

**27 Ways to
Really Screw Up
Your
Weight Loss Plan**

**By
Jeremy Gray**

FOREWORD

Let's face it, losing weight is hard. Weight loss is achieved through **hard work, eating less, and dedication**. This book will give you 27 ways to really screw up your weight loss plan (and also how to fix them).

This book is by no means an extensive guide, but it should open your eyes to many little things you may be doing to screw up your weight loss plan.

Failure to Commit to a Weight Loss Plan

You may have reached out to a friend, personal trainer, or nutritionist and created a weight loss plan. You have your workout schedule, cardio schedule, and your diet planned out. This plan will ensure weight loss and happiness right?

Failing to commit to a weight loss plan is the number one reason why you won't reach your weight loss goals. A lack of discipline and motivation keep you from achieving your weight loss goals.

How to Fix

Cultivate motivation daily and visualize your success. Being able to visualize and how amazing you will feel and look after you reach your goals will push you to work hard.

Figure out what part of the plan you are having a problem sticking to because this will give you something to work on. Ask yourself why you are having problems sticking to the plan and why are you making excuses? If you really want it, you will stop making excuses.

Weight loss is possible if you can commit to your plan.

Inability to Control Calorie Intake

Bad eating habits, emotional eating, or a lack of planning and organization will lead to an inability to control calorie intake. In today's society, overeating and overindulging seems to be the norm. Family gatherings, holidays, and parties are usually focused around food and we equate that to happiness.

Humans are a creature of habit and it is *very hard* to break bad eating habits. I've personally been dealing with emotional eating and over-eating my entire life so I understand how hard it is to break a bad eating habit.

How to Fix

Take control of your eating and **get organized**. Apps like My Fitness Pal help you take control of your eating. Be brutally honest with yourself and find out what exactly you are doing that keeps you from controlling your calorie intake.

Don't judge the reasons you cannot control calorie intake, fix them.

Underestimation of Calorie Intake

You check the nutritional facts on the foods you eat and you have taken control of what you eat, so why aren't you losing weight?

Underestimating volume or weight of food simply won't cut it. The tablespoon of sour cream you put on your potato is more like two and the 8 ounces of steak is actually 12.

- **Liquid calories** are a huge majority of unaccounted calories for most people. Every soda and sweet drink contains calories.
- **Unconscious snacking** is when you eat a bag of chips or pretzels while you are watching a movie or otherwise not aware.

How to Fix

- **Use a food scale** - Food scales are inexpensive and should be your best friend. The more accurate you are with how much you eat the better.
- **Use measuring equipment** - Using measuring cups and spoons will give you control over all ingredients.
- **Prepare meals in advance** - Preparing and packing meals in advance is the best way to ensure every meal is exactly what you want it to be. Preparation will keep you from globbing an extra spoonful of sour cream or cheese in at the last minute.

Prepare your meals in advance when you are not hungry.

“Portion Distortion”

Over the years our portion sizes have increased... as well as our waistline. When starting a weight loss plan, you may think that you are starving yourself because of the hunger and small amount of food you are eating. If you are consulting with a nutritionist or personal trainer with credible knowledge of how to lose weight and feel like you are starving yourself, this shows you how far out of whack your portion sizes are.

If I were to conduct a survey with 3 different sized portions of steak on a plate and asked which one they thought was the 8 ounce piece of steak, the majority of people would guess that a larger size would be the 8 ounce portion.

How to Fix

Prepare your meals *in advance*. Preparing meals when you are not hungry will give you the advantage of using measuring equipment and not your stomach.

Another tip: Don't go grocery shopping when you are hungry. You are going to buy foods you don't need and probably spend more money than you originally planned.

Don't cheat yourself; eyeballing portions will not get you results.

Trying Fad Diets

The health and weight loss industry is booming because it cashes in on the hopes and dreams of people who want to become lean and shredded. Coming up with crazy or extreme diets catches your eyes and gives you a false sense of hope.

Which sounds like a more appealing diet: **“7 Weeks to Shredded”** or **“Turn Your Body and Life Around in 1 Year”**? My guess is the 7 weeks to shredded. I mean who has a year to get into shape?

How to Fix

Fad diets are bad news and need to be avoided. These diets are detrimental to your metabolism and after you’ve starved yourself for 7 weeks with no results, you give up.

