



**BONUS
RECIPE
BUNDLE
INSIDE!**

YOUR COMPLETE GUIDE TO **TRACKING MACROS**

Kellie Largay | Nutrition Coach | ACE Nutrition



I'M KELLIE.

I'm a Precision Nutrition L1 & L2 Certified Nutrition Coach, as well as an NCI Certified Hormone and Mindset Specialist. My specialty is in weight loss, body recomposition, and sports performance. I've worked with many athletes in their quest for fat loss, strength gains, and overall general health.

**LET'S
CONNECT**



<https://acebarbell.com/nutrition-coaching/>



<https://www.instagram.com/kellielargay/>



<https://www.facebook.com/kellie.largay>



MACRO TRACKING TOOL BOX



Here is what you need!



Online Tracking App



Food Scale



**Education
(Keep Reading!)**

This guide will provide you with the basics on learning how to begin tracking macros. You're going to see by the end why it's so important to have a coach walk you through this step-by-step to ensure you're making the best progress possible!

It's no secret that tracking macronutrients is a very effective way to reach your physique goals.

But.....where do you start?

In this guide, I'm going to break it down for you!

MACRONUTRIENTS

Knowing The Basics

01

First of all, what are macronutrients?

Macronutrients are: Carbs, Fat, and Protein. They make up our food, and your body needs them in large amounts in order to function properly.

Many eating plans focus on changing the amount of carbohydrate, fat & protein in your diet. And this is because manipulating how much of them you eat can have a big impact on your body composition.

No healthy eating plan should totally restrict any of the macronutrients, as your body needs them to perform certain functions.

02

What does “tracking macros” actually mean?

The term tracking macros means that you are logging your food in an app (such as My Fitness Pal). And rather than focusing on your overall calories, you are aiming to hit a particular number each day for Carbs, Fat, and Protein.

Tracking macros is not the same as counting calories. Counting calories alone won't tell you the balance of fat, carbohydrates and protein in the food that you eat, which is important!

03

Why should you track macros?

Learning how to track macros is one of the best and most effective ways of gaining control over your physique for life.

There is a learning curve to becoming consistent with tracking macros. It won't feel easy at first. But the more you practice and the more you plan ahead, the easier it becomes. And once you have mastered it, you'll have a clear understanding of how much food your body needs in order to thrive!

You'll find that, over time, there will be no more guessing how much food your body needs in order to grow lean tissue, or burn body fat, because you'll know exactly how much to eat for your goals.

And you don't have to track macros forever, but the reality of changing your physique is that you need to first bring awareness to your current habits, and then get specific in regards to what you need to change in order to move towards your goals.

Tracking macros is a great tool for this!

WHEN YOU SHOULD SERIOUSLY CONSIDER TRACKING MACROS



If you feel like you're doing everything right, but still not seeing results.

If you have specific fat loss or muscle gain goals.

If you are looking for a way of eating that does not eliminate foods or food groups.

If you want to gain awareness around what it takes to fuel your body.

If you enjoy structure and planning ahead.

TRACKING MACROS MAY NOT BE THE BEST OPTION FOR YOU IF:



You've tried it in the past and it has led to an unhealthy relationship with food.

You aren't looking to lose fat or gain muscle (looking to maintain your physique)

You **HATE** numbers.

Tracking your food leads to unhealthy binges or other disordered eating patterns.

NOW, LET'S GET A BREAK-DOWN OF EACH MACRONUTRIENT...



