



Is Your Kitchen Making You Fat?

Experts say that just reorganizing can help you lose weight. Yes, please!

By Shaun Dreisbach

Nutritionists tell *Glamour* they see a spike in weight gain at this time of year, as we all eat more now that swimsuit season is over. How can you fight that phenomenon—without a bikini diet? The secret could be rearranging things at home. "How your kitchen is set up can be a huge influence on how healthy you eat," says Rachel Beller, R.D., author of *Eat to Lose, Eat to Win*. She knows because she's done countless in-home visits, examining clients' cupboards and Sub-Zeros to see what's really going on in there. "It's the dietary equivalent of going through someone's underwear drawer," she says.

There's even research—reams of it, actually—on the mistakes we normally make. Read on, then check your kitchen for these top fat traps.

The trap: Jars of snacks in the open

"Clear canisters filled with crackers or M&M's are the worst, because when you're hanging out at the kitchen island, you'll start munching," says Beller. Even jars filled with healthy snacks are nonos. "The last house I went to had containers of almonds and prunes—'good' snacks the **Continued on next page**

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woman was proud to show off. She was shocked when I told her the three handfuls of nuts she ate yesterday clocked in at 510 calories!"The fix? Replace the canisters with a bowl of fruit. You'll still have calories in plain sight—but you're looking at less than 100 for almost every type you can grab, plus you get antioxidants and fiber. Bonus points for using a beautiful bowl in a well-lit part of the kitchen. Doing so, research shows, makes people twice as likely to pick up a piece.

The trap: An empty spot by your stove

Yes, the emptiness is the problem. Here's why: Cooking at home is almost always healthier than ordering in (or filling up on Cheez-Its). "But often the roadblock is having to go to the pantry and pull out the basics, which means you're more likely to say, 'Forget it,' and order a pizza instead," says Beller. "Having a few things corralled by the stove takes away the mental block." So keep olive oil, salt, pepper, and a few key spices—just the ones you use all the time—right by your stove, subtly calling to you, "Psst...fix something healthy! We'll help."

The trap: Gadgets on the counter

Believe it or not, more appliances is not better, healthwise. In fact, "for a recent study, we went into 240 people's homes, noted everything on their counters, and recorded how much the subjects weighed," says researcher Brian Wansink, Ph.D., director of Cornell University's Food and Brand Lab and author of Mindless Eating: Why We Eat More Than We Think. "We found you can actually estimate someone's weightwithout even seeing her-based on what's on her countertops. The more appliances, the heavier the people were." True, smoothies and fresh juices can be healthy. The problem, Wansink says, is that you'll spot your blender and whip up a smoothie when you don't really need it: "Gadgets are reminders of what we might be hungry for. 'Hey, make toast! Whip up a milkshake!' Store your toaster, blender, or food processor in a cupboard or pantry instead."



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-researcher Brian Wansink, Ph.D. (Fruit is good; appliances are bad!)

The trap: Your little kitchen TV

You probably know that watching television encourages mindless overeating. But there's a second, even sneakier problem: A recent British study found that not only did people consume about 10 percent more when they munched while distracted, but they also eat over 25 percent more than usual at their next meal. Researchers say we're so mesmerized when noshing our way through New Girl, we have no memory of eating—so we crave extra food later to make up for the perceived void.

The trap: A pantry stocked like a supermarket

No one expects you to have only kale chips in there. But where you put the so-so foods and the virtuous ones is key:

"People keep the most enticing items front and center," says Wansink. Yet research shows you're three times more likely to grab the first thing you see than the fifth. Adds Beller, "It's like at the grocery store: They put fattening, processed foods at eye level, and healthy stuff by your feet." You want to arrange things anti-supermarket-style. Stash the chips and Keeblers in a hard-toreach spot and the healthier stuff up front, including meal-building items like tuna, beans, and whole-wheat pasta. (If you have kids, store their snacks at the bottom-within their reach but out of your sight line.) Same with the freezer: turkey burgers and frozen veggies in front, ice cream in back. "If you see good options, you'll grab them," explains Beller, "instead of a takeout menu."