Know that you aren’t simply “going on a diet” you are changing your diet. When I say you are changing your diet, you are changing what you eat, how you eat, and how you view food.

Have realistic goals and know how long it will take to get there.

Trying to Lose Weight Too Fast

Just because you can lose 20 pounds in 2 weeks doesn't mean you should.

Going on extremely low-calorie diets will crash your metabolism, drain your energy, and ruin any progress you may have made before now. Even if you are extremely overweight, a sudden dramatic cut in calories will make you drop weight in the beginning, but you are setting yourself up for failure later on down the road.

How to Fix

Just like starving yourself, eating less may not be the best thing to do either. Physical activity and the amount of calories you burn during the day are equally as important as how much food you eat. Sometimes walking an extra 20 minutes is healthier overall to you than eating 100 fewer calories.

Trying to lose weight too fast is detrimental to your health and ego. You may originally drop a lot of weight but not being able to keep up with unrealistic goals will make you give up hope and quit trying later on down the road.

Expect slow and steady weight loss for the best overall health.

Relying heavily on the Calorie Counts at Restaurants

Relying heavily on the calorie count of the dishes that some restaurants offer on their menu will be the demise of your weight loss plan. Busy or careless chefs will not be able to give an exact tablespoon of butter or mayonnaise.

Going out to eat is a great for social activities and to enjoy things you may not be able to cook. Regularly eating out makes weight loss hard to achieve because having an accurate measurement of what exactly goes into the foods is impossible.

How to Fix

I'd like to start by saying I am not against eating out, I am advising against relying on the calorie count on the menu. Not being able to control exactly how much of an ingredient goes into your food is tricky and with some common sense you can enjoy life and still lose weight.

I think it is great that restaurants offer low-calorie entrees and also offer calorie counts on the majority of their meals. With some planning in advance you can splurge and have the steak meal and not wreck your weight loss progress.

Always plan on adding at least 100 calories to the calorie count a restaurant provides to safely account for lack of precision.

Avoiding Healthy Foods

“I’ve only been eating salads for the last two weeks and I haven’t lost any weight.” Anything “low carb” or “low fat” is healthier than their full versions, right? Generally speaking, foods touting that they are low fat will have more sugars in them than their original product.

Learning how to maintain your calories is most important along with a healthy mix of protein, fats, and carbohydrates in your diet is most important.

How to Fix

Maybe you’ve been eating salad but not accounting for the meat, cheese, and other toppings on the salad that really packs on the calories. Eating dietary fats is healthy; **low fat or low carb alternative are not always the healthiest way to go.** Knowing your nutritional needs is important for a properly functioning metabolism.

Picking a wide variety of proteins, fruits, and vegetables will give you the best chance to achieve your weight loss goals. Having the occasional steak or bacon doesn’t make you fat but regularly over-eating *anything* will.

Consuming proper amounts of dietary fats has been shown to curb the craving of sweets for most individuals.

Not Eating Enough Protein

Going along with the salad dilemma, not consuming enough protein is a huge problem. Eating meat is healthy and you should design your meals with **protein** as your main priority.

Not eating enough protein impacts your ability to build or even *maintain* muscle mass. If you are going to the gym with the goal to also build muscle, not consuming enough protein will stall progress.

How to Fix

Studies show that carbohydrates are also muscle sparing. Not eating enough protein will force the body to burn muscle for energy when you are in a calorie deficit. It is inevitable that you will lose some muscle when losing body fat but eating plenty of protein will ensure you keep as much muscle as possible.

Eat a wide variety of proteins, supplement with a protein powder, and live a normal life; there's no reason to worry about every freaking macronutrient that goes into your body.

Pick a variety of protein sources to benefit the most. Choosing from fish, beef, pork, beans, and dairy gives you plenty of options for healthy and tasty foods.

Skipping Meals

Skipping meals to cut calories is not beneficial to you in the long run. When skipping a meal you are essentially denying yourself food and creating a negative experience in that moment. This negative experience usually has a terrible backlash of over eating.

If you are hungry, eating a small meal or healthy snack is better than nothing at all. Purposely skipping a meal will make you hungrier later and could lead to overeating if you have not prepared your meals in advance. Nothing sounds better when you are hungry than your favorite fast food.

Sound familiar? It happens to the best of us.

