

8 TIPS FOR MINDFUL EATING

Begin With Your Shopping List

Consider the health value of every item you add to your list and stick to it to avoid impulse buying when you're shopping. Fill most of your cart in the produce section and avoid the center aisles—which are heavy with processed foods — and the chips and candy at the check-out counter.

Come to the Table with an Appetite

If you skip meals, you may be so eager to get anything in your stomach that your first priority is filling the void instead of enjoying your food.

Start with a Small Portion

It may be helpful to limit the size of your plate to nine inches or less.

Appreciate Your Food

Pause for a minute or two before you begin eating to contemplate everything and everyone it took to bring the meal to your table. Silently express your gratitude for the opportunity to enjoy delicious food and the companions you're enjoying it with.

Bring All Your Senses to the Meal

When you're cooking, serving, and eating your food, be attentive to color, texture, aroma, and even the sounds different foods make as you prepare them. As you chew your food, try identifying all the ingredients, especially seasonings.

Take Small Bites

It's easier to taste food completely when your mouth isn't full. Put down your utensil between bites.

Chew Thoroughly

Chew well until you can taste the essence of the food. (You may have to chew each mouthful 20 to 40 times, depending on the food.) You may be surprised at all the flavors that are released.

Eat Slowly

If you follow the advice above, you won't bolt your food down. Devote at least five minutes to mindful eating before you chat with your tablemates.