CARBOHYDRATES



The best sources of carbs are:

- Fruit
- Vegetables
- Quinoa
- Beans
- Whole grain bread
- Oatmeal
- Black or brown rice
- Buckwheat
- Sweet Potato

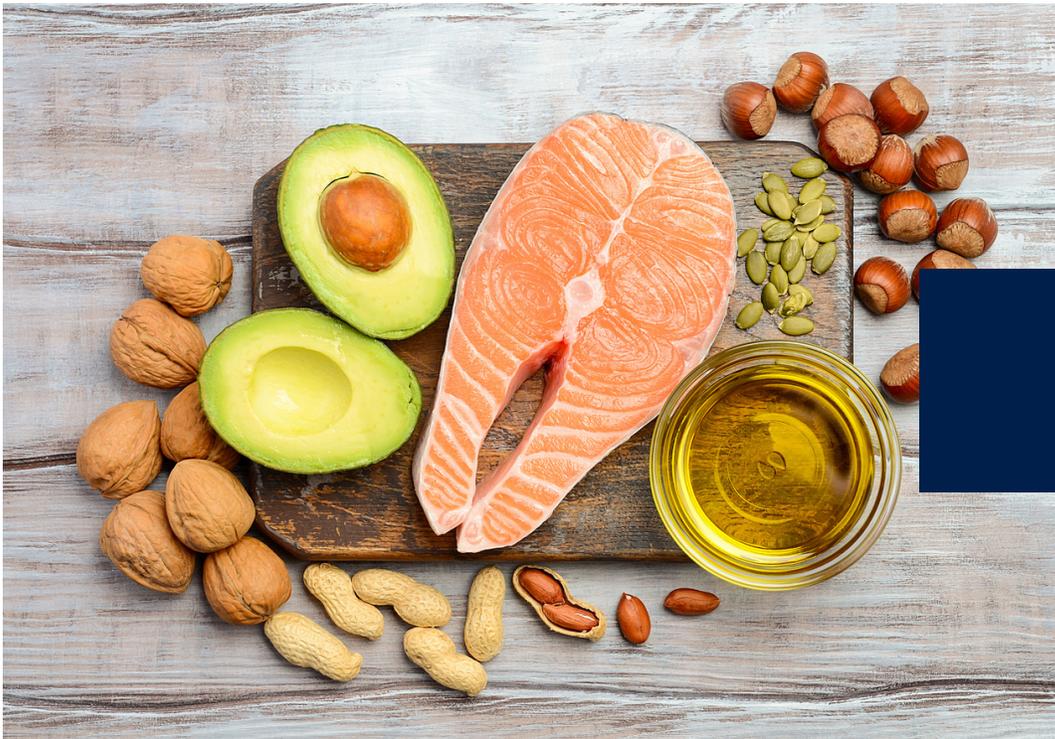
Carbohydrates, or carbs, are your body's primary source of fuel. They provide energy to your muscles during movement and exercise.

Not only do carbs fuel your muscles during activity, but they also fuel your brain, play an important role in digestive health, help to control cortisol levels, and can help regulate blood sugar.

1 gram of carbohydrates contains 4 calories.

My recommendation for carbs

Your carbohydrate intake can range anywhere from 35%-65% of your daily total calories. Individual needs vary depending on goals, gender, age, activity level, and medical conditions.



FAT

Fat is vital for your body as an energy reserve, for absorption & transport of fat-soluble vitamins, proper hormone function, and also for insulation & protection of your organs. 1 gram of fat contains 9 calories.

My recommendation for fat

About 20%-40% of your daily total calories should come from fat. Individual needs vary depending on goals, gender, age, activity level, and medical conditions.



The best sources of fat are:

Avocados
Whole eggs
Fatty fish
Olive oil
Coconut oil

Walnuts
Almonds
Chia seeds
Almond butter
Fish oil

PROTEIN

Protein provides structure to muscle, hair, nails, bones, ligaments, organs and blood plasma.

Proteins are also involved in metabolic, hormonal, and enzyme systems.

1 gram of protein contains 4 calories.

My recommendation for protein

A good starting place for protein is .7 - 1.2 grams per pound of body weight. Individual needs vary depending on level of leanness, goals & activity level.

