

# Diets Blow



**A Weight Loss Plan that Works  
by Jason Robillard**

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## **Table of Contents**

Trust me, you don't need a table of contents for this book. You could read the entire thing while dropping a moderate-sized deuce. If it DOES take you loner, odds are you're functionally illiterate and shouldn't be wasting your time trying to read dumbass crap like this.

## **Chapter One: The Entire Book**

Ever try to lose weight? I bet you weren't successful. Before you chalk it up to you being a complete and utter failure, consider another possibility. There's probably a good chance you ignored a fundamental element of body weight:

*The number of calories you consume affects how much you weigh.*

If the calories coming in are the same as the calories you burn, you stay at the same weight.

If the calories coming in are less than the calories you burn, you lose weight.

If the calories coming in are more than the calories you burn, you gain weight.

It really is that simple. Your attempts to lose weight were probably because you were eating too much or not burning enough.

The End.

You kept reading, didn't you? Odds are good you're skeptical. If you're trying to lose weight, you probably tried the whole "counting calories" thing and it didn't work.

Or maybe you're skeptical that it really could be that simple.

In the case of the former, you just miscalculated. Don't feel bad. Those serving sizes on food labels and online "how many calories do I burn each day" calculators are only marginally accurate.

In the case of the latter, you're sort of right. While the concept of calories in/calories out IS simple, the application of the principle gets tricky. "Calories in" should really be "calories absorbed into your body." If you don't fully digest some foods, you'll end up pooping out a few calories. You know... like supermodels eating cotton balls and other dumbass nonsense.

"Calories out" should be "the total sum of all energy your body uses, ranging from the processes that keep you alive, to energy used by the brain, to energy used during exercise, and everything else that results in an energy expenditure." Lots of shit occurs in your body, and all of it requires energy.

No matter what diet, exercise, or lifestyle method you choose, *this rule applies*.

Okay, the underlying concepts can get ridiculously complex, so here's an excellent simple practical application:

*Start eating a balanced diet with lots of different colored foods. Buy most of your foods from the perimeter of the grocery store instead of the middle aisles. Eat everything in moderation. Indulge your cravings, but be careful with sweets. Monitor your weight once per week. If you are gaining weight or remaining steady and your goal is to lose weight, eat a little less the next week.*

I suspect you probably have a lot of questions, so a "frequently asked questions" section seems appropriate.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: But I've tried counting calories before and it didn't work. Clearly you're wrong.**

A: No, I'm right. You just miscalculated. The calculations are easy to estimate, but there's a lot of factors that affect calorie counting. Eating in a restaurant? Odds are good their supposed calorie counts are off by a long shot. What about calorie counts posted on food labels? Without boring you with details, they may be somewhat inaccurate because of the commonly-used calculation methodology. Besides, factors like how thoroughly you chew food may affect the amount of calories your digestive system absorbs and how much gets pooped out.

And energy expenditure? That could be affected by a ton of shit ranging from drugs (smoke meth = speeds metabolism = burn more calories... but don't smoke meth), to activity level, to body weight, to hormone regulation (thyroid dysfunction.) Different foods can even affect your body via the insulin response, energy required to chew and digest, how your body uses the macro or micronutrients in the foods, etc. It's complicated, and we don't fully understand all the nuances of energy expenditure yet.

You can get around this by monitoring your own progress. Count all calories as accurately as possible. Check your weight every few days. If you're going up, reduce the crap you stuff in your pie hole. If you're going down, keep it up.

**Q: So you're saying I could eat nothing but deep-fried Twinkies and, as long as I am creating a caloric deficit, I will lose weight?**

A: Yes. This is exactly what I'm saying. It would be a stupid plan, however. Your teeth will probably fall out and you'd die of malnutrition. Besides, the vitamin deficiencies would probably cause raging cravings for foods that contain the crap you're missing from your diet, which will cause you to bail on the weight loss attempt. Creating a caloric deficit doesn't mean abandoning common sense. You still need a balanced diet that provides everything your body cannot create on its own. If you eat shitty foods, understand you're probably not doing yourself any favors. Use moderation.

**Q: If a small caloric deficit is good, then a huge deficit should be great, right?**

A: Wrong. Your brain is pretty smart. If your caloric intake drops really low, your brain assumes you're in the midst of a famine, thus starving. As a defense mechanism, it will slow down processes to conserve energy (burn less calories.) You'll also likely develop a variety of nutritional deficiencies. This would defeat the purpose of the deficit. So how low is too low? It's probably an individual thing. Personally, I never like to have more than a 500 calorie per day deficit.

**Q: I just heard about a new diet from some hotshot doctor that published a crappy study then wrote a generalization-filled book that promises to "revolutionize weight**

**loss.” The doc claims I can eat as much as I want.**

A: The doc is full of shit and you are a sucker for buying their snake oil. No diet or exercise can circumvent the law of the conservation of mass.

**Q: I don't necessarily want to lose weight; I just want to get ripped. How do I do that?**

A: Lift weights. I recommend a good functional fitness program like those found at <http://kemmeftness.com/>. Diet still plays a huge role and the same calorie rules apply, but exercise is critical to get a body like the woman on the cover. Good for you, by the way. The “athletic” look is infinitely more attractive than the “skinny” look.

