FREE STARTER · 6 PAGES

16:8 Starter: *the 3-Week Ramp*

From 12:12 to 16:8 in three gentle steps. One simple rule per week, a tick box for every day, and space to notice how you feel.

WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3
12:12	**14:10**	**16:8**

WHY "40"?

40 is the number of tradition: the 40 days of Lent and the 40-day fasts told in history. It is **not** 40 days without food. In this starter and in the full programme you eat full meals every day, inside a daily window.

READ FIRST: NOT FOR YOU IF

- ✕ you are pregnant or breastfeeding
- ✕ you take regular medicine, especially for diabetes, unless your doctor agrees
- ✕ you have a history of eating disorders
- ✕ you are under 18

Feel unwell at any point? Stop, eat, and talk to your doctor.

This starter is education and a simple daily structure. It is not medical advice and does not replace your doctor.

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THE PLAN

The ramp at a glance

Nobody needs to start at 16 hours. You close the kitchen a little earlier, or open it a little later, each week. The fasting hours include your sleep.

WEEK 1
12:12



Example: eat 08:00–20:00. The only change for most people: nothing after dinner.

WEEK 2
14:10



Example: eat 09:00–19:00. Breakfast an hour later, dinner an hour earlier.

WEEK 3
16:8



Example: eat 10:00–18:00. Only if weeks 1 and 2 felt fine.

eating window fasting hours (out of 24)

FOUR GROUND RULES

1. **Pick times that fit your life,** your work and your family. The examples are only examples.
2. **Keep roughly the same times** on most days. A late dinner with friends now and then is fine.
3. **Outside your window:** water, black coffee and plain tea. Milk, sugar and juice count as food.
4. **Inside your window:** full meals. This is not a diet and there is nothing to count.

WHEN TO STAY, OR STEP BACK

Each step is an offer, not an order. If a week felt hard, repeat it. If you feel dizzy, weak or unwell, go back a step or stop.

Staying at 12:12 or 14:10 still gives you a clear rhythm. That counts.

WEEK 1 · DAYS 1–7

12:12 Close the kitchen after dinner

> This week's one rule: once dinner is over, the kitchen is closed until breakfast, twelve hours later.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Most people already sleep through a large part of twelve hours. The new part is the evening. Many of us eat across a long day: in one study that logged everything people ate and drank, more than half of the adults spread their eating over 15 hours or more a day.

Hunger tends to show up at the times you usually eat, then fades again. In a small study of people who did not eat for a day, the hunger hormone ghrelin still rose around their usual mealtimes and then fell again by itself.

SMALL HELPS

- ✓ Brush your teeth right after dinner. It's a clear "done" signal.
- ✓ A cup of herbal tea in the evening.
- ✓ Move the snacks out of sight.
- ✓ Write your "kitchen closed" time on the fridge.

TICK OFF YOUR WEEK

DAY	KITCHEN CLOSED AT	FIRST FOOD AT	HOURS	DONE
Day 1	_____	_____	____	☐
Day 2	_____	_____	____	☐
Day 3	_____	_____	____	☐
Day 4	_____	_____	____	☐
Day 5	_____	_____	____	☐
Day 6	_____	_____	____	☐
Day 7	_____	_____	____	☐

Sources: Gill & Panda 2015; Natalucci et al. 2005 (full references on page 6).

WEEK 2 · DAYS 8-14

14:10 Add two hours, one at each end

> This week's one rule: eat within a 10-hour window. Move breakfast an hour later, dinner an hour earlier, or both.

HOW TO CHOOSE

Morning person? Keep breakfast as it is and have dinner an hour earlier. Agree the week's dinner times with your family.

Evening person? Keep dinner, start later. Have water or black coffee first thing and eat when your window opens.

Either is fine. The best window is the one you can keep with your family and your work.

HUNGER SOS · ONE MINUTE

1. Sit or stand tall. Breathe in through your nose for 4 counts.
2. Breathe out slowly for 6 counts. Repeat for one minute.
3. Drink a glass of water.
4. Still hungry, close to your window? Eat. Far from it and feeling unwell? Eat anyway.

TICK OFF YOUR WEEK

DAY	WINDOW FROM	WINDOW TO	HOURS	DONE
Day 8	_____	_____	____	☐
Day 9	_____	_____	____	☐
Day 10	_____	_____	____	☐
Day 11	_____	_____	____	☐
Day 12	_____	_____	____	☐
Day 13	_____	_____	____	☐
Day 14	_____	_____	____	☐

Check-in at the end of the week: did 14:10 feel fine most days? Then week 3 is open to you. If not, repeat week 2.

WEEK 3 · DAYS 15-21

16:8 An 8-hour window, if you feel well

> This week's one rule: eat your meals within 8 hours, and leave 16 hours, most of them asleep, without food.

A SAMPLE 8-HOUR DAY

07:30 Water, black coffee or tea

10:00 First meal: eggs or yogurt, bread or oats, fruit

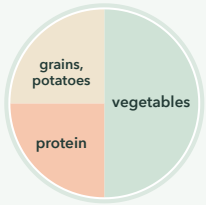
14:00 Main meal: the plate on the right

17:30 Last meal: soup, fish or beans, vegetables

18:00 Kitchen closed. Herbal tea is fine.

Two or three meals are both fine. Shift the whole day earlier or later to suit you.

THE 8-HOUR PLATE



Half vegetables, a quarter protein (fish, eggs, meat, beans, tofu, yogurt), a quarter grains or potatoes, plus some olive oil, nuts or cheese. Many people find a plate like this keeps them full until the next meal.

TICK OFF YOUR WEEK

DAY	WINDOW FROM	WINDOW TO	HOURS	DONE
Day 15				☐
Day 16				☐
Day 17				☐
Day 18				☐
Day 19				☐
Day 20				☐
Day 21				☐

Not feeling well? Go back to 14:10, or stop. Feeling fine is the whole point.

YOUR OWN DATA

21 days of notes

Score each from 1 (low) to 5 (high), or just circle a dot. Your own notes beat anyone's opinion, including ours.

DAY	WINDOW	HUNGER	ENERGY AT 3 PM	SLEEP LAST NIGHT	NOTE
1		• • • • •	• • • • •	• • • • •	
2		• • • • •	• • • • •	• • • • •	
3		• • • • •	• • • • •	• • • • •	
4		• • • • •	• • • • •	• • • • •	
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8		• • • • •	• • • • •	• • • • •	
9		• • • • •	• • • • •	• • • • •	
10		• • • • •	• • • • •	• • • • •	
11		• • • • •	• • • • •	• • • • •	
12		• • • • •	• • • • •	• • • • •	
13		• • • • •	• • • • •	• • • • •	
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18		• • • • •	• • • • •	• • • • •	
19		• • • • •	• • • • •	• • • • •	
20		• • • • •	• • • • •	• • • • •	
21		• • • • •	• • • • •	• • • • •	

Ready for days 22–40?

The full Fasting40 programme: the guide, the 8-hour plate, a 40-day tracker and one short email a day. €29 one-time, no subscription.

fasting40.com

Sources

Gill S. & Panda S. (2015). A smartphone app reveals erratic diurnal eating patterns in humans that can be modulated for health benefits. *Cell Metabolism* 22:789–798. doi:10.1016/j.cmet.2015.09.005

Natalucci G. et al. (2005). Spontaneous 24-h ghrelin secretion pattern in fasting subjects: maintenance of a meal-related pattern. *European Journal of Endocrinology* 152:845–850. doi:10.1530/eje.1.01919

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