The best sources of protein are:



- Chicken
- Lean steak
- 95/5 ground beef
- Tuna
- Salmon
- Turkey
- Egg whites
- Tofu
- Tempeh

Protein powder can be used as a supplement



COMMON FOODS AND THEIR APPROXIMATE MACRONUTRIENT COUNTS

PROTEIN

Skinless chicken breast (4oz)
23g of protein

Tuna (water packed - 5oz can)
28g of protein

Wild caught Salmon (4oz)
15g of protein

Extra lean ground beef (4oz)
24g of protein

Egg whites (3)
11g of protein

Sirloin Steak (4oz)
35g of protein

Shrimp (3oz)
18g of protein

Tofu (3oz firm)
14g of protein

Tempeh (3oz)
8g of protein

Ground turkey (4oz)
25g of protein

CARBS

Sweet potatoes (4oz, raw)
23g of carbs

Oats (1/2cup dry)
27g of carbs

Quinoa (1/4cup dry)
31g of carbs

White rice (1/4cup dry)
40g of carbs

White potatoes (4oz, raw)
20g of carbs

Black beans (4oz)
20g carbs

Chickpeas (4oz)
25g of carbs

Apple (4oz)
16g of carbs

Banana (4oz)
26g of carbs

Blueberries (4oz)
16g of carbs

Blackberries (4oz)
11g of carbs

Strawberries (4oz)
9g of carbs

Peach (4oz)
11g of carbs

Mango (4oz)
17g of carbs

FAT

Natural almond butter (2tbsp)
16g of fat

Natural peanut butter (2tbsp)
16g of fat

Olive oil (1tbsp)
14g of fat

Coconut oil (1tbsp)
14g of fat

Avocado (3oz)
13g of fat

Walnuts (1oz)
18g of fat

Almonds (1oz)
15g of fat

Whole egg
5g of fat

Dark Chocolate (1oz)
11g of fat

Chia Seeds (1oz)
9g of fat

SO, WHERE DO YOU START?

First, you need to find a food tracking app (I recommend MyFitnessPal)

When you sign up for a My Fitness Pal account, it will ask you some questions, such as your age, height, weight, and goals.

Then, it will set a calorie goal and macro targets for you!

Seem too good to be true?
That's because it is.

I never recommend letting a computer set your macros because, well, it doesn't know you. The MOST important factor in determining what macros are right for your particular body is.....

YOUR PAST DIETING HISTORY.

Have you been on a diet for the past 10 years?
Are you a chronic under-eater?

If so, the calorie deficit MFP sets for you may do more harm than good.
OR what it THINKS is a deficit for you may actually be a calorie surplus

On the flip side, if you've been overeating for many years, MFP may put you in a severe deficit, which will lead to loss of fat AND muscle (losing muscle mass is not a good thing)

It'll also leave you feeling unenergized, under-recovered, under-performing, and moody.

And here's the real kicker, MFP doesn't make adjustments for you. Your body is an adaptation machine, and even if you see amazing results on your first set of macros from MFP, your body will eventually adapt, and progress will stall.

You need to be making adjustments along the way in order to continue seeing results!

This is where having a coach is invaluable!

So if you shouldn't use the macros MFP sets for you, where should you start??

Your first step to tracking macros should always be:
Becoming aware of your current habits

Whenever I take a new client into my 1:1 program, I have them fill out a 4 page intake form (yes, I need this much info), and I also have them track 1-2 weeks of food so I can get a TRUE indication of current habits. From here, I am able to figure out their maintenance calories, take into account their goals, and get them set up with some starting macros.

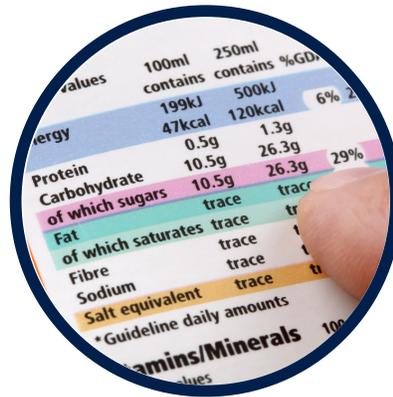
So before you put all of your faith into the macros MFP pulls out of thin air, track a couple of weeks worth of food and be sure to **eat as you normally would**. This way, you can find YOUR true maintenance calories.

Once you know the number of calories it takes to keep you weight stable, you can adjust from there!

