



# How to Beat 12 Common Obstacles to Losing Weight

WEIGHT LOSS | WEIGHT LOSS TIPS

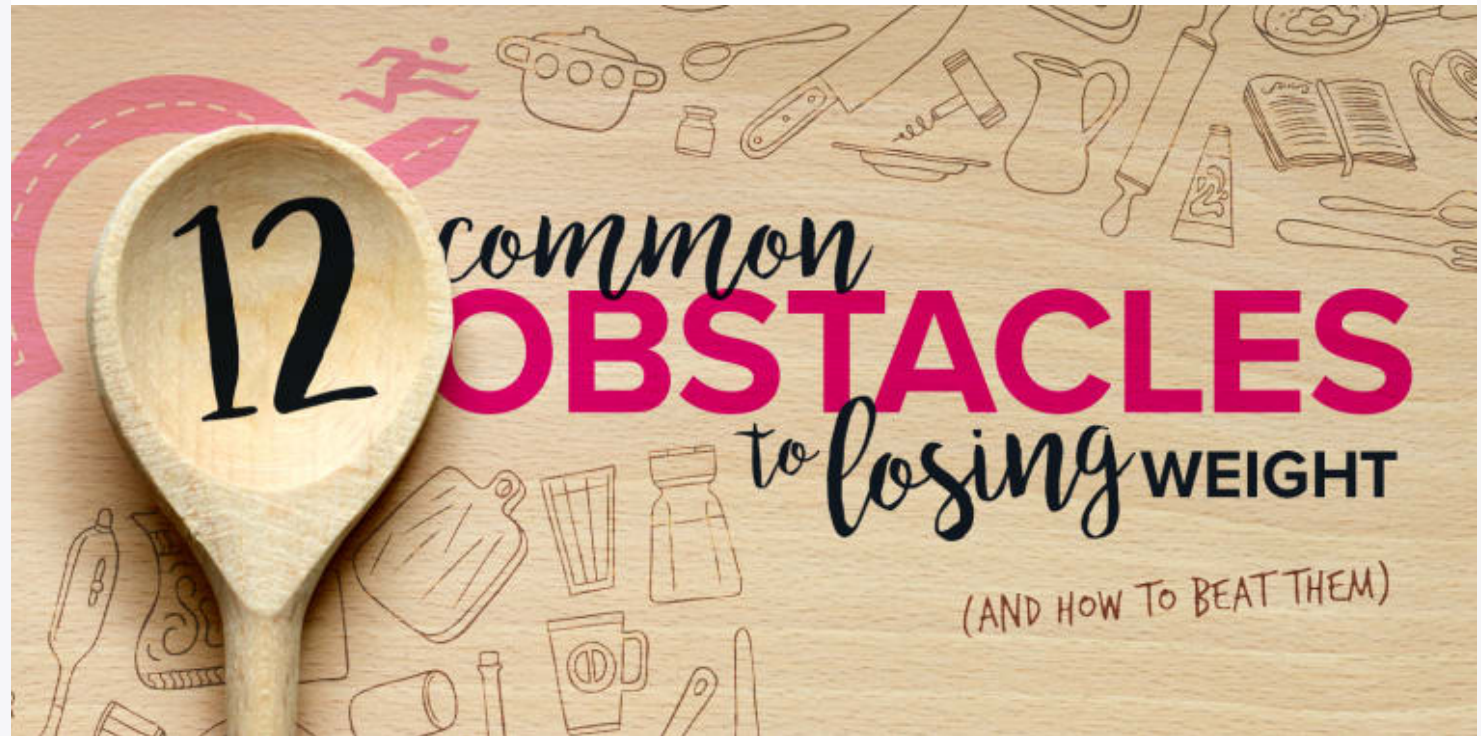
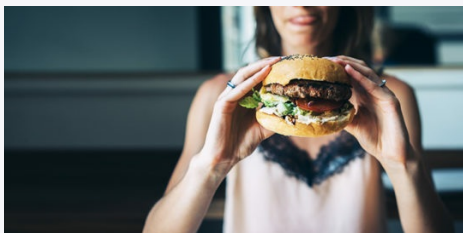
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loss obstacles standing in your way.

Losing weight isn't always easy, and there might be many mental, logistical, and lifestyle factors to overcome to reach your goal. But don't despair: You *can* shed those stubborn pounds with a little soul-searching (*do I really hate cauliflower?*) and some practical tips (*wait, I can roast cauliflower?? This is SO GOOD!*).

