panfried, marked as 'crispy' or with pastry. These are high in fat. Instead, look out for grilled, roasted, poached, steamed or baked dishes.

You say tomato: Avoid cheese, cream or butter-based sauces, which are high in fat and pack a calorie punch. Instead, go for tomato or other vegetable-based sauces.

Beware of high calorie salad: Watch out for high calorie toppings such as croutons, cheese, bacon and nuts. Ask for salad dressing on the side and add only as much as you need.

Downsize Your Portions: To avoid eating too much, order a starter dish as your main course instead of one of the larger mains on the menu

Healthier side dishes

Fill up on veggie sides. If cooked, go for steamed or boiled. A portion is 80g for your 5 A Day.

- Broccoli
- Mixed Leaf salad
- Carrots
- Beans
- Mushrooms
- Kale
- Spinach
- Cabbage



Did you know the average Parmo contains **2600 calories & 150g of fat!!**

Restaurant Tips

- Banish the buffet: it's hard to control your portion size at an all-you-can-eat buffet. It's a real test of willpower and the food tends to be less healthy. The solution? Try to avoid completely.
- Order less: there's no need to cry off takeaways when trying to lose weight, but portion control is key. Try ordering less than you need.
- Plain and simple: steer clear of creamy sauces and meals with lots of cheese.

Takeaways and takeaway food apps

The use of food delivery apps has increased exponentially and is set to continue; the number of users is estimated to reach 55 million by 2027.

This could have a serious impact on obesity rates in the UK, as 'out of home' meals have approximately 21% more calories than meals cooked at home. So, if we're using them more instead of home-cooked meals, we're probably eating more calories overall.

Did you know?

- Food on delivery apps tends to be more energy dense and less nutritious. The average content of meals is between 1125-1820 kcal per meal. To compare, national guidance for adults recommends around 600kcal each for lunch and dinner, so that's 2-3x higher!
- Eating takeaway food and using food delivery apps are associated with overweight and obesity. Evidence from the US over a 15-year period suggested that people who use delivery apps frequently are more likely to have a poorer diet overall and a higher Body Mass Index (BMI).^{iv} Similarly, research using the UK Biobank data showed that people who reported having more takeaways or delivery meals were more likely to have a higher BMI.

Who's using them most?

- The use of food delivery apps is more common among those who are on lower and middle-incomes and young adults between 25-34 years old.
- People are also more likely to use food delivery apps when they can order at work and pay through expenses.
- The number of food outlets people can order from on online food delivery platforms was 50% greater in the most deprived postcode districts in England, compared to the least deprived. This reflects the fact that unhealthy food is more easily available in more deprived areas, and healthier food can be harder to access.
- We're not sure yet whether the differences in use by age group are due to specific age differences, or generational differences. For example, will the 25–34-year-old group always be the age group that uses them most, or will people in this age group continue to use them as they get older, with younger age groups using them a lot too?

Tips When Using Food Delivery Apps

So, what can you do? If you're using an app to order food, keep the following tips in mind to try to shift towards a healthier order (and likely spend less money!)

1. Turn off notifications/ unsubscribe from their emails and texts to avoid temptation of offers when you weren't planning on ordering.
2. Try not to order when you're already hungry!
3. Consider if saving on delivery is worth the extra money to make it up to the minimum amount. Alternatively, you can add a side or starter, but choose something that will be a good snack or lunch the next day (and make sure you put it aside when the delivery comes!)
4. Look into the nutrition details – you may need to add some calorie totals together for different parts of a meal (like sides and sauces) to get the real amount for the whole meal.
5. Know you're being encouraged to buy as much as possible! Having this awareness can help question whether you go for deals because they're what you want, or because the deals make it seem like a good idea. Remember, they usually mean you end up spending more money overall.

How to eat in without Overindulging?

You know what it's like. You've had an exhausting day at the office. You're starving but the idea of cooking a meal is too much to bear. It's time to reach for a take-away menu. But what if you're trying to watch your calorie intake? Is all that take-away food pumped full of fat, sugars and other dieting no-no's? Not necessarily. Some take-away meals are better than others and a few dishes are positively saintly. Want to know more? Here's your at-a-glance guide to eating in without overindulging.

Chinese

Chinese is the most popular take-away in the UK and with a little know-how you can find healthy, low fat options on the menu.



Good

- Boiled or steamed rice rather than egg fried rice, which is higher in fat.
- Steamed vegetables and fish are a good choice as are stir-fries, which only use a little bit of oil.
- Dishes that have a high proportion of vegetables, such as Beef with broccoli

Bad

- Deep fried dishes, such as Crispy Duck, Kung Pao Chicken and Mu Shu Pork. A portion of crispy duck, for instance, has around 31g of fat.
- Deep fried starters such as dim sum, prawn crackers, spring rolls, prawn sesame toast.
- Anything cooked in batter, such as sweet and sour pork (a portion of battered sweet and sour with egg fried rice contains a heart stopping 60g of fat and 44g of sugar)

Indian

Authentic Indian cooking is quite low in fat but western influences have created more dishes that include high calorie creams and oils, including the nations favourite curry, chicken tikka masala.

Good

Tomato based curries

- Chicken and prawn dishes tend to be less fatty than other meals
- Vegetable dishes
- Chapati (150 calories and 1g of fat)
- Drier dishes such as tikka and tandoori (Tandoori chicken has around 350 calories and 15g of fat per portion)
- Madras, Dupiaza, Balti and Jalfrezi are also reasonably low in fat.
- Plain boiled rice
- Raita (cucumber, onion and yoghurt dip that can also be used as a low calorie sauce)



Bad

- Creamy curries such as korma and masala (chicken Tikka Masala, for example, has 700 calories and 30g of fat per portion)
- Deep fried extras like bhajis and samosas
- Nann (300 calories and 16g of fat per bread)
- Pilau rice

American

Burger bars are especially popular with kids and it can be difficult to find anything healthy on a fast food menu. However, some burger chains are beginning to sell lower fat options

Good

- Reduced calorie Mayo
- Side salads (no dressing)
- Grilled burger
- Grilled chicken breast
- Water, Skimmed milk
- Mustard or ketchup (In moderation)
- Any low-fat burger option

Bad

- Going large or supersize
- Bacon or cheese
- Milk shakes (a burger king whopper, French fries and a chocolate shake contains 149g fat or 1360 calories!)
- Fries
- Mayo and Caesar salad dressings
- Fish burgers and chicken burgers as they're often deep fried



Italian

Italian food is very healthy on the whole, but you need to keep an eye out for pasta dishes with rich creamy sauces and food cooked with large amounts of cheese.

Good

- Pasta with tomato sauce (pasta with arrabiata sauce has only 12g of fat and 6g of sugar for example)
- Vegetable based sauces, cooked in olive oil rather than butter
- Minestrone/bean soup
- Salads with a low calorie dressing such as balsamic vinegar
- Grilled vegetables
- Traditional pizza with low fat topping such as seafood or extra vegetables



Bad

- Garlic bread
- Meat feast pizzas or extra cheese
- Lasagne contains around 45g of fat

Thai

Traditionally thought of as the dietaries favourite take-away, Thai food is usually very healthy as most dishes are based around steamed rice and vegetables. Just watch out for dishes containing high-fat coconut milk.

Good

- Stir fried dishes (stir fired chicken with plain steamed rice Phad Khing Hai has only 13g of fat)
- Steamed jasmine rice
- Vegetables
- Thai salads
- Pad Thai made without the egg



Bad

- Thai green curry (contains 29g of fat mostly due to the coconut cream)
- Fried Rice
- Peanut sauces and dressings