Other basics of tracking macros:



Use a food scale



Have the ability to read nutrition labels



Take time to plan ahead in your food tracking app

These steps will help you better understand how many calories are in foods, create awareness around macronutrients, and track your intake as accurately as possible.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1/2 cup dry (40 g)
 Servings Per container: 13

Amount Per Serving

Calories 150 **Calories from Fat** 25

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 3 g	4%
Saturated Fat 0.5 g	2%
Trans Fat 0 g	0%
Cholesterol 0 mg	0%
Sodium 0 mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 27 g	9%
Dietary Fiber 4 g	15%
Sugars 1 g	
Protein 5 g	
Vitamin A	0%
Vitamin C	0%
Calcium	0%
Iron	10%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65 g	80 g
Sat Fat	Less than	20 g	25 g
Cholesterol	Less than	300 mg	300 mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400 mg	2,400 mg
Total Carbohydrate		300 g	375 g
Dietary Fiber		25 g	30 g

HOW TO READ A NUTRITION LABEL

Accuracy is important when you're tracking macros, so it's important that you understand how to read a nutrition facts label.

Always make sure you're paying attention to the serving size, and recording the correct # of servings that you consume into your food log. (I always recommend using a food scale rather than measuring cups)

For a quick run-down of how to read a label, click [here](#).

MY FITNESS PAL TRACKING TIPS

If you're brand new to My Fitness Pal, learning the app may feel overwhelming at first. But just like anything, you'll get better at it the more you use it! I suggest sitting down with the app and playing around with it to get to know the software. Practice searching for different foods and making sure you know how to change the serving sizes.

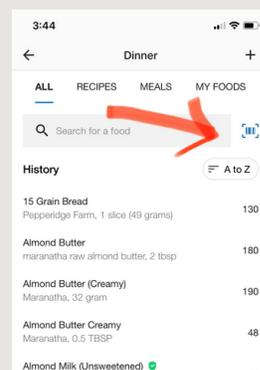
Here are some more tracking tips:

1

Track your food when you consume it, or better yet, track your food BEFORE you consume it. If you're waiting until the next day to track what you ate, you will never remember what and how much you ate.

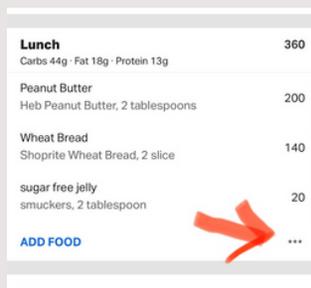
2

Scan ingredients from packages. Anytime you're eating something from a package, you can scan the barcode right into MFP via your phone camera and the nutritional value of that food will pop right into your food log. Just go to add a food, and click the scanner over to the right of the search box!



3

Copy meals. Do you repeat meals often? If so, you'll want to learn how to use this feature. For example, if you eat the same thing each day for lunch, input it into your food log once, and you can use the "copy" feature to copy that exact meal to another day. Just click the 3 dots to the right of your meal, and copy it over!



4

Be 100% honest. Track everything. It's easy to find yourself wanting to deny certain actions, but this is only impeding your results. Tracking everything will also make you much more aware of the BLT's (bites, licks and tastes) that you may be sneaking throughout the day. They add up!

5

Turn your phone to landscape mode (turn it the long way) to see nutritional facts. Although you can see an item's nutritional facts by clicking on it in your diary, you can also find this information by flipping your phone to landscape mode. Calories, carbs, fat, protein, sugar, and sodium will appear to the right of the food.

A screenshot of a food item's nutritional facts in landscape mode. The item is "Raw Cocoa Powder". The table shows the following values: 441 calories, 30g carbs, 13g fat, 30g protein, 418g sodium, and 11g fiber. Below the table are the names of other items: "Black coffee", "Almond Milk (Unsweetened)", "Columbian Yogurt Unsweetened", and "Nestle's Chocolate Protein Powder".

