



Fill 'Er Up! (on Fewer Calories)

When you learn how to fill your plate with the right foods, you'll be surprised that you can eat more while actually filling up on fewer calories.

More Food, Fewer Calories

Understanding Calorie Density

From the moment you first set eyes on a plate of food, you kind of know how satisfying the meal is going to be. A plate brimming with food will take longer to eat, giving you more time to feel satisfied. A big meal also fills your stomach with a lot of food, causing it to stretch and send “I’m full” messages to your brain and keep you satisfied longer.

Experience has taught us that more food equals more satisfaction. But what if you’re trying to lose weight—how can you feel that same satisfaction with fewer calories? Good news: If you fill your plate with the right foods, you can automatically stay within your calorie zone while eating more than ever. Yes, you heard that right! You get to eat more food—and still lose weight!

Packing your plate with foods that are filling and delicious, yet moderate in calories, is a proven weight-loss technique. And the good news is, if you’ve been following the Real Appeal meal plans and nutrition principles, you’re already eating this way! In this session, we’ll reveal how this nifty trick works so you can master the “fill ‘er up on fewer” magic for yourself.



Pop quiz: What has more calories?

8-ounce mug of hearty vegetable soup



1-inch cube of cheese



-OR-

Gotcha! They’re both 70 calories.

Now, can you guess which one will fill you more, and for longer?

If you guessed the soup, you’re right! That’s because each of these two foods has a very different “calorie density” (aka “energy density”), the amount of calories in a given weight of a food. With low calorie-density foods, you get a lot more belly-filling bang for your calorie buck. The greater proportion of your diet that’s made up of these foods, the better your chances of losing weight.

Just look at how much food you get for 50 calories of low, medium, and high calorie density foods!

Low calorie density: 1 cup of raw carrot sticks, 114 grams (4 ounces)

Medium calorie density: ¼ cup French fries, 15 g (½ ounce)

High calorie density: 1/32 cup (1 ½ teaspoons) butter, 7 g (¼ ounce)

Amazing, right? You could munch on a cup of carrots for 10 minutes or you can lick 1 ½ teaspoons of butter off of your finger in 1 second, for the exact same number of calories.

A few key factors determine if a food is low calorie density:

More water. Most fruits and vegetables are 85 to 95 percent water. With all that water, there’s not room for many calories! That’s also why you can eat far more whole fruit than dried fruit. Sixty calories gets you 1 cup of grapes or only 2 tablespoons of raisins (grapes with the water removed!).

More air. Air is what makes a cup of popcorn 30 calories and a cup of corn tortilla chips 130 calories. The air popped into the corn gives it a larger volume, which means a longer munching time for fewer calories.

More fiber. Fiber is a no-calorie carb—our bodies can’t absorb it. High fiber foods like fruits, veggies, simply-cooked whole grains (plain brown rice, quinoa, oatmeal), and beans all have low calorie density. While you get a small quantity of calories from the starch and sugar in vegetables (and a moderate amount of calories from plain grains), you’re also swallowing a lot of bulk that will go right through you.

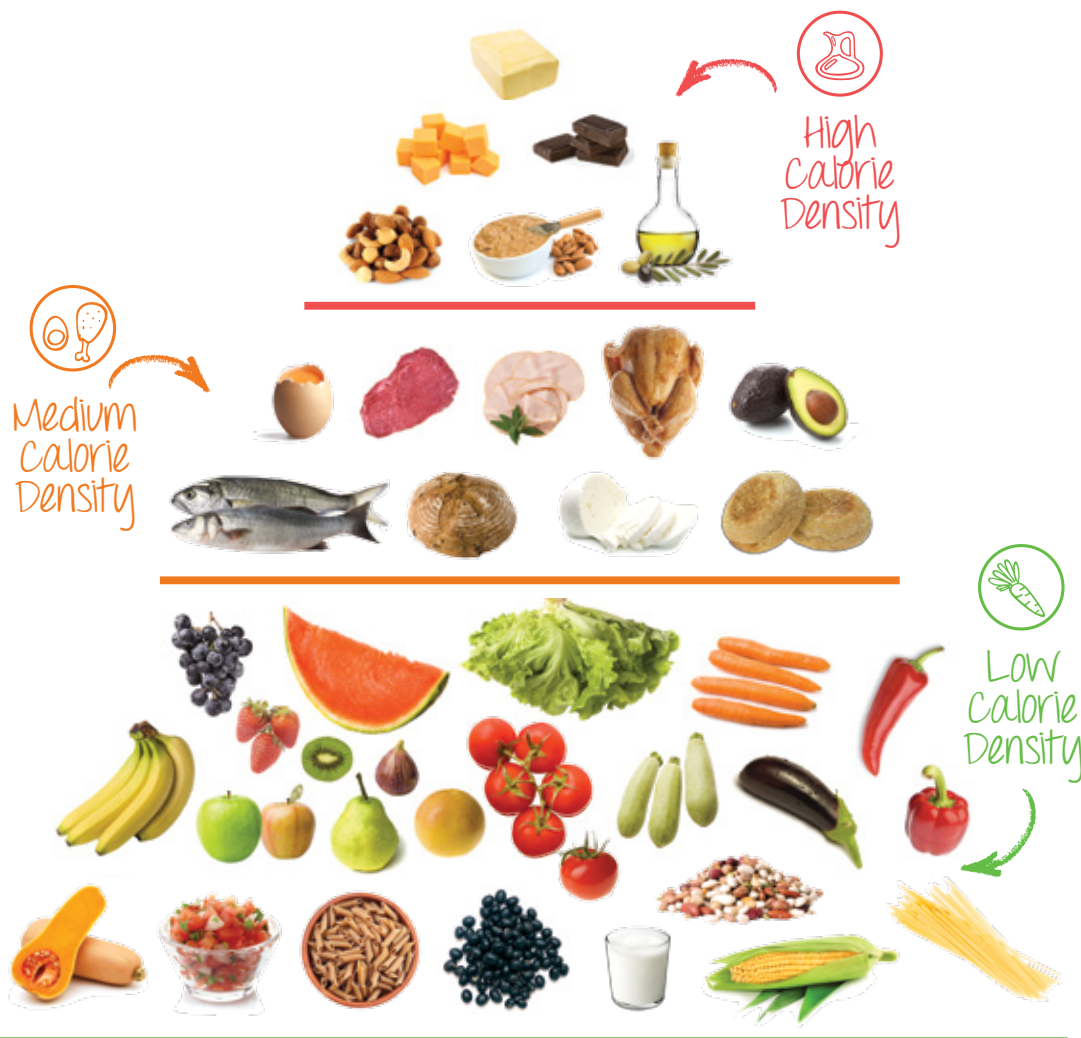
Less fat. Fat has the highest calorie density of the three main nutrients—9 calories per gram vs. 4 calories per gram for protein and carbs. If a food is high in fat, you can be almost certain it has a higher calorie density.

