



# 25 LAZY WAYS TO LOSE WEIGHT

Drop pounds without trying thanks to little diet tweaks.

BY HOLLY PEVZNER

**You? You are *not* lazy. Your mind and body are in perpetual motion, working tirelessly, planning dinners, volunteering, chauffeuring kids and, generally, getting the job done. That doesn't leave much time to focus on complicated diets. Luckily our experts came up with these zero-effort, incredibly easy weight-loss tips just for you.**

**1 GET TO KNOW UMAMI.** Sweet, sour, salty and bitter have nothing on this savory flavor—found in foods like green peas, dried shiitake mushrooms, salmon and miso—known for making losing weight easier. “Research shows umami has the power to trigger early satiety and leave you feeling fuller for longer,” explains

Sharon Moalem, MD, PhD, author of the forthcoming *The DNA Restart: Unlock Your Personal Genetic Code to Eat for Your Genes, Lose Weight, and Reverse Aging*. “An umami-rich breakfast, like an omelet with Parmesan cheese or sun-dried tomatoes, can reduce hunger and keep you from overeating throughout the day.” Learn more about where to find this flavor at [familycircle.com/umami](http://familycircle.com/umami).

**2 GO TO SLEEP.** Every action (missing zzz's) has an equal and opposite reaction (gaining pounds). Sleep loss may pump up a chemical in our blood that enhances the joy of eating, particularly sweet and salty treats, says a small new study. So when you don't get enough rest, you're likely to dig into the candy

bowl at work or grab a few of the kids' cookies from the pantry the next day. Hit the sack on time and save calories.

**3 POP A PROBIOTIC.** “Gut bacteria can have a profound effect on weight and metabolism,” notes Mark Hyman, MD, director of the Cleveland Clinic's Center for Functional Medicine and author of *Eat Fat, Get Thin*. In one study, women who took probiotics for 12 weeks lost 51% more weight than their supplement-skipping counterparts—and continued to drop pounds even after the study ended. “Look for a supplement with at least 25 billion live CFUs from diversified strains of *Lactobacillus*, *Bifidobacterium* and *Saccharomyces boulardii*.

Take it twice a day for about two months,” says Hyman.

**4 AT-HOME TAKE OUT.** There are going to be days when everyone's hungry, you're not remotely interested in cooking and two four-letter words come to mind: fast food. When you do indulge, make sure you get it to go. The harsh lights and loud sounds of fast food restaurants may cause increased calorie consumption—about 175 more.

**5 EAT IN THIS ORDER.** “Always fill up on veggies and protein first,” says Chelsea Fuchs, RD, a registered dietitian in New York City. “That way, you start to feel full before moving on to the richer, higher-calorie foods, like mashed potatoes, and are less inclined to overeat.”

**6 KEEP FRUIT ON THE TABLE.** *If it's out of sight (in the fridge), it's out of mind. "But having fruit visible and within reach makes you more apt to eat it," notes Amy Gorin, CDN, a registered dietitian nutritionist in Jersey City. "Apples and pears in particular are high in fiber and low on the glycemic index, meaning they keep you full longer and cause a smaller spike in blood sugar, leading to less post-snack hunger." Berries also rank high on the weight-loss scale but shouldn't be left out. Put them someplace prominent so they're the first thing you see when opening the fridge.*



**7 CHEW GUM.** Next time you're trying to resist a second helping, pop a piece of sugarless gum. "When you chew, you stimulate the nerves and muscles in your jaw," says Victoria Shanta Retelny, RDN, author of *Total Body Diet for Dummies*. "They send a signal to the part of your brain that's linked to satiety, which may result in less hunger."



**8 FREEZE SWEETS.** What financial experts used to recommend for credit cards is now what health experts recommend for candy bars. But the reasoning is different: "Frozen chocolate takes longer to consume so you're more likely to be satisfied with a small amount," says Fuchs. Indulge in dark chocolate with at least 70% cacao—it has fewer calories and less sugar.

**9 CHOOSE SKINNY BREAD.** Use smaller whole wheat (emphasis on whole) pita or thins for sandwiches. "Two thin slices

can save you about 100 calories a sandwich," says Bruce Y. Lee, MD, director of the Global Obesity Prevention Center at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

**10 TRY THIS PORTION TRICK.** Check serving sizes and use a measuring spoon or demarcations on the package to measure out mayo and butter, says Shannon Szeles, RD, a registered dietitian for Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak, MI. We're not accusing you of over-spreading, but if you are, this is a big calorie-saving move.

**11 FORGET (IM)PULSE CONTROL.** Pulses are the edible, dried seeds of plants in the legume family—like chickpeas, lentils, dry peas and beans—and a nutritional buzzword you'll soon be hearing a lot. Dishing 130 grams (about ½ cup) of pulses onto your plate daily can help you shed a half pound in six weeks, according to recent research. "Pulses are high in fiber and protein," explains Russell de Souza, RD, ScD, a study co-author and researcher with the Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute of St. Michael's Hospital in Ontario. "Plus they release hormones from your gut that tell your brain you should stop eating."



