

10 Tangible Steps toward a plant-based diet

1

GET CLEAR ON WHAT YOU WANT

Consider exactly what you want your diet to include and exclude. Are you aiming for whole-foods plant-based? Or are you ok with some "vegan junk food"? Figure out exactly what your target is. If you don't have a clear definition of what you are going for you will never be able to achieve it.

2

FIGURE OUT WHAT IS THE LAST TO GO

Often people say something like "I could be vegan except for cheese." If that's the case then don't let that hold you back—focus on going vegan except for cheese, and then you can work on figuring out doing without cheese.

3

ASSESS YOUR BARRIERS

You will inevitably encounter barriers that make it difficult to stay the course. It is important to anticipate those challenges, and brainstorm strategies to overcome them, that way when you encounter them you won't be thrown off course.

SET A SMART GOAL

Setting goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely is really important to keep you on track and motivate you. Goals that are not SMART are more likely to make you feel overwhelmed.

4

LEARN TO READ FOOD LABELS

If you don't already know how to read food labels to determine if something is plant-based or not, now is a great time. As time passes and you become more comfortable with this you will be able to do this laser-fast compared to when you started.

5

VEGANIZE YOUR TOP 5 "GO-TO" MEALS

This is perhaps the most important step in the entire list. This step is what is going to really make this journey achievable and sustainable. It is important to note, these are not your five favorite meals per se, but the five meals that you eat most often. We humans are creatures of habit, and almost all of us will inevitably want to fall back on our go-to meals, especially when the going gets tough. If you have not already veganized those meals, you will have a really hard time staying on track.

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7

DETERMINE WHICH FOODS YOU LIKE ARE "ACCIDENTALLY VEGAN"

This is another vital step to ensure this journey is achievable and sustainable. Knowing which foods and products you can fall back on in a pinch, when pressed for time, stressed out, or otherwise just lacking capacity will really come in handy to keep you on the path.

8

LEARN HOW TO EAT OUT

Switching to a plant-based diet does require relearning how to order food when eating out, and learning to create a plant-based meal at a restaurant. Fortunately plant-based eating is very popular these days, and most restaurants have at least one plant-based menu option or can create a plant-based dish upon request.

9

EXPLORE YOUR RESOURCES

Now is a great time to explore the numerous resources that are out there. Sometimes people go exploring all of the resources as the first step, and then it becomes information overload and they feel overwhelmed and burned out right away. We've saved this step for towards the end to avoid this. Now is a great time to explore new apps, websites, meal plans, food assistance programs, or any other resources that can help you on your path.

SPREAD YOUR (PLANT-BASED) WINGS AND SOAR

At this point, all that's left is to realize that the sky is the limit! You may choose to continue exploring even more, trying new recipes and new ingredients, trying out new restaurants, joining new groups, etc. You might even decide you want to get involved by volunteering with local plant-based organizations or seeking a new career in plant-based eating. Or, you might choose to stay low-key and just keep focusing on your SMART goals. The main idea is to focus on what works best for you!

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LEARN MORE AT APNM.ORG/PLANTBASED

This handout is a companion to our webinar called *Where Do I Start? Tips and Strategies for Adopting a Plant-Based Diet*. The recording of the webinar can be viewed on our YouTube channel (APNM Plant-Based Eating).

Our website also has additional resources to help you with the steps outlined in this handout including our podcast (*Teach Me How To Vegan*), blog, recipes, Vegan Dining Guide, and more!



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plant-based eating
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