

# Basics of Nutrition for Skinny Guys Gaining Muscle

A Simple Guide on Nutrition  
[www.36pounds.com](http://www.36pounds.com)

By: Adrian

## Basics of Nutrition

I wrote this guide to make the most important part of building muscle easier to understand for guys just starting to train and gain muscle. Most skinny guys don't even know what to eat to or how much and when to eat in order to gain muscle. Well, I am here to help. Although I have to say this guide is far from being the most detailed one. I won't use fancy terms (unless really needed) nor will I go into great detail into things since I believe it is unnecessary.

This is a simple guide that will help you achieve results as far as muscle building goes I am neither expert, nor a guru. I just share my knowledge I've gained while training and gaining 22lbs of muscle.

I think it's great when you get to meet a guy in real life that knows a lot and can give you advice in the gym. I will try to be this guy for you. This guide is free. You are allowed to share this with your friends if they need help on gaining muscle as well.

I hope you will take this guide seriously and use it to your advantage. Now, let's get down to business!

***P.S. This guide is for skinny ectomorphs, if your body type is different or your goal is to lose weight this info is not ideal for you!***



*Picture from Flickr*

## 3 Basics of Gaining Muscle

In order to successfully gain muscle, you need to do these three things **CONSISTANTLY**. All three of these are really simple, but have a big impact in muscle building.

1. *Eat more than your maintenance level.*
2. *Train your whole body in a gym for 3 times a week.*
3. *Get plenty of rest*

These are the three simplest things you need to do. If you do these three things you **WILL** be gaining.

## 2 Monumental Mistakes Most Skinny Guys Do

I constantly see skinny guys doing tow huge mistakes that stand in their way of achieving body of their dreams.

The mistakes are:

### 1. *Guys think that muscles grow in the gym*

This is a very, very common mistake when guys think that muscles actually grow when you are in the gym. They train 5 times a week lifting for 2 hours. Some even go on a daily basis.

Guess what?! They are **KILLING** their muscles. They don't give time for their muscle to recover, let alone to grow!!! They need to **STIMULATE** the muscles with workouts, not annihilate them. Don't be one of those guys!

Your muscles only grow when you rest! They have to have a chance to recover from the micro trauma that lifting weights cause. If you go to the gym more than 3 times a week you are risking overtraining, not only to your muscles, but your Central Nervous System also.

When you over train your muscles, they will not grow. They won't get stronger and you will feel slow, have less energy and possibly depressed. If this happens, take a week off of training and get a lot of rest. I once over trained myself and I wasted a month like this! I'd go to gym 5 days straight, go to bed late, wake up for school. I wasn't gaining muscle or strength. The workouts felt useless. Do not repeat my mistake!!!

Instead you should workout 3 times a week and get 8-10 hours of sleep per night!

## 2. *You think you eat enough*

Another KILLER mistake that most skinny ectos do is think that they eat enough! Often, we overestimate how much we ate during the day and think we ate enough. It is common for a skinny guy to say “I eat a lot, a ton actually, but I can’t still gain.... It must be that damn fast metabolism; I really eat a lot. What should I do?”

Well guess what, you are under eating if you are not gaining muscle. 90% percent of the time this is the problem. You see, if you had actually started calculating calories of what you ate and see how much (actually how little) you eat, you would see that you are not eating enough!

First time I calculated calories I ate during the day, I was embarrassed!! I ate like a freakin’ bird! In my mind I thought I ate a lot. I had 3 square meals a day and I thought that was enough. The reality kicked me in the nuts as I still was skinny and didn’t gain a lot even though I busted my ass in the gym.

### **How much do you need to eat to be gaining muscle**

So how do you know the amount of food you need to be eating to gain muscle? Well, you have to start counting calories from now on. Really, it is necessary.

First off, we need to calculate your maintenance level (BMR or Basal Metabolic Rate). BMR is the amount of calories you need to eat per day to be able to maintain your current weight. If you eat fewer calories you will lose weight and if you eat more you will gain weight. It’s really simple! Now let’s calculate it:

$BMR = \text{weight} * 18$

See, really easy to remember and calculate!! ;) Now, you must take your weight in pounds (if you use kilograms multiply your weight in kilograms by 2.2) and then multiply by 18. So let’s take a guy who weights 110lbs as an example.

