

» BATTLE OF THE BULGE

The secrets of our

Struggling to shift the scales?
Take some tips from readers
who've lost 80st between them



I plan a week ahead what I'm eating each day. That way I've got time to shop for everything and make up healthy recipes for when I get in from work. It takes away temptation and makes it much easier to eat well.

Sarah Everitt, 29, from Norwich, lost 11st over two years on Weight Watchers from 2005-7.



My secret is finding out what made me overeat. I had counselling and kept a diary of my feelings and how they affected what ate. I found that stress made me turn to food for comfort. Now I deal with it in other ways.



Having a special occasion goal in mind kept me focused.

Also, I wanted to improve my energy levels.

Heidi Lambeth, 39, from Oxford, lost 4st 8lb using Zotrim in 2007.



I substituted as much food as possible – including milk, spread, pasta sauce and biscuits – with low-fat versions. It means I can still eat the same foods and shift the weight!

Tessa Barrell, 31, from Loughton, Essex, lost 2½st in 2008.

Losing weight and keeping it off is about balance. If I'm having a big night out, I cut back at breakfast and lunch and exercise more. At Christmas I have four lean days leading up to Christmas Eve, then the next three days I've got more leeway.

Sarah Robertson, 40, from Fort William, lost 8st with Scottish Slimmers in under a year in 2006. She's now a class manager for the club.



I slow down my eating so I recognise when I'm full and don't overeat

or finish my plate for the sake of it. If I chew each mouthful properly, it's easier to notice when I've had enough.

Niki Fisher, 33, from Belfast, lost 3st in 2008.



Debbie Vass, 55, from Liskeard, Cornwall, lost 5½st in five months on LighterLife in 2009.



The scales kept Katie on track

Don't stop weighing out your food! If you're anything like me, portion sizes will drift – usually upwards! If you keep a close eye on the weight and size of your portions, even when you've reached your goal weight, it helps you stay there!

Katie Driskell, 38, from London, lost 5st in 11 months in 2006 with www.weightlossresources.co.uk

slimming success!



I educated myself about what was in my food. At Scottish Slimmers I got lots of books to learn how to make the best choices in food shopping or eating out. Once you know, it stays with you forever.

Linda Harrison, 45, from Glasgow, lost 6st 5lb on Scottish Slimmers over a year in 2007.



Linda's now a class assistant for the club

The key to my success was making sure I never felt bored. I always make sure I mix up what food I eat and I love experimenting with new low-fat recipes. I also vary what exercise I do and can honestly say it's not difficult to control my weight anymore.

Denise Price, 46, from Droitwich, Worcestershire, lost 5st 5lb over a year-and-a-half with Rosemary Conley in 2006.



Making exercise fun keeps my weight down. I love working out at my local Curves gym and I've made so many new friends that we all encourage each other to stay on track. I actually look forward to doing circuits with the other ladies.

Sharon Adamson, 51, from Belfast, lost 3½st with Curves in 2009.



Basing my diet on filling foods – fruit, veg, pasta, rice – satisfies me and helps keep my weight down.

Sylvia Rubery, 39, from Weston-Super-Mare, lost 5st 11lb on Slimming World between 2004-5.

I used reminders of how big I'd got to spur me on to lose weight and keep it off. I kept a size-20 skirt in my wardrobe and looking at it made me determined not to slip up. I vowed I'd never wear something that big again.

Rachel Cook, 37, from Melton, Suffolk, lost 7st 2lb in just over a year on Rosemary Conley in 2008.



Get support! Going to weekly meetings and getting weighed made me feel like I was part of a little gang.

Tracy Highway, 41, from Chadwell St Mary, Essex, lost 6st 8lb on Slimming World between 2004-5.



For me, the key to weight loss is simple; it's about

squeezing exercise into my daily routine wherever I can. I aim to do 30 minutes at the gym three times a week and in between I keep active with small things such as taking the stairs instead of the lift.

Clare Davies, 51, from Basingstoke, lost 3½st over 10 months with Curves in 2009.



BEFORE



BEFORE

I keep an eye on my calories all week, then give myself a day off. I'll usually treat myself to a takeaway or go for drinks with friends on Saturday. That way you have something nice to look forward to and won't miss out on socialising.

Jo Ingate, 36, from Kelvedon, Essex, lost 2½st in a year in 2009.