

Dietary Reset Guide

Preparing Your Body & Habits Before a Cut

A “reset” isn’t a diet — it’s one week of groundwork that makes an actual cutting phase work. Most stalled or miserable cuts happen because someone jumps straight into a deficit from messy eating habits, poor sleep, and no baseline data. This guide fixes that first.

Why Reset Before You Cut

- You can’t accurately cut calories if you don’t know what you’re currently eating.
 - Metabolism and hunger hormones respond better to a deficit when sleep, hydration, and food quality are already dialed in.
 - A reset lets you build habits (meal timing, tracking, protein intake) *before* willpower gets taxed by hunger.
 - It prevents the common mistake of an overly aggressive first week that leads to burnout by week 3.
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The 7-Day Reset

Don’t cut calories this week — just observe, stabilize, and build the habits that make the deficit work once it starts.

Days 1-3: Baseline

1. **Track everything you currently eat** — no changes, just log it (app, notebook, photos). This gives you your real maintenance intake, not a guess.
2. **Weigh in daily, same time, same conditions** (morning, after bathroom, before food/water). You’ll average these across the week — one noisy morning doesn’t mean anything on its own.
3. **Hit a consistent protein floor**: ~0.7-1g per lb of bodyweight, every day, no exceptions. This alone often improves body composition before any deficit starts.
4. **Cut liquid calories and alcohol** to near-zero this week. Easiest calories to remove with the least impact on hunger or training performance.

Days 4-7: Clean-Up

5. **Structure meals around protein + fiber** at each sitting (protein source + vegetables/fruit) — this is what actually controls hunger, not calorie counting alone.
 6. **Set a consistent meal schedule**. Whether it’s 3 meals or 4, pick a rhythm and stick to it — this trains hunger cues and makes the coming deficit predictable.
 7. **Fix sleep** — aim for 7+ hours. Poor sleep raises hunger hormones (ghrelin) and lowers satiety hormones (leptin), so this needs to be in place before the deficit starts, not fixed mid-cut.
 8. **Keep training consistent** — 3-4x/week resistance training. Muscle you maintain now is what determines how the end result of the cut actually looks.
 9. **Review the week**: by Day 7 you should have a real maintenance calorie estimate, a full week of weigh-ins to average, a protein habit, and a stable training routine.
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Setting Up the Cut (What Comes Next)

Once the reset is done, use your baseline data to set the actual cut:

Variable	Guideline
Calorie deficit	Start at 15-20% below your logged maintenance (avoid larger cuts out of the gate)
Protein	0.8-1g per lb bodyweight, non-negotiable
Carbs vs. fat split	Personal preference — split remaining calories based on energy/training performance
Cardio	Add gradually; don't start a cut and a big cardio increase at the same time
Rate of loss	0.5-1% of bodyweight per week is sustainable; faster than that risks muscle loss
Diet breaks	Plan a maintenance week every 6-8 weeks of cutting to reset hormones and adherence

Common Mistakes This Reset Prevents

- Starting a deficit from an unknown, often underestimated, maintenance number
- Cutting calories and increasing cardio at the same time (too much stress at once)
- Chasing a number on the scale from day 1 instead of using a weekly average
- Neglecting protein early, then struggling to hit it once hungrier in a deficit
- Under-sleeping, which sabotages hunger control before the diet even gets hard

Quick Checklist Before Starting Your Cut

- ☐ Logged food for 7+ days and know my real maintenance intake
- ☐ Have 7+ days of morning weigh-ins and a weekly average
- ☐ Hitting protein target consistently
- ☐ Sleep at 7+ hours most nights
- ☐ Training routine is consistent and sustainable
- ☐ Liquid calories/alcohol under control
- ☐ Picked a realistic weekly rate of loss (0.5-1% bodyweight)

Once every box is checked, you're ready to move into an actual cutting phase with real data behind it instead of a guess.