



Carbs & Cals



FREE APP
iPhone &
Android

✓ Type 1 Diabetes

✓ Type 2 Diabetes

BASICS TO CARB COUNTING

Carbohydrate is the main nutrient that affects the rise in blood glucose after eating. Counting carbs is an essential skill for people with type 1 diabetes, so that the amount of insulin and carbohydrate can be matched to manage blood glucose levels. It's also a valuable skill for people with type 2 diabetes who are limiting their carb intake.

★ STARTING OUT ★

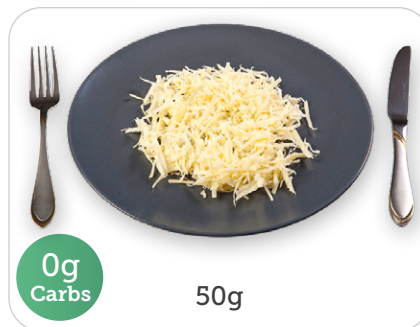
The first step in counting carbohydrates is to identify the foods that contain carbs, and those which don't. As a general guide, the following foods contain very little or no carbohydrate and therefore can be disregarded for counting:

- ★ Meat, fish and shellfish
- ★ Cheese
- ★ Fat spreads, butter and oil
- ★ Eggs
- ★ Nuts
- ★ Most vegetables and salad items

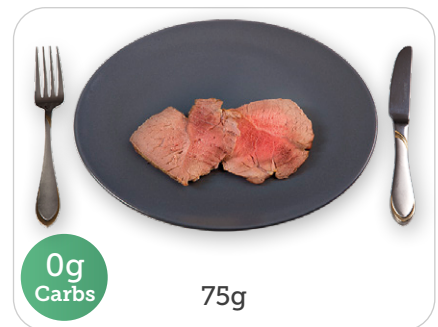
Poached Eggs



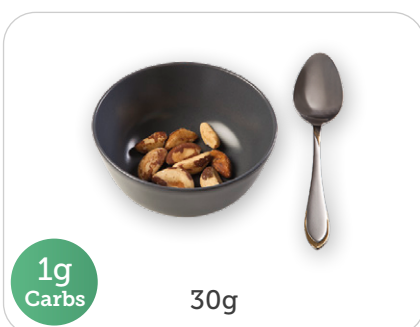
Cheddar (grated)



Roast Beef



Brazil Nuts



Butter



Mixed Salad Leaves



Carb foods you wouldn't normally count

Other foods may contain carbohydrate that has little or no effect on blood glucose because it is absorbed very slowly. Please see our separate guide on this topic, which highlights some examples.

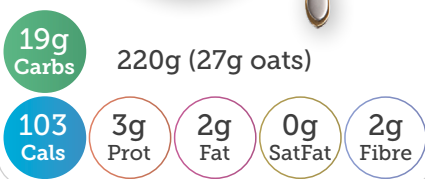
Counting carbs

For all other foods that contain carbohydrate, the [Carbs & Cals book](#) or [app](#) can be used to estimate the carbohydrate content, which is usually estimated in either grams (g) or as Carbohydrate Portions (CPs). One CP is equal to roughly 10g of carbohydrate. For example, a medium slice of bread contains 15g of carbohydrate or 1½ CPs. The [Carbs & Cals book](#) and [app](#) use grams of carbohydrate, so if you use CPs simply divide the number of grams by 10 to convert to CPs.

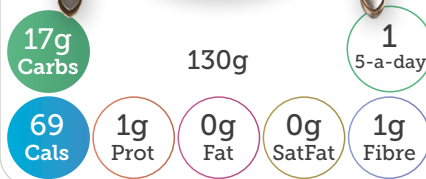
Using Carbs & Cals

To estimate the carbohydrate content of a meal, find the carbohydrate values for the appropriate portion of each part of the meal using the [Carbs & Cals book](#) or [app](#), and add these together to get the total. This is demonstrated in the example below.

Porridge (with water)



Banana



Orange Juice



Porridge: 19g + Banana: 17g + Juice: 12g = **48g Carbs or 5CPs**

★ KEY POINT ★

The essential skill of estimating the carbohydrate content of food and drink becomes easier with practice and, as the accuracy of your carbohydrate estimation improves, so does your ability to manage your blood glucose levels.