To maximize your chances of success, start by taking a few minutes to identify your biggest obstacles to losing weight and see how you can overcome them. Here are 12 of the most common ones that get in the way of losing weight.

(And check out these dramatic **"Before and After"** stories if you need proof and inspiration!)



## Diet Obstacles

Obstacle: You don't have time to cook.

Solution: Do some prep work.

No one is denying that it's easier to order takeout than it is to make something from scratch. But cooking healthy meals doesn't have to be a major time-suck. Some tasty options — like a [main course salad](#) — don't even require any cooking at all. The key is to think about what you'll eat long before your tummy starts rumbling.

Tammy Lakatos Shames, RDN, CFT, a dietitian, personal trainer, and co-author of [The Nutrition Twins' Veggie Cure](#), suggests taking some time over the weekend to [plan out your meals](#) for the following week, stock up on ingredients, and chop up some veggies and protein so you'll be in good shape when you peek into the fridge after a long day at work.

Obstacle: You hate being hungry.

Solution: Load up on low-calorie, filling foods.

Surprise: You don't have to eat tiny amounts food to lose weight. In fact, you're [better off not depriving yourself](#) or you might end up backsliding pretty quickly.

“The best way to feel full — and lose weight — is to fill up on a combo of whole grains, fruits and vegetables, and lean protein,” says Lakatos Shames. “[Processed or simple] carbs by themselves will give you energy, but you'll come crashing down soon after because you don't have any protein and fiber to slow down digestion.”

She's also a fan of keeping lots of non-starchy veggies on hand, like broccoli, [Brussels sprouts](#), [cauliflower](#), and squash. “Drizzle on flavorful vinegars and spices to make them more interesting. Or [roast them so they caramelize](#) and taste sweet,” she suggests. Not only are they filled with loads of nutrition (vitamins, minerals, and phytonutrients), the

fiber and water will help fill you up.

**Obstacle:** You don't like the taste of healthy food.

**Solution:** Be patient and keep trying new things.

First of all, you may not really know what good, nutritious food tastes like. (Hint: It's not plain, flavorless chicken and limp, over-cooked veggies.) Watch a [healthy cooking show](#) to learn the basics and experiment with some new recipes. Need some ideas? You can find a slew of options [right here](#).

But if you just don't think anything will taste good unless it's deep-fried and loaded with salt or sugar, be patient. As you build out your recipe repertoire and try new things, you'll find foods that you enjoy, and even ones that don't seem appealing right now might eventually become your favorites.

**Pro tip:** Use [healthy spices to boost the taste and flavors](#) in your dishes to point your tastebuds in the right direction.

**Obstacle:** You think nutritious food is too expensive.

**Solution:** Make smart choices.

Spendy organic produce is great, but it's not essential for good health or weight loss, says Lakatos Shames. Try to shop for what's in-season — it's almost always cheaper — and remember that [frozen vegetables and fruit](#) are usually as nutritious as their fresh counterparts.

Lakatos Shames also advises her clients who are [on a budget](#) to eat more [vegetarian- and plant-based protein](#) while limiting expensive items, like meat.

And if you think that fast-food combo meal is cheaper than a healthy salad, think again. Research suggests that staying fit and healthy could [save you cold, hard cash](#) in health-related expenses down the road.

And even in the short-term, losing weight can be cost-effective if you want it to be, says

Holly Lucille, ND, RN, a Los Angeles-based naturopathic physician and CrossFit coach. “Not going out to dinner as often and drinking less wine are pretty good ways to save some money,” she says.



## Fitness Obstacles

Obstacle: You think exercise is boring.

Solution: Find something you love.

If you consider your workout a chore, then you're doing the wrong workout. Finding a fun activity is really crucial if you want to stick with it long enough to lose the weight and keep it off.

If running a treadmill is about as exciting to you as staring at a brick wall, don't do it. Experiment with other types of workouts until you find a good fit: Try a [country line dancing class](#), kick some butt in a [mixed-martial arts workout](#), or check out a [yoga class](#); your [options are endless](#)!

Obstacle: You don't have time to exercise.

Solution: Find a workout that fits your schedule.

Lack of time is one of the biggest barriers, but it's also about making workouts a priority, says Lakatos Shames. Scheduling a time in your day like you would an appointment can help you do that.

