

# ***How to Enjoy a Few Drinks WITHOUT Gaining Weight***



Below you'll find **10 tips** for reducing sugar and calories when drinking, as well as **20 delicious, lower-calorie cocktail recipes**.

But it's also important that you have a plan that allows you to enjoy yourself *without* sabotaging your weight loss progress. Follow these 4 simple steps:

**STEP 1. Be a little more active that day** – whether that's a 15-minute longer workout... or playing with your kids... or going on a bike ride, playing tennis, or whatever. Just be more active the day you plan on having a few drinks.

**STEP 2. Be a little stricter with your meals** that day and focus on veggies and protein, as they offer the lowest calories and the most amount of nutrients.

For example, let's say you normally have chicken fajitas on Friday for lunch. Instead of using a tortilla, use romaine or bibb lettuce to wrap your chicken and veggies. This simple change alone will save you about 200 calories (and it's still really tasty).

**STEP 3. Choose lower calorie options**, such as the 20 cocktail recipes listed below. Or if you're going out to a restaurant or a bar, see the 10 tips below.

**STEP 4. Get right back on track the next morning.** Don't be one of those people that figures they blew it Friday so they might as well go crazy the rest of the weekend, and then "start over" on Monday. Have fun on Friday, but get right back on the plan the next day.

Now, if you follow step 1 and 2, you'll likely have expended an *EXTRA* 200 – 300 calories ... and consumed 300 – 500 *LESS* calories.

So, you'll be going into the party with a "budget" of 500 – 800 calories that you can use to enjoy (lower calorie) cocktails, beer, and wine.

And that's how you enjoy a few drinks AND still make progress towards your weight loss goal!

*Chad Tackett*

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# 10 Tips for Reducing Cocktail Calories



Alcoholic drinks can be a sneaky source of calories, sugar, and even salt – but not when you play bartender. Here are 10 tips for cutting down the calories while still enjoying your favorite cocktail:

**1. Use only fresh-squeezed or 100 percent fruit** juice to reduce added sugars. Fruit juice can still be high in sugar, though, so sometimes it's best to dilute it with water or ice to cut back on calories.

**2. Choose seltzer water over other carbonated waters** to eliminate added sodium and other additives. For recipes that call for soda, skimp on portions, or try *Crystal Light Pure* (the natural version).

I'm not sure how a dirty martini would be when cutting back on half of the vodka/gin and replacing it with seltzer or diet tonic or club soda?... but that's what I'd try, so that you can cut the calories in half and still enjoy a couple drinks with friends.

**3. Make simple syrup with honey**, which has some added benefits, like a healthy dose of antioxidants. It also gives you better control of the sugar content. Any recipe that calls for simple syrup will use the following recipe: 1/2 tablespoon honey mixed with 3/4 tablespoon warm water. You can also



make simple syrup with Stevia.

**4. Use whole fruit instead of sugar or flavored syrups.** The fruit itself adds fiber, natural sugars, and vitamins.

**5. Choose light alcohol over dark alcohol.** The dark stuff contains more compounds known as congeners, which can worsen hangovers.

**6. Limit yourself to one shot per drink.** Multi-alcohol cocktails can pack in serious calories, so we kept ours to one shot (or 1 1/2 ounces) each. The shooters and shots we included actually contain less than one shot each to further lessen the caloric load.

**7. Size matters**—especially when it comes to consuming liquid calories. That's why we kept all our drinks right around the 8-ounce mark.

**8. Choose nutritious ingredients.** Ginger, coffee and lemon star in several of our drinks. They've each got their own proven health benefits, even though they may not totally counteract the negative affects of alcohol.

**9. Don't forget water.** For every alcoholic drink you have, drink at least one extra glass of water. This will help your body metabolize the alcohol and may counteract some of the dehydrating effects of the alcohol on the body, such as next-day hangovers.

**10. Don't drink on an empty stomach.** Skimping on food in order to make room for drinks will most likely end up backfiring. Here's why: Most cocktails are loaded with sugar, so during a night of drinking, people end up with soaring blood sugar, followed by a crash that leaves them ready to devour anything in sight.

You can prevent this from happening by having a snack at home before you

go out that includes a protein, natural carb with fiber, and a small amount of healthy fat. A good example would be a half an apple, string cheese, and a large glass of water. Greek yogurt, berries, and almonds is another good one.

Well-balanced, healthy snacks like this will help stabilize your blood-sugar without slowing down your metabolism. An added benefit of snacking before having a drink is that the alcohol will be absorbed more slowly into the bloodstream, thereby minimizing its fat loss-damaging effects.