Breakfast	441	30	13	30	418	11
Raw Cocoa Powder	20	3	0	1	-	-
Black coffee	5	-	0	1	0	-
Almond Milk (Unsweetened)	8	0	1	0	40	-
Columbian Yogurt Unsweetened	61	6	4	-	20	-
Nestle's Chocolate Protein Powder	20	2	-	10	110	0

6

Save your favorite recipes. Love to create new and fun meals? Save them in MFP to ensure they are super easy to track! To do this, log every ingredient that goes into your recipe, then click the 3 dots underneath your meal and select "save as a meal". Give your meal a name, and save it. Next time you make it, search for this meal and you won't have to enter every single ingredient.

MACRO TRACKING FAQ'S

Do I really need a food scale?

Tracking food is not a perfect science, but it's important to be as accurate as possible, and using a food scale is the best way to do this. Even with measuring cups, it's easy to overestimate or under-estimate. Now, don't bring your food scale into a restaurant or to Thanksgiving dinner. But when you are preparing your meals and have control over the ingredients, it's best to be as accurate as possible!

Click [here](#) for a demonstration on the best way to use a food scale!

What about restaurants??

First, look to see if the restaurant you're going to shows nutritional info. More and more restaurants are doing this!

If it doesn't, don't sweat it. The more you weigh things and cook at home, the better you'll get at eye-balling things when you're out to eat. And always remember that it's what you do MOST of the time that counts. One meal is not going to ruin all of your progress.

How do I track recipes in MFP?

Just because you're tracking macros doesn't mean you should shy away from creating delicious meals! But it is important that you're tracking your meals as accurately as possible.

Click [here](#) to learn how!

Do I need to count calories?

If you have goals set for carbs, fat, and protein, there is no need to count calories.

Can I count calories instead of macros?

You can, but results will be better if you're paying close attention to the composition of your calories. Meaning that you're eating an appropriate macro-split.

Should I use an online calorie calculator to determine my calorie needs?

You can, but remember, online calorie calculators are just an estimation. They don't know YOU. They offer generalized recommendations.

[Here](#) is one that I sometimes use with new clients coming into my nutrition coaching program.

MACRO TRACKING FAQ'S

Do I need to hit my macros spot on?

You will drive yourself crazy if you try to hit your macros to the T. Aim to be within 10g of your carbohydrate and protein goal, and within 5g of your fat goal MOST of the time.

Perfection is not required, but if you want to get good results, consistency is.

What if I can't hit my protein goal?

One of the most common issues I see with clients coming into my nutrition coaching program is that they are undereating protein. And if you aren't getting enough protein, it's going to be nearly impossible to change your body composition. If you have a difficult time getting a minimum of .7g/lb of body weight in protein, refer to this for some tips on ways to increase your protein intake!

How do I track alcohol?

Cheers to that!

The cool thing about tracking macros is that you can make anything fit. Even a nice refreshing glass of wine! Alcohol is actually the 4th macronutrient, but you won't find it on a nutrition label. For example, White Claw is 100 calories but only shows 2g of carbs (because alcohol is not listed). Your body digests alcohol similar to the way it digests fat and carbohydrates. The most accurate way to track it is to create a manual entry, which I explain how to do here.

How often should I change my macro goals?

It depends! I know this isn't what you wanted to hear, but it really depends on your goals, how patient (or impatient) you are, and your biofeedback (energy levels, motivation, gym performance, sleep, hunger levels, etc)

However, it's important not to jump the gun.

Before you make any changes, ask yourself:

- have I been consistent in hitting my macros goals for at least 3-4 weeks in a row? Be honest with yourself here.
- have I been tracking accurately? Even including the BLT's? (bites, licks, and tastes)

If you can honestly answer both of these questions with a YES, it may be time to change things up. The changes that you would need to make go beyond the scope of this guide, as it depends on many different things!

Should I weigh meat cooked or raw?

Meat loses a lot of water and juices as we cook it, therefore will weigh less in its cooked form. There is a lot of debate on the topic of weighing your meat cooked vs raw, and the general consensus is that it should be weighed in its raw form. However, this isn't always possible. To keep it simple, search for exactly what you want to find in My Fitness Pal. Example: "raw chicken", or "cooked beef 85%", or "raw sockeye salmon" or if it's already cooked, search "cooked sockeye salmon". There are tons and tons of entries in MFP, so be as descriptive as possible, which will allow for the most consistency.