Skipping breakfast is a mistake many people make and starts a chain of events through the day that create the bad habits we are trying to break:

- Since you skipped breakfast, you are so hungry you eat a huge lunch.
- 3pm arrives and you are lethargic from trying to process all of the food you ate for lunch.

How to Fix

Your breakfast doesn't have to be extravagant or include 7 courses; eating a piece of toast with some peanut butter and a bowl of oatmeal will fill your belly with protein, carbs, fats, and fiber needed to carry out the day. Check out these breakfast ideas...

Breakfast Ideas

- **Sausage or Eggs and Oatmeal** - Oatmeal is full of healthy fiber and a great source of carbohydrates. A hearty breakfast with sausage or eggs (or both) along with a bowl of oatmeal will give you a steady boost of energy until you are ready for lunch.
- **Glass of Whole Milk and a Piece of Fruit** - A glass of whole milk and a piece of fruit is a refreshing way to start your day. The fats, vitamins, minerals, and protein from whole milk are essential for growing muscle. Pick your favorite type of fruit and enjoy.
- **Eggs and Toast** - This protein packed meal will start your day off right.
- **Toast or Bagel with Peanut Butter** - A simple and filling meal that tastes great when you are short on time.

Once again, meal preparation is ideal; *how great would steak and eggs be if you had everything ready to make quickly in the morning?*

Depriving Yourself

We all have that one type of food that we just can't go without. Depriving yourself of that food completely will cause issues and could result in binge eating. If you slowly cut down on eating your favorite unhealthy foods, you are developing will-power and setting yourself up for a healthy relationship with food.

How to Fix

Completely depriving yourself is not the answer. Give yourself something to look forward to; pick two times a month that you can enjoy this food. *Simply account for the calories you are going to be eating and do not have any regrets.* Enjoy the food and realize that it will taste even better when you have planned the meal out instead of just eating it on a whim.

If you completely deprive yourself of your comfort food, there will come a time when stress will trigger a huge cheat meal aka binge session; this will set back weeks of progress if not controlled. If you just schedule these foods into your schedule, you are going to lose the anxiety you may have from not eating this comfort food.

This is a lifestyle change and will have many rough days ahead. If you are in it for the long haul, you can't look for shortcuts.

Using Food as a Reward

Too many times I hear of a friend putting in a killer workout and rewarding themselves with some donuts or Dairy Queen. Rewarding yourself with food is an unhealthy habit developed when you were a child. What good is putting in a good workout when you just ate twice as many calories than you burned off?

How to Fix

If you follow my advice and quit depriving yourself of your favorite foods, the “reward” feeling will no longer be there. Using food as a reward is going to stall your weight loss and could undo weeks of hard work.

We are a reward-based culture; instead of rewarding yourself with food, reward yourself with something for YOU. This means take the time to “unplug” from the internet and watch a beautiful sunset, go for a long walk, watch a movie, or go shopping. Give yourself something that is beneficial to your soul, not just your stomach.

A lot of us do it, and we learned this when we were kids. Find something that is *more rewarding* than food to you; I use “jam out sessions” in my car with no distractions for my rewards.

Too Many Processed Carbs

Rice, oatmeal, and vegetables are healthy and nutrient dense. These foods are higher in carbohydrates and will give you energy and the performance in the gym you need to make progress.

Highly processed foods such as microwave burritos and frozen pizzas are great to have occasionally, but they need to be limited. Highly processed foods are calorie dense, usually lacking many nutrients, and provide no benefit to you other than they taste good.

How to Fix

Stick to an 80/20 rule. 80% of your foods come from fresh ingredients that you prepare and cook meals with and the remaining 20% can be the microwave burritos, mac and cheese, and anything else you really like.

The more fresh foods you start eating and the more you learn how to cook, the less tasty some of these highly processed foods will taste. You will start to see how flavorless they are and how they lack any texture compared to the real thing. Not only will you start feeling better, your digestion tract will thank you.

Learn how to cook whole foods and enjoy the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.

Relying on Weight Loss Supplements

Relying on weight loss supplements to lose weight will cost you so much money with no results. Like I said earlier, the weight loss and fitness industry thrives from sales of supplements and fads that “help you lose weight.”