His BMR is:

$110 * 18 = 1980$  cal per day

Good, now we know how much you need to eat at minimum per day to keep your weight stable, but this is not enough to gain muscle. For that you need to add some more calories. Do this by adding 500 calories to your BMR:

$1980 + 500 = 2480$  cal per day

For some, this might look like a lot, but it really isn’t. Your caloric needs will also grow as you will gain muscle. So don’t forget to recalculate your BMR each time you gain a pound or two of muscle.

**ATTENTION:** This is a generalisation; for some guys at 110lbs this much cal may not be enough. If you count calories and still don’t grow, then add another 250cals. If those are not enough, add another 250 cal to it.

## **You need to count calories**

Before I started training and gaining muscle the only counting I did was counting if I had eaten three meals a day, if I didn't, oh well, no big deal, but it is a big deal!! I now count meals, proteins and calories I get a day!

It even changed the way I shop; now I go into to store not to get something tasty to eat, but to go to buy myself some protein, carbs, or a good snack full of calories like nuts. That's a bit weird, I know, but from now on you also have to look how good food is for you and how calorie dense food is.

For example, 100g of rice has more calories than 100g of spinach. Since you want to gain muscle, you need foods that are denser in calories. Also, another example is milk. You can drink whole milk or low-fat milk. Well, which would you choose? I hope you said whole because it has more calories per 100ml. Low Fat milk is for those who want to lose weight.

Counting calories SUCKS! But it is necessary! Otherwise, you will not get enough calories and that means:

YOU....

ARE....

SCREWED....!

No matter how hard you train you will not gain a pound. Eating enough calories is vital in order to build muscle and gain weight.

So from now, count your calories and give yourself a pat on the back every day you get 500 calories over you maintenance level because it just got you one step closer to your dream body!

## **Proteins, Carbohydrates and Fats**

Some very basic things you need to know about these essential nutrients:

### **Proteins:**

Proteins are the building blocks of muscle. Proteins consist of amino acids that are used not only to build muscle, but also for your teeth, skin, and hair. It helps them grow or repair themselves.

They have also become a Holy Grail of bodybuilding. Everyone is obsessed with them and trying to figure out how many grams you need to gain muscle. In my opinion it is enough to eat 1 gram of protein per pound of your body weight per day. That's it.

Others recommend eating as much as 1.5g or even 2 grams. Pro bodybuilders maybe need to eat that much since they are on steroids or low-carbohydrate diet and they want to preserve muscle loss when dieting, plus those steroids help them absorb more proteins. Also, I learned from Mike Menzer's book *Heavy Duty Nutrition* that proteins are just a small part of muscle tissue. Only 22 percent of it! So why overeat on proteins?

### **Carbohydrates:**

Carbs are primary fuel for our body. It provides us with energy to move, think, gain etc. Also glucose (a simple sugar) is the only source of energy for muscles and the best source of it is carbs. If you don't get enough of it then your body uses amino acids to derive it and because of that you lose some of the protein intake.

Carbs are definitely important! They are divided into simple and complex carbs. Simple carbs have different effect on blood-sugar levels than complex carbs and that's why people got this idea in their head about Glycemic Index (or GI). They try to manipulate what carbs they eat according to GI. But that is not needed so I won't even go to details. It would be making things more complicated than necessary. Just eat the damn carbs. Again, keep things simple!

### **Fats**

They are also necessary, but people also fear them a lot. They can cause high cholesterol levels or heart disease. Bad fats are saturated fats, but for us skinny guys it doesn't really apply. We don't want to lose fat.

Here is what Lyle McDonald, a great nutrition specialist has to say about fats: For someone who is lean and active eating plenty of fruits and vegetables, who eats in caloric balance (read has balanced nutrition), saturated fats cause no danger in health context even if there is increased intake of them.