## ***20 Lower Calorie Cocktail Recipes***



### **1. Classic Mojito**

In the bottom of a glass, muddle 12 fresh mint leaves, the juice of 1/2 lime, and 1 tablespoon simple syrup. Add a few ice cubes and pour in 1 1/2 ounces (one shot) of light rum and 3/4 cup seltzer. Garnish with a lime wedge.

### **2. Fruit Mojito**

Prep a classic mojito, but before pouring in the rum and soda, muddle in 1/4 cup fresh or thawed frozen fruit like strawberry, blueberry, mango, or kiwi in the bottom of the glass. Top with ice, rum, and seltzer and garnish as desired!

### **3. Sea Breeze**

Pour 1 shot vodka, 1 shot cranberry juice (100 percent juice, no sugar added), and 1 shot fresh-squeezed grapefruit juice over ice. Add a splash of seltzer and enjoy!

### **4. Berry Lemonade**

In the bottom of an 8-ounce glass, muddle the juice of 1 lemon,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup frozen blueberries or strawberries, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  shot simple syrup. Pour in 1 shot of vodka and top with seltzer (about  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup).

### **5. Minty Iced Tea**

In a heatproof mug, combine 6 fresh mint leaves, 1 teaspoon honey, 1 black tea bag, and 1 cup boiling water. Cover and let sit for 2 minutes. Then, place mug in fridge or freezer until chilled. Remove tea bag and mint, and pour liquid into a glass with ice. Add 1 shot of vodka and garnish with a lemon wedge.

### **6. Grapefruit Margarita**

Combine 1 shot of tequila, the juice of 1 lime and  $\frac{1}{2}$  a grapefruit, and  $\frac{3}{4}$  shot of orange liqueur. Pour over ice.

### **7. Light White Russian**

Combine 2 shots brewed coffee (or espresso!) chilled and  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup skim milk. Add 1 shot of vodka and a few ice cubes and stir.

### **8. Rosemary-Cucumber Lemonade**

Stir together juice from 3 lemons and 1 teaspoon honey. Add 1 shot rosemary-infused vodka and  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup seltzer. Garnish with a cucumber spear and lemon wedge.

### **9. Pear Martini**

Muddle half a very ripe peeled pear in the bottom of a cocktail shaker. Add

ice, 1/2 shots fresh-squeezed lemon juice, and 1 shot pear vodka. Strain into a martini glass and garnish with a slice of fresh pear.

### **10. Sex on the Beach**

In a glass with ice, mix 1 shot peach-flavored vodka, 2 shots cranberry juice, and 1 1/2 shots fresh-squeezed orange juice. Add a dash of seltzer and enjoy!

### **11. Tropical Rum Punch**

Stir together 1/2 cup fresh-squeezed orange juice, 1/2 cup pineapple juice (100 percent juice only!), and 1 shot light rum. Pour over ice and put on some shades.

### **12. Gin and Juice**

Pour over ice: 1/2 cup of fresh-squeezed orange juice, 1 shot of gin, and 1/2 cup seltzer.

### **13. Lemondrop**

In a shaker with ice, combine 1/3 shot vodka, 1/3 shot fresh-squeezed lemon juice, and 1/4 teaspoon honey.

### **14. Fuzzy Navel**

In a shaker with ice, combine 1/3 shot peach Schnapps, 2/3 shot fresh-squeezed orange juice, 2/3 shot fresh-squeezed lemon juice, and 2/3 shot water.

### **15. Pina Colada**

Blend together 1/2 cup ice, 1/2 cup coconut milk, 1/4 cup fresh pineapple chunks, and 1 shot white rum.

### **16. Frozen Mudslide**

Mix together 1 packet diet hot cocoa mix with 1 shot warm simple syrup and 1/4 cup hot water. Blend the cocoa mixture, 1/4 cup vanilla soy milk, 1 shot

vanilla-infused vodka, 1 teaspoon chocolate syrup, and 1/2 cup ice.

### **17. Strawberry-Lime Daiquiri**

Combine 1 shot simple syrup, 1 shot white rum, 2 tablespoons fresh-squeezed lime juice, a small handful of frozen strawberries, and 1/2 cup of ice. Blend.

### **18. White Sangria**

In a wine glass, combine two strawberries (halved), 1/2 a fresh peach (diced), 1/2 a pear (diced), 2 shots white wine, and 1/4 cup seltzer.

### **19. Red Sangria**

Toss 1/2 an apple (sliced), 1/2 an orange (sliced), and 4 grapes into a glass. Add 1/2 cup fruity red wine and 1/4 cup seltzer.

### **20. Sparkling Apricot Punch**

In a glass, combine 1/2 cup diced apricots and 1/2 cup apricot juice (100 percent juice, please!). Add 1/2 cup sparkling wine and 1/4 cup seltzer and stir to combine.

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