

ANSWERING THE UK'S 5 BIGGEST NUTRITION QUESTIONS

The five most asked nutrition questions in the UK — and what our nutritionist actually had to say about each one.

01 How much protein do I need to build muscle?

Research consistently shows that for most people, around **1.6g of protein per kg of bodyweight** is going to be the sweet spot for building muscle. There is potentially a benefit from going up as high as 2.2g/kg, but you'll likely start to get diminishing returns from a muscle-building point of view. Getting in enough resistance training and the right intensity to stimulate muscle growth is an even more important factor. Your body won't build muscle unless you tell it it needs to!

02 What should I eat before and after a workout?

Pre-workout: carbs are your friend! If you're doing a strength session, you might not need tonnes. For a cardio workout, they become more important. Ideally you'd eat a balanced meal with a mix of carbs and protein around 2-3 hours before training, then maybe top up with a snack like a piece of fruit ~45 minutes beforehand. Those training early in the morning might need to rely on caffeine and liquid carbs like fruit juice. After training, a mixed meal with a good dose of protein, carbs and fats within the next few hours will get the recovery process started.

03 How many calories should I eat a day?

This depends on lots of things — including your current goals! By far the biggest determining factor for how much energy a body needs to sustain it is simply the size of the person. Age, gender and activity level all contribute too. You can find plenty of online calculators that will give you an estimate (most predictive equations are likely to give pretty close answers to one another!). You should consider your training, both frequency and intensity, but also things like daily steps, how sedentary your job is, and any active hobbies you have.

04 Can I lose fat and build muscle at the same time?

It's absolutely possible, and probably a little bit easier to achieve if you're brand new to training. This requires being strategic and paying attention to your strength training, maintaining a moderate calorie deficit, and eating enough protein consistently. It's entirely achievable but requires patience and attention to detail to maximise your chances of achieving it.

05 Are ultra-processed foods (UPFs) bad for you?

There's a lot of debate about this one! I think we can all agree that a diet consisting entirely of UPFs wouldn't be the best thing for you, but it doesn't mean we need to fear these foods and that it's automatically "bad" to eat them. There are lots of times when processed versions of foods are cheaper, last longer or more fit-for-purpose (for example, an athletic performance situation). The poison is in the dose. So **aim for a diet mostly consisting of whole foods**, but don't panic when you see an ingredients list with something you haven't heard of on it.

WANT TO GO DEEPER?

Follow [@groundwork_training](https://www.instagram.com/groundwork_training) on Instagram to learn more about what we do.