

Starting Your Weight Loss Journey

Starting a weight loss journey can feel overwhelming, but breaking it into manageable steps and building sustainable habits makes it achievable. The aim is building habits that will help you maintain a healthy weight, not quick fixes.

Lifestyle Factors

At the start of your weight loss journey, it helps to identify what may have contributed to weight gain. Looking at your current habits can reveal simple changes to help you begin well.

For example, common causes of weight gain include:

- Eating more calories than you need (e.g., large portions, frequent snacking, sugary drinks)
- Physical inactivity (e.g., sedentary lifestyle, little structured exercise, driving/lifts instead of walking/stairs)
- Emotional eating (e.g., eating for comfort or boredom; choosing high-sugar or high-fat foods for a dopamine hit)
- Processed foods (e.g., added sugar, refined carbs, high fat, low fibre) are less filling and make overeating easier
- Alcohol consumption: alcohol is high in calories, so regular drinking can significantly increase intake and reduce self-control around food

Focus Areas

Weight loss requires change. Small, positive lifestyle shifts can improve weight management and energy levels. Try adding these tips to your daily and weekly goals:



Regular cardiovascular exercise: walking, cycling, swimming and running increase energy use and burn calories. Over time, this builds metabolic efficiency, helping your body burn fat and calories more effectively



Regular resistance exercise: building muscle boosts metabolism, increasing calorie burn during and after exercise



Hydration: drink plenty of fluids to support metabolism and curb appetite. If you're reaching for biscuits/crisps/chocolate, you may be thirsty rather than hungry



Regular sleep pattern: a consistent sleep routine helps regulate hormones linked to hunger and fat storage



Manage stress: stress can trigger comfort eating. Identify what's causing stress and address it to reduce food noise and improve eating/drinking habits



Avoid restrictive diets and skipping meals: rapid weight loss is rarely sustainable and often leads to regain when you eat "normally" again. It can also cause nutrient deficiencies



Track progress: avoid weighing yourself daily. If you weigh, use the same day each week. You can also take body measurements—if weight loss plateaus, changes in inches can keep you motivated



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Summary

A successful weight loss journey starts with realistic goals, better eating habits, more physical activity, and consistent, sustainable lifestyle changes.

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- [Better Health - NHS](#)
- [Weight loss | NHS inform](#)
- [70 healthy recipes for weight loss | Good Food](#)
- [Calorie Tracker & BMR Calculator to Reach Your Goals | MyFitnessPal](#)
- [12 Best Weight Loss Workouts for Beginners: Burn Fat & Get Fit](#)
- Contact your GP, a dietitian, your employer, a personal trainer or a local weight-management support group