How to Fix

Some weight loss supplements *can* help but take it from personal experience when I tell you there are no magic pills... **spend that money on whole foods instead.**

Performing on a calorie deficit can be rough; you will probably feel a little sluggish and fatigued at times. Caffeine has thermogenic and appetite suppression properties which will help with weight loss.

Caffeine is a stimulant and will help you stay productive and active during the day. Black coffee is a quality natural source of caffeine and I highly recommend drinking it. **Note: using creamers and sugars will add calories to your calorie intake.**

Brew up some coffee and use milk instead of a creamer. Mix in a scoop or two of your protein powder and you have a great tasting drink. Try a French vanilla coffee with a chocolate or vanilla protein!

Exercising Too Much

Just because you *can* work out 3 hours a day doesn't mean you *should*. Diet and exercise is the key to weight loss, a healthy heart, and a healthy lifestyle but beating yourself up an extra hour to burn an extra 100 calories is not worth the time or effort.

If you find yourself in the gym more than you are at home and you are not planning on becoming an elite athlete, you need to re-think your strategy. There is such thing as exercising too much.

How to Fix

An extra hour of sleep can be more beneficial to your recovery and weight loss than an extra hour on the treadmill. This is not a free pass to get lazy, but putting an extra hour on the treadmill so you can go eat a Beef N Cheddar doesn't seem like a good way to spend your time.

I would advise you to come up with a solid work out and conditioning plan that coincides with your eating plan. This way you can do your weight training, cardio work, enjoy foods you like, AND have a balanced lifestyle.

Find a healthy balance and enjoy life.

Using a Poor Workout Routine

Progressive overloading is a technique where you strive to add more reps or weight to an exercise each session. If you go to the gym doing the same weight for the same reps every session, you will not build muscle, you will hardly burn any calories, and *you are essentially wasting your time.*

How to Fix

Regardless of your goals, you have to have some sort of progression in your training. If you are a runner, you want to try to beat your distance by 1 second or by going further, right?. If you are a powerlifter you should strive to add another 5 pounds to the bar every time you walk into the gym.

Don't get to the gym and "go by how you feel" anymore; this is a poor approach to training and you won't make the progress you could. Listening to your body and "going by how you feel" are two totally different things which I will get into in a blog post. Know your body and expect to push yourself beyond those limits if you want to succeed.

This shit isn't supposed to be easy; don't expect this to be a walk in the park.

Expecting Consistent Weight Loss

You have been consistently losing a conservative 3 pounds a week for the last two months and all of a sudden you don't lose any this week.

How is this possible?

Each day of the week and every hour your body weight fluctuates. Day in and day out you eat right and exercise and you expect to lose the weight, but it just isn't happening.

How to Fix

Don't take a small setback as the end of the world. Don't only go by the scale; if you are using a good weight training routine, chances are your weight is from muscle.

Be sure to weigh yourself at the same time on the same day of the week. It doesn't matter when, but pick a time that you will be able to get on the scale consistently. Make sure you use the restroom and weigh yourself the same way each time; ideally weigh yourself naked, clothes can add a pound or two easily.

One last thing: **The leaner you get, the harder it is to lose weight.** The closer you get to your goal weight, the harder it is going to be to make progress. You will have to really watch your intake and adjust your calories likewise.

One Setback Ruins Everything

For the past 6 months you have been busting your ass and you've lost 48 pounds. The next week you weigh yourself and you've *gained 4 pounds*. Wait a minute... you've gained 4 pounds after you've just spent the past 6 months losing 48, how can this be??

You treat yourself to a cheat day, because what is it going to hurt... you've already gained 4 pounds, right? **Welcome to the world of setbacks, are you ready to combat them?**

How to Fix

We have all been to this stage and I personally know how fast a stall or reversal can completely ruin your motivation and put you into a spiral of bad choices. Trust me when I tell you to not take a setback personally and let it roll off. If you don't, you're in for a terrible ride.

Since your bodyweight fluctuates so often, I would not sweat a week of stalled weight loss. Once you hit 3 weeks of a stall in weight loss, I would suggest re-evaluating your calorie intake and expenditure and adjust accordingly.

Take a minute and remember why you started this weight loss plan in the first place when you lose motivation.

Relying on What the Cardio Machine Says

Whatever cardio machine you've decided to shackle yourself to for this workout will usually give an *estimate* on how many calories you have burned based on your *body weight*. This won't take into account your body's BMI, your overall health, or your cardiovascular health.

