

Beginner's guide to plant-based eating

Thinking about joining the move to plant-based eating but not sure where to start?

The many benefits of a whole-grain, plant-based diet are very well known and the trend towards plant-based eating is growing significantly.

If such a change seems a bit overwhelming to start, here are some tips to ease your way.

- **Try “Meatless Mondays”** – you may want to start with just one day a week on which you make your meals wholly plant-based. Gradually increase the number of meals per week that are based around whole grains and vegetables. Make meat the side dish, until one day you’ll realize that you’ve left it out entirely and don’t miss it!
- Give a **“plant-based makeover”** to your favourite family meals. Here are a few suggestions:
 - *Lentil Bolognese – just use cooked black or green lentils in your tomato sauce instead of beef mince.*
 - *Veggie Mexican Chilli bowl – leave out the meat and add black beans, roasted red peppers and your favourite chilli spice!*
 - *Mushroom burgers and sweet potato baked fries*
- **Focus on the big changes** – for example, you may want to start by cutting out red and processed meats from your meals. There are plenty of ways to substitute plant-based alternatives such as lentils, beans, and tofu. Gradually move to reduce dairy, using plant-based milks instead. Beware: highly processed “meat free” products can be just as unhealthy as the meat version, particularly if packed with oils and sugars and artificial flavourings and preservatives.
- **Plan ahead!** Making a meal plan for the week can keep you on track and help keep things varied and interesting.
- Set aside time for **batch cooking**. Eating a diverse range of whole, natural foods will involve cooking, so be curious, explore the vast number of plant-based/vegan recipes out there, and get to know your spices and flavourings! It can be an exciting adventure into healthy eating.



You'll be surprised at how good you feel after making the change to plant-based eating!