

BLUE ZONES[®]

KITCHEN CHECKLIST

Did you know you could consume 100 fewer calories every day without even thinking about it? According to Dr. Brian Wansink and other scientists at Cornell University's Food and Brand Lab, the setup of your kitchen greatly impacts what and how much you eat. In his book, *Mindless Eating: Why We Eat More Than We Think*, Wansink showed that simply making small changes in your kitchen can lead you and your family to "mindlessly" or effortlessly eat less and better food.

The Blue Zones[®] Kitchen Checklist will help you determine the impact your current kitchen has on both the quality and quantity of your own food consumption. The answers will help you see where you can make small, simple changes to facilitate healthy and conscious eating.



DIRECTIONS

1. Print and fill out the questionnaire while walking through your kitchen.
2. Add up your points to see your score.
3. Start making changes to your kitchen based on the recommendations given. These changes don't have to be made all at once—pick the easier ones to start with and continue completing at least one item each week.
4. Complete this tool again in three months to see how many points you've gained and how much your rankings have improved!

Check off each item you are currently doing, and add up the points to see how supportive your kitchen environment is of healthy, conscious eating.

	I DO THIS NOW	POINTS
STORE ALL OF YOUR SNACKS IN PROPORTIONED, SMALL BAGS		
<p>How to do it: When you buy snacks like pretzels, portion them into small bags to avoid overeating. For a great way to portion out your snacks, check out portioning items at your local store.</p> <p>Why do it? Re-bagging your snacks will help you eat reasonably sized portions. Additionally, you actually burn more calories by preparing fresh meals and snacks.¹</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
DEDICATE THE TOP SHELF OF YOUR REFRIGERATOR TO FRUITS AND VEGETABLES		
<p>How to do it: Get in the habit of keeping your healthy foods in the front of the top shelf of your refrigerator.</p> <p>Why do it? Placing the healthy options at eye level will encourage you to snack mindfully.²</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
ONLY OWN DINNER PLATES THAT ARE 10-INCHES OR SMALLER		
<p>How to do it: Replace your oversized plates with smaller 10-inch plates.</p> <p>Why do it? Eating on 10-inch plates promotes eating smaller portions. Over the last 20 years, the average U.S. dinner plate has grown to over 12 inches. During the same time frame we are eating 22% more calories. The easiest, mindless way to eat less is to eat off smaller plates.³</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
DRINK BEVERAGES OUT OF TALL, NARROW GLASSES – NO MORE THAN 2.5-INCHES IN DIAMETER		
<p>How to do it: Replace your big gulp drinking glasses with narrow, cylinder shaped glasses.⁴</p> <p>Why do it? We visually measure our drinks by the height, not the width, of the glass. It's far better to drink out of narrow glasses because we THINK we are drinking more than we are.⁵ Switching from the "Big Slurp" size glasses to more normal sizes will help you consume less.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
CREATE A JUNK FOOD DRAWER		
<p>How to do it: Put unhealthy snacks and food out of eyes' reach on bottom shelves or behind cabinet doors. Label it "Junk Food."</p> <p>Why do it? Most junk food is consumed because you see it and it looks good. If you're going to have junk food in your house, hiding it from your line of vision will dramatically decrease consumption.⁶</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5

PRE-PLATE YOUR FOOD

How to do it: Plate your entire meal before sitting down at the table. Avoid eating family style by leaving the serving dishes on the counter.

3

Why do it? Leave the serving dishes on the counter – not on the table – so you won't be tempted to take more food than you're hungry for. Research has shown that when people pre-plate their food, they consume about 14% less than when they take multiple, smaller servings as seen in family style dining.⁷

REMOVE THE TV FROM YOUR KITCHEN AND DINING ROOM

How to do it: Remove the TV from your eating environment.