It's All About Balance

Using the Real Appeal Food Calorie Density Chart

The idea isn't to eat *only* low calorie density foods, but a nice balance of mostly low calorie density foods, moderate portions of medium calorie density foods, and small portions of high calorie density

foods (mainly healthy fats). This balance helps you feel full and stay satisfied on fewer calories. Check out how Real Appeal-recommended foods fit into the categories of low, medium, and high calorie density.



High Calorie Density (4.1 calories per gram or more)

Include these foods in small portions

Cheddar and gournay (soft cheese with garlic and herbs)		Olive Oil and other vegetable oils	
Nuts, nut butters, and seeds		Dark Chocolate	

Medium Calorie Density (1.6 to 4 calories per gram)

Include these foods in moderate portions

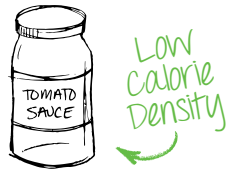
High protein foods: eggs, chicken, fish, pork, turkey, lean beef		Part-skim mozzarella cheese, reduced fat cheese, cottage cheese	
Whole wheat bread, whole wheat pita, whole wheat English muffin, whole wheat tortilla		All-purpose flour, whole wheat flour	
Avocado and guacamole		Light mayonnaise	

Low Calorie Density (0 to 1.5 calories per gram)

These foods should constitute the bulk of your meal

Salad greens, like arugula, romaine, spinach and others		Salsa	
Vegetables that are not starchy (such as broccoli, asparagus, mushrooms, carrots, cucumbers, tomatoes, zucchini)		Milk (fat-free, 1%), soy milk, plain yogurt (fat-free, low-fat)	
Fresh fruit (apples, berries, cantaloupe, mangoes, peaches and all others)		Whole grains (cooked) and starchy vegetables: quinoa, brown rice, whole wheat pasta, butternut squash, corn, peas	
Beans and legumes (cooked) such as white, kidney and black beans; lentils			

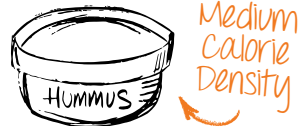
Doing the Math on Calorie Density



Pasta Red Sauce

Nutrition Facts	
Serving size ½ cup (125g) Servings Per Container 5	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 80	

$$\left(\frac{80 \text{ calories}}{125 \text{ grams}}\right) = 0.64 \text{ calories per gram}$$



Hummus

Nutrition Facts	
Serving size 2 tablespoons (28g) Servings Per Container 10	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 70	

$$\left(\frac{70 \text{ calories}}{28 \text{ grams}}\right) = 2.5 \text{ calories per gram}$$



Caesar Salad Dressing

Nutrition Facts	
Serving size 2 tablespoons (29g) Servings Per Container 16	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 160	

$$\left(\frac{160 \text{ calories}}{29 \text{ grams}}\right) = 5.5 \text{ calories per gram}$$

Creating a Low Calorie Density Meal (Anytime, Anyplace)

These easy tricks lower the calorie density of any meal whether you're eating in or out.