But if you're really time-strapped, make sure you're getting the most out of your sweat sessions. Choose a workout that's designed to yield major results quickly. Beachbody's [Focus T25](#) and [22-Minute Hard Corps](#), for example, were created to get you an hour's worth of results in less than half an hour.

Both programs also employ [high-intensity interval training \(HIIT\)](#), which helps you burn more calories every minute compared to steady-state exercise. You also *keep* burning more calories for days afterward: "By varying your intensity level — you get your heart rate up and down and up and down again— you increase post-exercise oxygen consumption, so you end up burning calories... long after you've finished your workout," says Lucille.

Obstacle: You push yourself too hard, too often.

Solution: Make recovery a priority.

Walking your dog around the block may get your heart pumping a little, but it's rarely enough to help you lose weight. Likewise, it's easy to go overboard, and some people end up [hitting fitness plateaus](#) because they don't ever give their bodies the time they need to recover from all of the intense exercise they're doing.

"Allowing adequate time for recovery is extremely important," says Lucille. "When I'm

forced to rest a little and then go back to the gym, my speed and efficiency ends up being better.”

But before you get too excited, “recovery” doesn’t equal “lying on the couch all day with the remote.” There *is* a difference between [rest and recovery days](#); on rest days, you’ll want to focus on getting sleep and replenishing your energy stores. On recovery days, you can still work out, but to a lesser degree. Try a gentle yoga routine from [Beachbody’s 3 Week Yoga Retreat](#), or these [full-body stretches](#).

“It’s important for your body to be challenged by doing something it’s not already used to,” says Lucille.

Obstacle: You rely on workouts to do it all.

Solution: Understand that exercise is just part of the puzzle.

While exercise can definitely help you lose weight, you can’t expect results if you focus on fitness while ignoring bad eating habits. Research shows that people who start a [healthy diet AND a workout program](#) at the same time are more likely to be doing both a year later.

“In my experience, I’d say weight loss is about 60 percent diet and 40 percent exercise,” says Lucille.

Obstacle: Your joints ache.

Solution: Go low-impact.

Whether you’re recovering from an injury or have a [chronic issue](#), it’s hard to move when you’re in pain. Assuming you have your doctor’s OK, try stepping up your activity just a little bit, and focus on [low-impact exercise](#), says Lakatos Shames.

“[Any movement at all is better than sitting](#) on the couch, and even spending 30 minutes on an exercise bike or swimming may help you lose weight if you were pretty sedentary before,” she explains.



## Emotional Obstacles

Obstacle: You're just not that motivated.

Solution: Set short- *and* long-term goals.

There's a reason why it's often easier to lose weight before a wedding or school reunion. But those types of motivators tend to be fleeting, and before you know it those 10 pounds (or more) are back on.

Setting a **long-term, non-scale goal** — say, to avoid health issues that a parent or grandparent has — will help, but you'll probably need some extra targets to shoot for along the way.



“I once lost weight mainly by challenging myself to do a certain number of push-ups every day until I could do 100,” says Lucille. Some people find that getting competitive — perhaps by signing up for a series of challenging events, [like a marathon](#), or 5K — keeps them invested in staying fit.

**Obstacle:** You’re embarrassed by your failed attempts.

**Solution:** Let it go, rethink, and reboot.

Lots of people try to lose weight and repeatedly fail, and they [end up beating themselves up](#) for it.

If that sounds like you, Lucille suggests nixing shame and blame by doing a 21-day “autopsy” — spend five minutes each night reviewing your habits and thinking about what went right (and what didn’t) that day, and try not to make any harsh judgments.

The goal is to eventually have an “a-ha” moment that enables you to stop feeling guilty and instead [focus on moving forward](#).

**Obstacle:** Your willpower disappears in the face of temptation.

**Solution:** Plan your defense.

Sometimes it might seem like the entire world is out to sabotage your weight-loss efforts. Try to think ahead and predict where diet traps may arise so you can be ready with a healthy snack or distraction.

**Pro tip:** Don’t go hungry where temptation lurks (we’re looking at you, happy hour and office birthdays). Have a small nibble or a [healthy shake](#) beforehand and you’ll be more apt to resist unhealthy treats.

Obstacles are made to be overcome, so add these solutions to your weight-loss toolbox and watch those pounds drop off, slow and steady.



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\*Results vary depending on starting point and effort. Exercise and proper diet are necessary to achieve and maintain weight loss and muscle definition.

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