5

Why do it? When other things are going on in your eating environment, you are more likely to pay attention to them rather than the food you are consuming.⁸ Avoid multi-tasking while you eat by turning off the TV and radio. Practice this habit while you're at work, too—try not to work while eating. Take some time away from your desk to eat lunch.

PUT A FILLED FRUIT BOWL ON YOUR COUNTERTOP

How to do it: Take a fruit bowl you already have and put it on your countertop in a well-lit, prominent place.

3

Why do it? Placing the healthy options in convenient, eye-level locations will encourage you to snack mindfully.⁹ Keeping the fruit bowl filled will also encourage you to buy a variety of fresh produce items.

USE HAND OPERATED KITCHEN APPLIANCES

How to do it: Get rid of your electric can opener and use a hand operated one instead. Also get a potato masher and garlic press, rather than an electric mixer.

3

Why do it? Manual kitchen tasks encourage hand and arm strengthening. Try squeezing fruit juice, mashing potatoes or beans, and opening cans manually.

PLACE A LONGEVITY FOOD MAGNET ON YOUR REFRIGERATOR

How to do it: Put the longevity food magnet on your refrigerator door or in another prominent area in your kitchen.

5

Why do it? The magnet lists the best longevity foods to have in your kitchen at all times and the worst junk food to keep out of your kitchen. This magnet will help remind you to be conscious of what you're eating.

TOTAL POINTS (40 possible):

TOTALS

35+ points: Blue Zones Kitchen. You have set up your eating environment in a way that allows you to eat healthy meals and snacks. Can you get yourself all the way to scoring 40/40 points?

25 to 34: Mindful Eater. You are well on your way to creating an ideal eating environment. What other changes are you going to make to have a Blue Zones Kitchen?

15 to 24: On Your Way. When you begin to pair many of these behaviors together, you'll start seeing a healthier environment. Which item is first on your list of changes? Get started on that right now.

Below 15: Just Getting Started. Everyone has to start somewhere. Begin the process by prioritizing the changes you want to make and start on them tomorrow.

REFERENCES

¹Wansink, Brian and Koert van Ittersum (2007), "Portion Size Me: Downsizing Our Consumption Norms," Journal of the American Dietetic Association, 107:7 (July), 1103-1106.

²Chandon, Pierre and Brian Wansink (2002), "When Are Stockpiled Products Consumed Faster? A Convenience--Salience Framework of Postpurchase Consumption Incidence and Quantity," Journal of Marketing Research, 39 (3), 321-35.

³Wansink, Brian (2010), "From Mindless Eating to Mindlessly Eating Better," Physiology & Behavior, 100, 454-463, and "The Perils of Plate Size: Waist, Waste, and Wallet" (2011), Brian Wansink and Koert van Ittersum, under review at Journal of Experimental Psychology.

⁴Wansink, Brian and Koert van Ittersum (2003), "Bottoms Up! The Influence of Elongation and Pouring on Consumption Volume," Journal of Consumer Research, 30:3 (December), 455-463.

⁵Wansink, Brian, Koert van Ittersum, and James E. Painter (2006), "Ice Cream Illusions: Bowl Size, Spoon Size, and Serving Size," American Journal of Preventive Medicine, 145:5 (September), 240-243.

⁶Painter, James E., Brian Wansink, and Julie B. Hieggelke (2002), "How Visibility and Convenience Influence Candy Consumption," Appetite, 38:3 (June), 237-238.

⁷Wansink, Brian and Collin R. Payne (2011), "Serve it Here; Eat it There: Serving Off the Stove Results in Less Food Intake than Serving Off the Table," FASEB Journal, 2:878.7, forthcoming.

⁸Wansink, Brian (2006). "Mindless Eating: Why We Eat More Than We Think," Bantam-Dell: New York.

⁹Wansink, Brian, James E. Painter and Yeon-Kyung Lee (2006), "The Office Candy Dish: Proximity's Influence on Estimated and Actual Candy Consumption," International Journal of Obesity, 30:5 (May), 871-5.