



Step 05 Be mindful when you eat and plan ahead

Eating fast, on the run, and while distracted by other activities like television, can lead to you eating more food that you realise or need. Becoming more mindful when you eat can help you stay satisfied with less food.

Eat slowly, use all your senses and get satisfied on less

- ✓ Sit down to eat
- ✓ Always put food on a plate
- ✓ Minimise distractions. Turn off the TV and concentrate on the process of eating
- ✓ Tune in to your senses. Enjoy the sight, smell and taste of the food
- ✓ Be the last person to start eating and try to be the last person to finish
- ✓ Eat slowly until just full but not overfull
- ✓ Chew each mouthful well and put cutlery down between mouthfuls
Think of the taste and texture of everything you eat
- ✓ If you feel like second helpings, wait 10-20 minutes and you may not feel like it
- ✓ If you are still hungry, eat extra vegetables or salad
- ✓ Use a teaspoon for cakes or desserts and take tiny mouthfuls
- ✓ Use chopsticks with Asian dishes. If you are not an expert this will definitely slow you down

Practice all of the above

The more you do it the easier it becomes. Involve your household and make it fun!





Plan ahead

Eating well does not happen without planning and organisation. Being prepared will help you achieve and maintain a healthy weight.

Practice the following

- ✓ **Plan healthy meals for the week ahead and make a shopping list based on ingredients you need**
- ✓ **Keep a list of quick and easy meals and their ingredients on hand**
This way you will be less tempted by the thought of takeaways. A can of chilli beans on top of a microwaved potato is a good example. It is quicker and far more nutritious than fish and chips!
- ✓ **Make healthy environments at home or at work**
 - Stock cupboards with healthy food you enjoy
 - Avoid buying foods you know you can't resist
 - Replace biscuit or lolly jars with fruit bowls
- ✓ **Trade-off**
If you eat or drink extra, "trade off" with extra activity or less food later in the day.
For example "I will eat less at lunchtime if I have morning tea" or "I will go for a longer walk if I have dessert"
- ✓ **Set yourself ground rules**
For example, I will always have a piece of fruit with lunch
- ✓ **Plan ahead when eating out**
Choose venues with healthy choices. Avoid "all-you-can-eat" venues
- ✓ **Have a light snack before attending functions**
This is a useful strategy if you worry you will eat too much when you go out
If you arrive ravenously hungry you are more likely to overeat

Tip: Practise the following ways to say no when pressured with food

"No thanks, I've just eaten"

"It looks delicious but I'm not hungry"

"Can I take it home for later – that way I will appreciate it more"

My goals for eating mindfully