**12 EAT LIKE CLOCKWORK.** “If you don’t eat every three to four hours, your blood glucose decreases and your metabolism slows down,” says Ellen Albertson, PhD, RD, co-author of *The Diabetic and the Dietitian: How to Help Your Husband Defeat Diabetes...Without Losing Your Mind or Marriage!* Set the timer on your cell phone to remind yourself to have a healthy bite, preferably one that contains a combo of protein and complex carbs, like hummus and veggies. “Well-planned snacks also prevent vending machine runs,” says Albertson.

**13 STEP AWAY FROM THE MESS.** If your kitchen is cluttered and chaotic, it may be triggering you to eat more. In one study, women ate twice as many cookies in a messy kitchen than did women in a peaceful, organized one. Don’t worry: We’re not going to hound you about cleaning your kitchen. Instead, stick to a serving size by enjoying your snack in a more serene spot.

**14 SCOOP A DIFFERENT DESSERT.** “The serving size on an average carton of vanilla ice cream is about ½ cup, but we often don’t realize the exact amount that we serve ourselves,” says Szeles, who estimates that most people double that. (Let’s not talk about how much they dish out at your favorite ice cream parlor.) Instead of denying yourself, eat frozen yogurt. “You’ll save as much as 300 calories for a 1-cup portion,” says Szeles. Just make sure there’s no more than 3 grams of fat in every 100-calorie serving and aim for close to 10 grams of protein.

**15 SPRAY ON YOUR OIL.** When you’re greasing your sauté pan, don’t pour—spray. “One teaspoon of olive oil, for example, has 40 calories and people often use at least twice that much when cooking,” says Lee. A two-second spritz of cooking spray, however, has a mere 12 calories.



**16 GET SPICY.** Just half a teaspoon of cayenne pepper sauce or flakes could increase your metabolism and cut an average of 60 calories from your next meal. The catch? “Our response to spicy food and its ability to suppress our appetite comes down to how familiar we are to the sensation of heat,” notes Niket Sonpal, MD, assistant professor at Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine in New York City. “If you can handle a little heat, add a bit more each day for a cumulative weight-loss effect.”

**17 PICK THE RIGHT PLATE.** When your dinner is brightly hued (think red sauce or pesto), put out white plates. People who use a dish that’s the same color as their food eat 30% more, according to research. To eat less, contrast. And always opt for dessert or salad plates

instead of the dinner-size version. “Smaller plates make us think the serving size is larger, which in turn makes us want to eat less,” notes Albertson.

**18 DRINK OOLONG TEA.** Hot or iced, oolong tea helps whittle your middle. “It not only boosts your

metabolism but research suggests it also specifically targets belly fat,” explains Moalem, who suggests drinking several cups of the calorie-free, antioxidant-rich tea daily.

**19 TAKE YOUR TIME.** “If you finish eating in less than half an hour, you’re not allowing yourself to register satiety, which leads to over-consumption,” says Alissa Rumsey, RD, a spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. To stretch out your meal, create a 20- or 30-minute playlist, filled with mellow, slow-beat music. Once you get accustomed to it, you won’t even need the soundtrack.





**20 GO NUTS.**  
*"Grab a handful of pistachios, for example, to get the protein and fiber you need to stay full until your next meal," says Patricia Bannan, RD, author of Eating Right When Time Is Tight. Stick to portion sizes (an ounce or a handful per day) and opt for in-shell nuts. "We tend to eat less when we have to exert the effort to get the nuts out," she says.*

**21 USE YOUR NOSE.** Yet more proof that smell is connected to taste: The fresh scent of a pear may make you significantly more likely to select fruit for dessert—even when brownies are up for grabs, according to a study in the journal *Appetite*. Just 15 minutes of inhaling the aroma could do the trick, so light a fruity candle before dinner.

**22 SERVE FROM THE STOVE.** Avoid overeating by filling your plate in the kitchen but eating at the dining table. "It takes more effort to get up again for a

second helping," explains Jennifer A. Gardner, MD, founder of Healthy Kids Company, an online weight management program.

**23 WATCH THE SALT.** While it doesn't have any calories, salt can still sabotage weight-loss goals. "When we eat salty foods, it overrides the 'I'm full' signal to the brain, causing us to keep eating," explains Russell Keast, PhD, a co-author of the study and professor and head of the Centre for Advanced Sensory Science at Deakin University in Melbourne, Australia. Other spices, however, may punch up flavor but not how much you consume. Try these alternatives from Rebecca Lewis, a registered dietitian for HelloFresh, a meal kit delivery service: Combine two parts granulated garlic, one part cumin and one part chili powder for a Southwest blend. Or for an Italian kick, mix equal parts granulated garlic, oregano, basil, black pepper and parsley flakes.

**24 HOLD THE BEEF (AND LAMB AND...)** Swap out one red-meat meal a week for a bean-based one and you'll save upwards of 200 calories, resulting in approximately a 3- to 6-pound weight loss in one year, notes Kristen Smith, RD, founder of an online nutrition counseling service called 360FamilyNutrition. The best part? You'll save calories and cash.

**25 GET IN MINT CONDITION.** A recent study showed that the smell of peppermint helps curb hunger and possibly prevent cravings. "Have a cup of peppermint tea after you eat," suggests Lara Felton, RD, head of the dietary team at ShopWell, a nutrition app. It's calorie-free and may even satisfy your desire for dessert.