

# Food Scales Help You Control Portions, Slim Down

For many, summer is a wake-up call for shedding unwanted pounds. And buying a food scale is a smart first step.

**Portion Education.** It's easy to underestimate portion sizes, but a food scale reveals the undeniable truth about how much food

you're really putting on your plate. It also helps you visualize. "Even doing it just once or twice can be helpful," says Lisa Young, Ph.D., R.D., author of *The Portion Teller Plan: The No-Diet Reality Guide to Eating, Cheating and Losing Weight Permanently* (Morgan Road Books, 2006).

Learning how to eyeball portion sizes accurately is an important skill, since it's not always practical to weigh your food.

**Weighing Pros and Cons.** Food scales have come a long way from traditional dial-based (analog) models. New digital scales are more precise and can weigh foods in 1/8-ounce or 1/4-ounce increments.

To narrow your choices, first decide the type of scale you want: 1) a digital scale that only weighs food, 2) a digital scale that also gives nutrition information or 3) a less expensive analog scale.

Scales that provide nutrition information may satisfy a curiosity about what's in your food—assuming it's in the database—but these scales are cumbersome to use. Some let you view only one nutrient at a time. Others can calculate and simultaneously display many nutrients.

Some scales keep track of your day's intake, but keep in mind that it's time-consuming to input everything you eat.

**EN's Bottom Line.** A scale that simply weighs and measures food is really all you need. But before you buy, consider:

- What is maximum weighing capacity?
- What increments are used for weight?
- Is there an "add-and-weigh" feature to allow you to weigh many items in the same container sequentially?
- How many and what type of batteries?

For nutrition data models, find out:

- How many foods are in the database?
- Which nutrients are provided?
- How do you enter a food item—by looking up the code in a manual or by scrolling through a list of possibilities?
- How many nutrients are displayed at one time?

—Adrienne Forman, M.S., R.D.

## Weighing In on Selected Food Scales

| Brand   | Features   | Cost*                   | EN Comments  |
|---|--|-------------------------|--|
| <b>ANALOG SCALE</b>   |  |                         |  |
| <b>Metrokane Gourmet Weigh Scale</b><br><i>www.cooking.com</i><br>800-663-8810                                  | Stainless steel tray.<br>Measures up to 2 lbs.<br>Reads in ounces or grams.  | \$22.95 +<br>\$5.77 s&h | Nondigital scale with<br>easy-to-read face.  |
| <b>BASIC DIGITAL SCALES</b>   |  |                         |  |
| <b>Salter Stainless Steel Electronic Kitchen Scale S1004</b><br><i>www.kitchen-universe.com</i><br>800-481-6679 | Add-and-weigh feature.<br>Measures up to 11 lbs in<br>1/8-oz or 1/4-oz increments.   | \$59.95,<br>free s&h    | Easy to use.<br>Weighs foods directly on<br>platform or in bowl.<br>Requires lithium batteries.  |
| <b>Polder Easy-Read Digital Kitchen Scale KSC-310</b><br><i>www.amazon.com</i>                                  | Add-and-weigh feature.<br>Measures up to 7 lbs<br>in 1/8-oz increments.  | \$40.00,<br>free s&h    | Large easy-to-read display.  |
| <b>Tanita Digital Pocket Scale with Tray/Cover 1475T</b><br><i>www.scalesgalore.com</i><br>800-832-0055         | Measures up to 42 oz in<br>0.05-oz or 0.1-oz<br>increments.  | \$94.95 +<br>\$6.95 s&h | Palm-sized, handy for<br>travel.<br>Expensive.<br>Requires watch batteries.  |
| <b>NUTRITIONAL DATA DIGITAL SCALES</b>  |  |                         |  |
| <b>Salter Nutri-Weigh Dietary Computer Scale S1450</b><br><i>www.kitchen-universe.com</i><br>800-481-6679       | More than 1,440 foods,<br>11 nutrients.<br>Add-and-weigh feature.<br>Tracks foods consumed.<br>Measures up to 6 lbs 10 oz<br>in 1/8-oz increments.<br>Can measure liquids.               | \$99.95,<br>free s&h    | Must enter food on keypad;<br>may have to scroll to find<br>item in common food<br>categories like chicken<br>and cheese.  |
| <b>Soehnle Food Control Electronic Kitchen Scale 69012</b><br><i>www.kitchen-universe.com</i><br>800-481-6679   | 425 foods, 5 nutrients.<br>Recalls accumulated<br>nutrition values.<br>Add-and-weigh feature.<br>Measures up to 4 lbs 6.5 oz in<br>0.05-oz or 0.1-oz increments.<br>Can measure liquids. | \$89.95,<br>free s&h    | Must use 3-digit food codes.<br>Shows one nutrient at a time.<br>Displays net carbs and<br>glycemic index, but<br>neither is necessary.<br>Requires lithium battery. |
| <b>Escali Cibo 63N</b><br><i>www.cutleryandmore.com</i><br>800-650-9866   | 999 foods, 7 nutrients.<br>Recalls accumulated<br>nutrition values.<br>Add-and-weigh feature.<br>Measures up to 6.6 lbs<br>in 0.1-oz increments.   | \$59.95,<br>free s&h    | Easy-to-use.<br>Excellent interactive demo<br>and downloadable manual<br>with food codes at<br><i>www.escali.com</i> .   |

\* Prices and shipping charges may vary; chart reflects prices of website vendors listed.  
s&h = shipping and handling

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