

How To Make Any Recipe Healthy!



You don't need a low-fat recipe to eat low-fat! You can take any recipe and make it healthy when you apply the simple tips below.

The easiest way to approach a recipe is to consider three things:

1. What ingredients can be substituted for a lighter ingredient?
2. What unhealthy ingredients can be removed or eliminated from the recipe without compromising the integrity of the dish?
3. What healthy ingredients can be added to the recipe that will enhance to nutrient content and the taste of the meal while also stretching out the serving sizes so that each serving is bigger and has less fat and calories?

FOOL YOURSELF FIT'S TOP 6 TIPS FOR COOKING LIGHTER!

1. Reduce OR Eliminate Fat/Salt/Sugar From the Recipe

FAT: When baking, replace butter or oil with applesauce, mashed banana, prune puree, or date puree. When cooking, use nonstick spray, water, or broth in place of butter or oil.

SUGAR: Use half the sugar called for in the recipe. Increase the flavorings and spices to compensate. You can also replace the sugar with a commercial sugar substitute (i.e. Splenda) or a natural one (i.e. Stevia, Agave Nectar, etc.).

SALT: Switch to low-sodium salt. When cooking, try eliminating the salt altogether and add more spices and flavors. If your recipe calls for a salty ingredient, like soy sauce, cut the amount in half. If you're baking, cut the amount in half. The only exception is if you are baking with yeast - if this is the case, use the called for amount of salt as it is necessary to proof the yeast.

2. Substitute Ingredients

Carefully consider every item called for in a recipe and try to substitute something healthier for each item. If you can't find a healthier substitution for an item, it's probably already the healthiest choice and you can move on to the next item. Consult this list for [common ingredient substitutions](#).

3. Remove Ingredients

Some ingredients can be eliminated altogether! Leave the nuts out of your cookie, don't add any frosting to your cake, leave the mayo off your sub, eat your bagel without butter, or make hummus without oil. When facing an unhealthy ingredient ask yourself if it is really necessary for the dish. If it is, replace it with a healthier option (i.e. use plain yogurt in place of mayo). If it is not (i.e. sprinkles on your frozen yogurt or butter in your rice) just eliminate it!

4. Add Ingredients

Many recipes can be made lighter by adding healthy ingredients. This will achieve two things: increasing the nutrient levels and stretching out the recipe across more portions. For example, consider jarred spaghetti sauce. On its own, it's not that bad for you. It has a bit too much sodium but its fairly low in fat and calories. You're getting a decent amount of tomatoes, but not many other vegetables. Now consider what would happen if you diced up some white meat chicken, onions, peppers, mushroom, garlic, and spinach, sautéed it all on a sauce pan, and then added the jar of tomato sauce to that! Not only would you increase the nutrient value and lower the caloric value of the sauce you're pouring over your whole wheat pasta, but you'll also be stretching out the sodium found in the jarred sauce over many more servings. A few more examples: consider adding oats to your baked goods, whipped cottage cheese to your guacamole, puffed wheat to your granola, or light popcorn to your snack mix. Any time you can add [volume](#) to a recipe by bulking it with low calories foods, like fruits and veggies, you're going to make it much lighter!

5. Use Healthier Cooking Methods

Don't read a recipe and assume it is written in stone. If something calls for sautéing in oil, you can sauté it without the oil, using some water, broth, or nonstick spray instead. You can bake homemade fries in the oven rather than grease to fry them. You can even bake donuts in mini-Bundt pans instead of grease and keep them light and healthy! Invest in a nonstick pan and you can cook without added fat! Even eggs and pancakes cook just right on a nonstick pan coated in a thin layer of nonstick spray! **See below this chart for a list of healthy cooking methods!**

6. Eat Smaller Portions

This isn't really a "cooking" tip but its a no-fail way to manage your weight. If you find yourself in a situation where you are unable to modify what you are eating (i.e. at a dinner party), you can always reduce unhealthy fat and calories just by eating less.

Healthy Cooking Methods!

Steaming
Grilling
Baking
Poaching
Stir-Frying
Sautéing
Smoking
Braising
Roasting
Broiling