I regularly hear something like "I ran an extra half hour on the treadmill and burned an extra 500 calories so I can eat my favorite food." Well, the 500 calories you burned is more than likely *much less* than 500 and you will notice a stall in your weight loss if you go solely by what the machine says.

How to Fix

You can buy equipment that will calculate calories burned according to heart rate and other factors which will be more accurate than a cardio machine, but will cost quite a bit.

Always use these figures as a reference; always round your calories down and know that the longer you do an exercise, the more efficient your body will get at that exercise. A person who weighs 200 pounds who gets out of breath walking to the mailbox will burn more calories walking a mile than someone who is 200 pounds and has been regularly going to the gym.

Overestimating the calories burned will keep you from hitting your weight loss goals.

Not Readjusting Your Calorie Needs

You've lost 65 pounds and you have dialed in your diet and exercise, but now you aren't losing weight...What gives?

When starting your weight loss journey, the amount of calories your body needs to maintain weight is much higher than what your body will need at your goal weight.

How to Fix

Using a basal metabolic rate (BMR) calculator will give you a general idea how many calories you need. For instance, a 6 foot tall 300 pound man that's 25 years old will need about 2600 calories to maintain that weight. A year later he is down to 200 pounds and needs 2056 calories* to maintain that weight.

* This figure is an estimate; conditioning, BMI, and other factors can change your BMR.

Tip: Decrease your calories by 300 and stick with that calorie deficit until weight loss stalls for 2 weeks. **Do not cut a lot of calories out of your diet all at once.**

Not Including Weight Training

Weight training combined with proper nutrition will give you the body you dream about. No ladies, you won't bulk up like a bodybuilder just from walking into the weight room.

Males with plenty of testosterone take years of hard work and lifting heavy to look "bulky." Women have hormones that actually fight against building muscle (estrogen) so it is hard for women to build any lean muscle, let alone enough to look "bulky."

Not including weight training with your cardio and diet, you are setting yourself up for a body type that will look skinny and have no muscle definition at all. The industry calls this skinny-fat and it is not a pretty sight... I know you know some people that look like this.

How to Fix

Follow a good workout routine, bust your ass, and do your conditioning work. Embrace the hard work and energy you are going to put into achieving your weight loss goals.

Weight training with compound lifts will increase your balance, give you more control over basic movements, and will make your life much easier.

Start slow, learn your body, and embrace the journey.

Underestimating the Effort of Losing Weight

Losing weight is difficult; be prepared for a roller coaster ride from hell. **One of the hardest things about losing weight is breaking the habit of over-eating.**

Years of careless over-eating and indulging in foods that aren't good for you create bad habits that have put you in the situation you are in. The good news is that you can break those habits with enough effort.

How to Fix

Breaking a bad habit is difficult; it's why losing weight and staying healthy is a lifestyle change and not a quick fix. Becoming conscious of what you eat will keep the bad habits at bay.

The physical effort of becoming more active and getting off of your ass is a huge obstacle you are going to have to get through if you want to achieve your weight loss goals. This is coming from a guy that loves nothing more than to sit and play video games for hours.

Trust me when I tell you the more you get up and move the easier it gets so get out there and enjoy life and be active.

Getting on the Scale Too Much

If you get on the scale daily I will **guarantee** you will get stressed out and quit trying to lose weight. Body weight fluctuates throughout the day and week so jumping on the scale every time you have a chance will not give you an idea of your overall weight loss.

How to Fix

I highly suggest finding a time and day that you can weigh in **consistently** every week or two. Weighing in at the **same time** on that day will give you the best idea on your weight loss progress. Make it a ritual to weigh in and make it fun; dreading stepping on the scale is going to make it hard to work through the hard times.

Quit using the scale only as a means of measuring your weight loss success. If you are building muscle, the scale may stay you weight the same or more than last week.

Use the mirror, tape measure, and how clothes fit to gauge your weight loss.

Not Staying Active

I said it once and I'll say it again: **Get up and get active.** There is nothing better than getting up and doing something you did not think was possible. Learn a new sport, start biking or running long distances, or go break a personal record in the gym.

Finding something you enjoy is paramount if you want to accomplish your weight loss goals and enjoy a healthy lifestyle.