**Q: I heard calorie counting is wrong because some reporter wrote a story that said foods with trans fat would make you fatter than foods with plant-based fats, even if they have the same caloric count.**

A: This seems to be true, but it doesn't change the calories in/calories out rule. Different foods will have different effects on the left side (energy consumption) and the right side of the calorie equation (energy expenditure.) Your body handles different calories in a variety of ways. Furthermore, we get (and use) a lot more from the foods we eat than just “calories.” This is why I recommend eating many different colored foods from the perimeter of your grocery store while mostly avoiding the stuff in the middle shelves.

**Q: How do deal with hunger caused by the stress of feeling hungry and obsessing over calories?**

A: Ah, the dieter's paradox- attempting to lose weight causes a desire to engage in a behavior that completely contradicts the goal. If we're stressed in a bad way, there's a tendency for hunger to increase. It's probably related to an evolutionary drive to hoard energy when the shit was about to hit the fan.

My solution- chill the fuck out. Eat like you normally would, but utilize a few tricks to eat less food (thus fewer calories.) Here are some of my favorites:

- Use kid-sized everything- pots, pans, plates, cups, silverware, etc. We're visual creatures. Simply reducing the size of our food preparation and service tools will trick us into reducing our serving sizes while making us believe we're eating huge portions.
- Drink a few glasses of water before eating. It usually gives us a “full” sensation earlier.
- Buy less high-calorie foods. If it's not in the cupboards, we may be too lazy to run to the store.
- Exercise before eating. This usually suppresses appetite. Also, every minute spent at the gym is one less minute spent eating.



- Don't weigh yourself every day. Weight fluctuates quite a bit due to all kinds of factors. That one pound weight gain between yesterday and today *could* just be the result of some constipation.

**Q: I'm a sciency person. Your explanation of calories in/calories out is idiotic. The metabolic processes involved in food utilization is incredibly complex. For starters, your body doesn't even use "calories" as you imply. Next, specific molecules in food are used by different bodily processes for things like building and repairing tissue, building enzymes, proteins, and all the bodily fluids we excrete, and a host of other uses. Furthermore, all these requirements vary greatly based on individual biology and environment. As such, this entire booklet should be tossed in a heap and subsequently burned. Oh wait, it's an electronic version. Apparently I got so lost in my science talk I lost sight of the big picture.**

A: All of this is correct. However, *how* the body utilizes food is a) complex, and b) not fully understood. Yes, we DO understand quite a bit, but it's unbelievably complex... especially for someone that hasn't spent their lives buried in textbooks and academic journals. We COULD try explaining every single outcome of every single food we consume to the masses, but we all know 99.5% would be bored as fuck and forget everything anyway.

My solution- go back to the simple concept: *eat less and move more to lose weight*. Acknowledge it's limitations. Give a practical method to overcome those limitations.

Meanwhile, I'll let you go back to your lecturing.

**Q: I don't get the "store perimeter" shopping thing?**

Most grocery stores are organized the same way- the produce section (fruits and veggies), meat, and dairy sections are usually found around the perimeter. You should probably stick to mostly these whole foods. Highly-processed foods are found on the middle shelves. Avoid a lot of these.

If your local grocery store ISN'T organized like this, please don't email me. Bitch to the store management.

**Q: If weight loss really is this simple, why do we have so many obese people today?**

A: I said the underlying concept was simple... not *easy*. Weight maintenance is difficult especially since the advent of the couch and the drive-through.

Take a look at my pictures. Even when I was at the height of serious ultrarunning I was at least 10 pounds overweight. Why? *I like food*. And beer. And wine. And I tend to be somewhat lazy when not exercising. Sometimes I eat more when stressed or depressed. Sometimes I get motivated and get in good shape, but the reward for maintaining a perpetual six pack isn't

worth it *for me*. Maintaining a phenomenal body takes sacrifice and dedication, which I don't always have. "Decent" is good enough for me.

That really is the end.

If you thought this guide was even moderately helpful, send it to your friends, family, and coworkers. *You have my blessing.*

And best of luck living a healthy lifestyle.

## Jason's Other Crap

Like this mini-book? Enjoy my writing? I'd like to take this opportunity to shamelessly promote my other projects:

- Interested in trail running, hiking, or ultramarathons AND you like offensive material? Check out my book [Never Wipe Your Ass with a Squirrel](#).
- How about barefoot and minimalist shoe running without the cultish attitude? Try [The Barefoot Running Book](#).

I've got a few blogs, too!

- [Barefoot Running University](#): My main blog that covers a whole host of topics from barefoot and minimalist shoe running to ultramarathons, from parenting to being a serial hobbyist. If it interests me, I write about it here.
- [Robillard Adventures](#): The blog dedicated to my family's lifestyle (we quit our full-time tenured teaching jobs to travel the country in an RV despite having three small kids.)
- [The Sexpressionists](#): Sex and relationships... my favorite social psychological topics to discuss.
- [High School Survival](#): My thoughts on the positives and negatives of our education system in general and teaching in particular.
- [Cupcake Fighting](#): My newest blog dedicated to my foray into MMA fight training (boxing, kickboxing, and Brazilian jiu jitsu.)