THE BOTTOM LINE

When first starting out, tracking macros can seem overwhelming. However, following the steps above can streamline the process for you.

The most important steps in counting macros are to determine your current habits, set a calorie goal for yourself, and then determine macronutrient needs.

Then, log your food intake and aim to be as consistent as possible, without stressing about perfection!

Plan ahead! I suggest planning your day in advance to ensure you are meeting your macronutrient goals.

Before you know it, tracking macros will feel natural!

If you're feeling overwhelmed, please reach out to me! You can also click [here](#) to inquire about coaching.



RECIPES

Click on the recipe title to view the ingredients and instructions.

Day 1

BREAKFAST

One-Pan Sweet Potato Hash

Courtesy of Carrots N' Cake

Yield: 4 servings
Prep Time: 5 min
Cooking Time: 10 min
Total Time: 15 min

Macros for 1 serving
Carbs: 36 g.
Protein: 8 g.
Fat: 27 g.

LUNCH

Lemony Chicken Soup

Courtesy of Lillie Eats and Tells

Yield: 10 servings
Prep Time: 20 min
Cooking Time: 10 min
Total Time: 30 min

Macros for 1 serving
Carbs: 10.8 g.
Protein: 32.5 g.
Fat: 3.4 g.

DINNER

Grilled Shrimp Tacos

Courtesy of Stay Fit Mom

Yield: 6 servings
Prep Time: 45 min
Cooking Time: 10 min
Total Time: 55 min

Macros for 1 serving
Carbs: 39.5 g.
Protein: 10 g.
Fat: 33.9 g.

RECIPES

Click on the recipe title to view the ingredients and instructions.

Day 2

BREAKFAST

Healthy Breakfast Egg Muffins

Courtesy of Well Plated by Erin

Yield: 4 servings
Prep Time: 15 min
Cooking Time: 25 min
Total Time: 40 min

Macros for 1 serving
Carbs: 9 g.
Protein: 24 g.
Fat: 9 g.

LUNCH

Fajita Cauliflower Rice Bowls

Courtesy of Kirbie's Cravings

Yield: 4 servings
Prep Time: 20 min
Cooking Time: 15 min
Total Time: 35 min

Macros for 1 serving
Carbs: 16 g.
Protein: 11 g.
Fat: 28 g.

DINNER

Cajun Chicken One-Pot

Courtesy of IIFYM

Yield: 6 servings
Prep Time: 40 min
Cooking Time: 45 min
Total Time: 1 hr 25 min

Macros for 1 serving
Carbs: 21 g.
Protein: 20 g.
Fat: 10 g.

RECIPES

Click on the recipe title to view the ingredients and instructions.

Day 3

BREAKFAST

Raspberry Chia Seed Pudding

Courtesy of A Dash of Macros

Yield: 1 serving
Prep Time: 10 min
Cooking Time: 0 min
Total Time: 3 min

Macros for 1 serving
Carbs: 28.8 g.
Protein: 31.3 g.
Fat: 13.5 g.

LUNCH

Spiced Tomato & Coconut Chicken w/ Basmati Rice

Courtesy of A Dash of Macros

Yield: 4 servings
Prep Time: 5 min
Cooking Time: 30 min
Total Time: 35 min

Macros for 1 serving
Carbs: 48.5 g.
Protein: 55.6 g.
Fat: 14.3 g.

DINNER

Mustard Pork Tenderloin with Grilled Vegetables in Foil

Courtesy of Well Plated by Erin

Yield: 4 servings
Prep Time: 15 min
Cooking Time: 15 min
Total Time: 2 hrs 30 min

Macros for 1 serving
Carbs: 16 g.
Protein: 20 g.
Fat: 33 g.

Don't forget dessert! Try these Strawberry Oatmeal Bars by Well Plated by Erin.

