

Note: Anyone can lose weight by eating “healthy” and doing some physical activity. However, extreme approaches for extended periods of time can lead to metabolic damage and muscle loss. This is why it is very important that you take a slow and calculated approach to your fat loss.

What are macronutrients: *Nutrients that the body uses in relatively large amounts - proteins, carbohydrates, and fats. This is as opposed to micronutrients, which the body requires in smaller amounts, such as vitamins and minerals. Macronutrients provide calories to the body as well as performing other functions.*

As I mentioned in the article “How to Calculate Macros for Lean Bulking”, In order to calculate your EXACT maintenance level and establish a “perfect” macronutrient split for yourself can be time consuming, expensive, and simply not worth the efforts. This is why I have chosen to give you a simple and very basic starting point that will do the trick.

Calculating your maintenance level

For healthy males who exercise regularly, the number 16 is a safe place to start.

Simple multiply your bodyweight (x) 16.

180 lbs x 16 = 2,880 ←Calorie Maintenance

Where did I get the number 16?

Resting Metabolic Rate: Your resting metabolic rate is approximately 10-11 calories per pound of bodyweight.

Thermic Affect of Activity: This is roughly 10-20% for someone who lifts weights regularly.

Thermic Affect of Food: Food has to be digested thus requires calories to do so. This is approximately another 10%.

Creating a slight caloric deficit

The greater the caloric deficit, the more weight you will typically lose. However, the goal here is not to lose all your hard earned muscle and strength just to cut some inches off the waist. With that being said, a 100-250 calorie deficit daily should be more than enough to get you on your way to ripped abs without sacrificing your muscle and your sanity.

For your first calorie cut, I recommend starting at a 250 calorie deficit and then 100-150 each time you cut calories after.

Example:

2,880 – 250 = 2,630 ← Daily Caloric Intake

Calculating Protein Intake

The rule of thumb for adequate daily protein intake is 1 gram per pound of bodyweight. Some may require a little less, some could benefit from a little more. Anything from 0.8-1.5 grams per pound of bodyweight is typical.

To be safe, I recommend being right in the middle.

Note: Protein intake will remain the same for the entire duration of your cut.

Example: (We are using someone who weighs 180 lbs as an example)

$$180 \text{ lbs} \times 1.2 = 216 \text{ grams of protein per day}$$

Calculating Fat Intake

The formula for fat consumption is (like the one for protein) very basic. The rule of thumb for fats is 0.25-0.5 grams per pound of bodyweight.

Remember, fats will be cut slowly as you get further into your fat loss phase. This is why I recommend starting at the higher end of the spectrum (0.5) so that we can maintain a healthy fat intake throughout the cut.

Example:

$$180 \text{ lbs} \times 0.5 = 90 \text{ grams of fat per day}$$

Calculating Carbohydrate Intake

The calories that are left over will make up your carbohydrate intake.

Step #1: Convert your daily protein into calories. There are 4 calories per gram of protein.

$$216 \times 4 = 864 \text{ calories from protein}$$

Step #2: Convert your daily fats into calories. There are 9 calories per gram of fat.

$$90 \times 9 = 810 \text{ calories from fats}$$

Step #3: Calculate left over calories

$$2,880 - 864 - 810 = 1,206 \text{ Calories left over}$$

Step #4: Convert left over calories into grams of carbohydrates. There are 4 calories in each gram of carbohydrates.

$$1,206 / 4 = 301.5 \text{ grams of carbohydrates.}$$

Macro Nutrient Split Example

Carbs – 301 grams per day

Fats – 90 grams per day

Protein – 216 grams per day

Cutting your calories

Weight yourself weekly to ensure that you are continuing to lose fat. When you reach a point that you are maintaining the weight, decrease your daily calories by 100 and continue.

If you don't want to live in the gym or give up all of the foods that you love, then I recommend increasing your caloric deficit, slowly, using calories and physical activity.

For example:

Weight loss plateau 1: Decrease calories by 100

Weight loss plateau 2: Add one day of interval training

Weight loss plateau 3: Decrease calories by 100

Weight loss plateau 4: Add an additional day of cardio

And so on and so forth...