Definitely don't be afraid to eat whole eggs. I see so many people eating only egg whites because of fear. In my opinion, they are mistaken and miss out on the tastiest part of the egg!

Also, saturated fats are necessary to keep your testosterone level optimal in your body which is incredibly important when gaining muscle.

Along saturated fats there are unsaturated fats and Essential Fatty Acids (EFAs). You must get some EFAs from your food so be sure to eat nuts and fish (salmon, mackerel, trout).

### **Water:**

Water is important in gaining muscle because it keeps you hydrated and is 70 percent of muscle. This doesn't mean you have to drink incredible amounts of water to gain muscle; you will just go to pee more often, but drink it whenever you are thirsty.

## The Meal plan

Ok, it's now time to give an example meal plan for the day.

**Meal 1:** Omelette with tomatoes, banana

**Meal 2:** 50g of nuts or dried fruits, 250ml of milk

**Meal 3:** Chicken breast, rice, and glass of milk

**Post workout meal:** Can of tuna, banana or apple

**Meal 5:** Chicken or turkey with pasta and glass of milk

**Meal 6:** bowl of Cottage cheese and some nuts or dried fruits

This is only example, no need to eat exactly like this. It is tough to eat chicken twice a day for a long time for example, so if you can, keep your diet as various as possible.

I also suggest you prepare meals in advance, if you have to work for example and are very busy do all the kitchen work before work or whenever you have free time.

By the way, you probably noticed that I don't mention protein shake after workout. I don't use it anymore. I decided to spend that money on real food or something else. I don't trust supplement companies too much after seeing how easy it is to make a supplement and sell it (saw it in movie *Bigger Stronger Faster*, which I recommend).

If you want to get something straight after a workout then I suggest you make yourself this DELICIOUS shake:

*Use 300ml of milk, 150g or more of ice cream, banana and some blueberries. Put them all in the blender, blend them. Enjoy!*



## Foods for gaining muscle

Here is a list of best foods for you to help you keep the diet various and delicious.

### Protein

Yogurt	Buffalo	Shrimp	Venison
Eggs	Ostrich	Boneless, Skinless Chicken Breast	Tuna (water packed)
Cottage cheese, Ricotta			
Ground Turkey, Turkey Breast slices or cutlets	Extra Lean Ground Beef or Ground Round (92-96%)	Protein Powder (Whey, Casein, Soy, Egg)	Fish (salmon, sea bass, halibut, sushi, mahi mahi, Orange roughi, tilapia, Sardines)

### Complex Carbs (nothing enriched, bleached or processed if possible)

Sweet Potatoes, Yams	Whole Wheat Bread	Potatoes (red, white, baking)
Oatmeal (Old fashioned, Quick oats, Irish steal cut)	Beans (Black eyed, Pinto, Red, Kidney, Black)	Oat Bran Cereal, Grape nuts, Rye cereal, Multi grain hot cereal
Whole Wheat frozen Bagels, Pitas	Whole wheat or Spinach Pasta, Whey Pasta	Rice (Brown, white, jasmine, basmati, Arborio, wild)

### Fibrous Carbs

Broccoli	Spinach	String Beans
Asparagus	Celery	Pumpkin
Carrots	Eggplant	Cucumber
Onions	Garlic	Cabbage
Cauliflower	Brussels Sprouts	Tomatoes
Zucchini	Bell Peppers (Green or Red)	Green Leafy lettuce (red, green, romaine)

## Fruit

bananas	grapefruit	blueberries
oranges	limes	strawberries
apples	lemons	raspberries
peaches		

## Healthy Fats

Olive oil	Fish Oil	Natural Style Peanut Butter
Safflower oil	Flaxseed oil	Nuts (peanuts, almonds, walnuts, pistachios)

## Dairy

Ricotta	Cottage cheese
Eggs	Yoghurt
Milk	



## The end

So, this is the end of this short guide on nutrition. I don't think guys should be too concerned about nutrition. If you want to get more info I recommend you read some Lyle McDonald's stuff and of course there will be more information on my blog at [www.36pounds.com](http://www.36pounds.com) on nutrition in future!

Cheers and go eat now,  
Adrian