Start with soup. Foods with high water content, like soup, fill you up. Always choose broth-, water-, or tomato-based soups over cream based.

Fill half your plate with vegetables. Bring on the salad, cooked veggies, or both! Lots of bulk for fewer calories.

Go for lean proteins. Choose seafood, skinless chicken and turkey, and leaner cuts of beef and pork. Look for "loin" cuts.

Use fats as accents. Add small portions of healthy fats to your meals, such as sprinkling 1–2 tablespoons of chopped nuts over oatmeal, rather than snacking on handfuls of nuts. Or, lightly spray veggies with olive oil and lemon juice after steaming them, instead of cooking in oil.

Cook with broth. Use broth to help sauté veggies, in place of some or all of the oil. Use broth as a base for sauces, instead of cream or butter.

Add stealth veggies. Pile plenty of vegetables, such as shredded carrots, chopped mushrooms, chopped spinach, and onions, into sauces or casseroles. You can enjoy more volume and flavor for fewer calories.

Curious how "calorie density" is computed?

The calculation is actually very simple. Just divide the number of calories per serving by the weight (in grams) per serving.

$$\text{calorie density} = \left(\frac{\text{calories in a serving of food}}{\text{grams in a serving of food}}\right)$$



If calories/grams =	It's a:	Quick way to "eyeball" it:
0 – 1.5	Low calorie density food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If calories are less than grams (g): Energy density is less than 1 (For example: 100 calories, 120 g) If calories and grams are about the same: Energy density is around 1 (For example, 100 calories, 100 g) If calories are 1 ½ times the grams: Energy density is 1.5 (For example, 150 calories, 100 g)
1.6 – 4	Medium calorie density food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If calories are two to four times the grams: Energy density is 2 to 4. (For example, 200, 300 or 400 calories, 100 g)
Above 4	High calorie density food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If calories are more than four times the grams: Energy density is greater than 4 (For example, 450 calories and 100g)



Low Calorie Density Real Appeal Meals

While all Real Appeal Meals are relatively low in calorie density, here are some of the lowest (and tastiest!) from the Real Foods Nutrition Guide.

Breakfasts	Calorie Density
Crustless Spinach Quiche with Crackers, Fruit and Milk (pg 24)	0.80
Eggs, Black Beans, and Salsa with a Latte (pg 26)	0.80
Yogurt, Oats, and Raspberries (pg 27)	0.95
Pear with Peanut Butter and Cafe au Lait (pg 29)	0.70
Pepper and Egg White Sandwich with a Latte (pg 34)	0.70
Lunches	Calorie Density
White Bean and Spinach Soup with Cheese and Crackers (pg 25)	0.50
Minestrone with Salad, Cheese and Crackers (pg 26)	0.60
Salmon and Cucumber Salad with Crackers and Carrots (pg 35)	0.90
Apple and Cinnamon Shake with Walnuts (pg 29)	0.90
Shrimp Salad with Red Cabbage, Avocado, and Sesame Seeds with Pita (pg 27)	1.20
Dinners	Calorie Density
Vegetarian Chili with Avocado (pg 25)	0.50
Broiled Shrimp with Lemon, Garlic, and Spinach over Pasta (pg 25)	0.80
Rotisserie Chicken with Soup and Crackers (pg 36)	0.70
Tilapia Fajita with Corn (pg 35)	1.00
Turkey Lasagna with Salad (pg 36)	1.00
Snacks	Calorie Density
Strawberry Milk (pg 121)	0.40
Spinach Dip (pg 126)	0.40
Creamy Ricotta Dip with Celery (pg 128)	0.50
Red Pepper with Herb Greek Yogurt Dip (pg 127)	0.60
Yogurt with Banana and Honey (pg 31)	0.70
Treats	Calorie Density
Light Ice Cream or Sorbet, ½ cup (pg 32)	0.90
Baked Pear with Chocolate (pg 141)	1.0
Baked Apple with Walnut and Maple (pg 149)	1.15
Strawberry with Peanut and Chocolate (pg 145)	1.20
Fruit Crisp (pg 140)	1.20



Tilapia Fajita



Salmon and Cucumber salad



White Bean and Spinach soup



Creamy Ricotta Dip with Celery



Turkey Lasagna



Rotisserie Chicken



Baked Apple with walnut



Strawberry Milk



Commitment Contract

I will fill my plate with mostly low calorie density foods. These foods will help me stay satisfied while still losing weight. To make sure my meals are lower calorie density I will:

- Aim to **follow the Real Appeal meal plans** and nutrition principles as often as possible.
- Fill at least half my plate with veggies** at lunch and dinner (and fruit at breakfast).
- Use high calorie density foods**, like oil and nuts, sparingly, to enhance the flavor of the lower calorie density foods on my plate.
- Use the “Creating a Low Calorie Density Meal”** suggestions when dining in or out. (For example, start with a broth-based soup or small salad, and choose lean protein for a main course.)
- Meanwhile, I’ll **continue my other healthy habits** to the best of my ability.

My signature: _____

*I will make sure
my meals are lower
in calorie density* 