How to Fix

Ask yourself “what would I go do if I didn't care what people thought?” It doesn't matter whether it is playing basketball, playing soccer, going hiking, mountain biking, or playing Frisbee golf, get up and go play.

Remember how much fun you had when you were a little kid and ran around and sweating it up?

Nothing is more physically and mentally healthy than getting up and being active.

Not Getting Enough Sleep

Sleep is paramount to your weight loss, muscle building, and strength building goals. The amount of sleep a person needs varies from person to person but I would recommend getting at least 8 hours of quality sleep a day.

Your quality of your sleep is completely different from the amount of hours you sleep; you can benefit from 5 hours of *quality* sleep more than you can 8 hours of mediocre sleep. Learning how to increase your quality of sleep is more important than how many hours you can lay in bed.

How to Fix

If your schedule is hectic, I want you to try to take *at least 30 minutes* before you go to sleep to read, meditate, relax, etc. Unplug from the internet, turn off your phone, and turn off the TV.

Seriously, try this out for 1 week and you are going to realize how much this has an impact on our quality of sleep. Cut out sugars and caffeine at least an hour before you unplug and you will notice that you will fall sound asleep much sooner.

Just as our bodies naturally release melatonin at night to start the sleep process, creating a ritual at night of unplugging and cutting out stimulants will dramatically increase your quality of sleep.

Too Much Stress

I take a very serious and holistic approach to training that I don't go into detail on Cutty Strength because I do not want to run my readers off who may not believe in meditation, using the power of your mind type of belief. **Stress is a killer** and will ruin your weight loss, your training, and your life.

Things like a shitty job, not enough money, barely enough time to get to the gym, family obligations, and no time for personal fun can lead to a hell of a stressful life. We all know that stress is *bad for us*, but how can that affect our weight loss goals?

If you've had a stressful week but go to the gym with laser focus on your lifts and still can't hit your weight, you have seen how detrimental stress is. Our bodies have a capacity that we can take so training, shitty jobs, calorie deficit, and aggravating home life lead us into a weakened state.

This is why some people actually can "overtrain" and become weaker and could actually become ill because the nervous system and immune system is shutting down from stress overload. Aside from the lack of progress in the gym, you are irritable, can have the shakes, develop chronic illness, develop stomach problems, have skin rashes, and more all from stress.

Hopefully I got your attention here and I've made it well aware how having *too much stress* can impact you and your life. Some stress is good and it pushes us to be productive and accomplish goals.

How to Fix

I have two approaches I will go over with you; what some would consider *normal* or the standard approach, and what I do.

Standard Approach

- Sitting down and enjoying time with your family or pet
- Watching a good movie
- Watching your favorite TV show
- Going on a quiet walk
- Listening to music
- Have an alcoholic beverage or two
- Eat your favorite meal (be sure to hold yourself accountable for calories or else you will become even more stressed)

Cutty's Approach

- Meditate
- Practicing awareness (Learn to get your brain to stop thinking, but become aware of everything)
- Stretching or Yoga
- Reading a book
- Walking or training in an aware state
- Listening to music

I also use standard approaches and I would be more than happy to go over techniques that I use for stress release. These techniques have helped me through some bad situations, helped me conquer massive personal records, and if used properly can completely change your life.

Conclusion

There are no secrets to weight loss; it takes hard work, dedication, correct dieting, and exercise. Today's society of indulging in whatever we want makes it hard for us to develop healthy habits since most will look at us like freaks or simply different. Most people don't want to feel different and will succumb to their temptations to fit in.

This book is designed to open your eyes to some of the reasons that you are screwing up your weight loss plan. *Only you* can fix your bad habits and make yourself get up and exercise. **You cannot out exercise a bad diet.**

I would like to thank Steve Shaw for all of his guidance throughout the years; if it weren't for him I would not be where I am now. Check him out at the forums of <http://www.MuscleandBrawn.com> and join the community.

I would also like to thank you, my readers for all of the support and kind words that you've given me throughout this time. Whenever I want to share something, you are all open to receive it and I love the talks and debates that we have.

I want to thank everyone reading this book; I will be producing much more content and trying to help as many people as I possibly can to become the best version of themselves that they can be.

If you want motivational quotes and personal updates from me, be sure to follow me on Twitter at @GreatnessCubed. Thank you and good luck on your weight loss goals.