

# Diabetes: How to Build Your Plate

When you have diabetes, using the plate method can make healthy eating something you do, and not something to count.

The plate method helps you find the right balance of carbohydrate, protein, and fat that can help you keep your blood sugar at a target level.

The plate method is a way to build your plate with food.

It uses healthy portion sizes of foods you like to create a meal that's balanced for your health.

Your plate should be about 9 inches or 22 centimeters across.

This may seem smaller than you're used to, but you get to fill it up.

Now let's check what's on the plate.

A healthy plate has balance: about 50% non-starchy vegetables, 25% protein, and 25% starchy vegetables, breads, or grains.

Here's what that means: Put the non-starchy vegetables, such as a green leafy salad or broccoli, on half the plate.

The protein, like eggs, chicken, fish, or tofu, goes on one-fourth of the plate.

In the other fourth, put a grain like brown rice, or a starchy vegetable like corn or some sweet potato.

Hmm.

I'll bet you're wondering about fruit and dairy or dairy alternatives.

So for fruit: Next to your plate, you can add a small dish—a half cup—to hold fresh, frozen, or canned fruit.

And for your dairy or dairy alternative, add a small glass or bowl that holds about one cup.

Low-fat or nonfat milk and low-sugar or unsweetened yogurt are good choices.

So let's review.

Fill half your plate with non-starchy vegetables, one-fourth of the plate with protein, and the last one-fourth with grains or starchy vegetables.

On the side, use a half cup for fruit and one cup for your dairy or dairy alternative.

So instead of counting carbs, try counting on the plate method for building a healthy meal—every time.

A lot of people find it easy to do.

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Maybe it can work for you, too.

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