How Many Calories Do YOU Need to Eat to Lose Weight Lesson Overview

To determine how many calories it is that you need to eat to lose weight, we're going to use the Harris-Benedict formula. Here's the formula:

Step 1: Plug Your Info into the Following Equation

For Men:

Metric Formula: 66.5 + (13.75 x weight in kg)+(5.003 x height in cm) - (6.755 x age in years)
Imperial Formula: 66 + (6.2 x weight in pounds) + (12.7 x height in inches) - (6.76 x age in years)

For Women:

Metric Formula: 655.1 + (9.563 x weight in kg) + (1.850 x height in cm) - (4.676 x age in years)
Imperial Formula: 655.1 + (4.35 x weight in pounds) + (4.37 x height in inches) - (4.7 x age in years)

Step 2: Multiply the number you get in step 1 by the appropriate activity multiplier

- Sedentary with little to no exercise: multiply number from step one by 1.2
- Exercise 1-3 times per week: multiply number from step one by 1.3
- Exercise 4-5 times per week: multiply number from step one by 1.5
- Exercise 6-7 times per week: multiply number from step one by 1.7
- Exercise everyday with labor intensive job: multiply number from step one by 1.9

***Note** it's important to be honest with yourself when it comes to the activity multiplier. If you use the wrong activity multiplier, then it can throw everything off. Therefore if you're not sure which category you fall into go with the lesser multiplier of the two. For example, if you're not sure if you fall into the 1.2 or 1.3 category, then go with the 1.2 category just to be safe.

Here's an example of how this works using the 30 year old 220-pound male (99.8 kg) at 5'10" (177 cm) that I talked about in the video:

Metric Formula: 66.5 + (13.75 x 99.8)+(5.003 x 177) - (6.755 x 30)= 2,116
Imperial Formula: 66 + (6.2 x 220) + (12.7 x 70) - (6.76 x 30)= 2,116

That would complete Step 1 of the formula. You would then take that number (2,116 in this case) and multiply it by the appropriate multiplier based on your activity level. In this case, the individual is sedentary, so we'll multiply the number found in Step 1 by 1.2:

2,116x1.2=2,539

Step 3: Subtract 500 to Create a Caloric Deficit

Therefore, this individual's maintenance calories are 2,539. He needs to eat less than this if he wants to lose body fat. The optimal rate to go about this would be to create a weekly deficit of 3,500 calories since there are approximately 3,500 calories in one pound of fat. You can of course create whatever sized deficits that you want on a day-to-day basis as long as it comes out to around 3,500 calories by the end of the week. For example, maybe one day you create a 1,000 calorie deficit and another day you only create a 250 calorie deficit. Or you can do 500 calorie deficits each and every day, it's up to you. Doing anything more than a 3,500 calorie deficit per week isn't going to be sustainable for the long haul. For the sake of this example, I'm just going to subtract 500 to create the same-sized deficit everyday for a total of 1 pound of fat loss per week:

2,539-500=2,039

Therefore if this person eats 2,039 calories per day, he'll lose 1 pound of body fat per week. That might not sound like a lot, but remember we're talking about pure fat loss here, not water weight. It adds up fast to make a big impact on the way that you look. And if you don't believe search online for a picture of what 5 pounds of fat looks like!