

Let's Go Gluten Free

The First 30 Days

A PRACTICAL GLUTEN-FREE
STARTING GUIDE



LetsGoGlutenFree.com

A little help for your next step.

Getting started can turn ordinary things - breakfast, a shopping trip, dinner with friends - into a list of questions. This guide gives those questions a place to land.

You do not need to finish it in order. Pick the page that helps with what is happening today. A familiar meal, a useful question, or a small change to your kitchen routine is a worthwhile place to begin.

How to use your 30 days

The numbered prompts are a planning tool, not a medical schedule. Move them around, repeat a day, or take longer. The aim is to build routines you can use again.

Before changing your diet

If celiac disease is a possibility and you have not been tested, speak with your clinician before removing gluten: doing so can affect test accuracy. Already eating gluten-free? Ask your clinician how to proceed; do not change your diet for testing on your own. [1]

Keep your care personal

This is general education for a U.S. audience, not an individual treatment plan. Use your clinician or registered dietitian's advice for your diagnosis, allergies, nutritional needs, and family circumstances. A gluten-free label does not address every food allergy.

Rooting for you,
Katie

Read the whole label.

Keep this page nearby while you compare packaged foods. A product name or a familiar brand is only the start.

Look for a gluten-free claim

For FDA-regulated foods, a gluten-free claim means the food must meet the rule's ingredient requirements and contain less than 20 parts per million of gluten. The claim is voluntary; the absence of a claim is not a verdict by itself. [2]

Check ingredients, not only wheat

Wheat, barley, rye, and their crossbred varieties contain gluten. A wheat-free statement alone does not rule out barley or rye. Review the full ingredient list and the product's gluten-free information. [2,3]

Treat different statements differently

'No gluten ingredients' is not one of the four defined FDA gluten-free claims. Certification programs have their own standards; do not assume every certification uses the same threshold. FDA does not require third-party certification. [2]

Make room for questions

Read the current package each time. For an unclear product, save a photo of its exact name and label, then contact the manufacturer. If you cannot establish whether it fits your needs, choose a clearer alternative. [3]

Oats deserve a separate check

If you have celiac disease, discuss oats with your clinician or dietitian. When including oats, choose gluten-free oats; cross-contact with other grains is a concern. [3]

Scope: FDA food-label rules are not a universal rule for medicines, every meat or poultry product, or all alcoholic drinks. Use the relevant product guidance. [2]

Build a repeatable routine.

Start with the places you actually use. You can make a plan for a shared kitchen without pretending that a checklist guarantees safety.

Map the journey of one meal

Follow breakfast from storage to preparation to serving. Where could crumbs, flour, utensils, or hands bring gluten into contact with the food? Cross-contact can happen in storage, preparation, and serving. [3]

Agree on a place for your food

Choose a clearly marked storage spot. Talk through who uses it, how food will be covered, and what happens when groceries are put away. A label is more useful when everyone understands it.

Plan preparation and cleanup

Discuss how your household will separate gluten-free preparation, utensils, and serving. Write down the steps you will use. If equipment is difficult to clean or shared in a way that leaves crumbs, ask your dietitian what arrangement is appropriate.

Walk through common trouble spots

Use these as conversation prompts: bread preparation, spreads with shared knives, draining pasta, flour used for baking, and serving spoons at a shared meal. Decide what needs a separate item or a different routine.

Make the plan easy to follow

Keep the first version short: where my food goes; what I use to prepare it; how we prevent mix-ups; who I ask when I am unsure. Revise the plan after trying it together.

My first change: _____

One question for my dietitian: _____

Find your starting point.

This week is about a few useful decisions, not a complete kitchen makeover.

01 Name your next step

Write down your biggest everyday question. Put any diagnosis or testing question on your clinician list.

02 Choose a familiar breakfast

Pick one breakfast you enjoy. Check the ingredients and preparation it needs.

03 Review three packages

Practice the label routine on three foods you use often. Put unclear items on a questions list.

04 Walk through your kitchen

Use the kitchen page to identify one place where your routine could be clearer.

05 Have one household conversation

Agree on a storage or preparation habit and who will help keep it working.

06 Plan a dependable dinner

Choose a simple meal and write down each ingredient, including sauces and seasonings.

07 Keep what helped

Note one thing that felt easier and one question that still needs an answer.

Make shopping more familiar.

Build a short list around meals you want to eat. You do not need a new pantry full of specialty products.

08 Start with two dinners

Choose two meal ideas from page 9 and adapt them to your household.

09 Check what you already have

Match your ingredients to the plan before adding anything to your list.

10 Write a specific shopping list

Include the exact gluten-free version where a swap is needed, such as bread or pasta.

11 Leave time to read

Give yourself room to check labels. There is no target shopping time to beat.

12 Compare one useful swap

Choose one product to compare for ingredients, price, portion size, and how you will use it.

13 Save your practical notes

Record the exact product and what you checked. Recheck the current package when buying again.

14 Simplify the next trip

Keep the meals and shopping notes you would happily use next week.

Bring your questions with you.

A clear conversation can help you plan for restaurants, visits, work, or school. Online listings are a starting point for questions.

15 Choose one upcoming outing

Pick a real event or meal to plan for. Avoid trying to solve every future occasion.

16 Contact the place or host

Ask about ingredients and preparation. Use the prompts on page 10.

17 Save the important details

Write down who you spoke with, what they said, and what you still need to check on arrival.

18 Choose a backup

Plan something you can bring or eat elsewhere if the answers are unclear.

19 Practice a short explanation

Write a sentence that states your actual dietary need without minimizing it.

20 Try the plan

Use your questions at the outing. You can choose a different option if the information is insufficient.

21 Review without blame

Note what worked and what you would ask earlier next time.

Keep the useful parts.

Use this final stretch to make your own small collection of meals, notes, and people you can turn to.

22 Choose three repeat meals

Keep meals you enjoy and can realistically make.

23 Write a short staples list

List what those meals need. Include bread or pasta if you enjoy suitable gluten-free versions.

24 Plan one busy-day option

Choose a meal with few steps and ingredients you can keep on hand.

25 Make a question appointment

Bring unresolved food or nutrition questions to your clinician or dietitian.

26 Ask for the help you need

Choose one specific thing a family member or friend could do.

27 Organize your notes

Keep labels, meal ideas, and useful contacts in one place.

28 Review your kitchen plan

Adjust a routine that is confusing or difficult to maintain.

29 Plan the next week

Choose meals and one outing using what you learned.

30 Notice your progress

Write down what is easier and what support you want next. There is no symptom deadline or finish line.

Keep foods you enjoy.

These are meal-building ideas, not a prescribed menu. Check every packaged ingredient, seasoning, sauce, and preparation step for your needs.

Pasta night

Gluten-free pasta + a suitable tomato sauce + a protein you enjoy + vegetables. Start with a combination your household already likes.

A rice bowl

Rice + beans, tofu, fish, or chicken + vegetables + a sauce you have checked. Keep the elements separate if that helps different family members build their own bowl.

Toast and something satisfying

Suitable gluten-free bread + eggs, nut butter, or another topping that works for you. Include fruit or another side you enjoy.

A potato dinner

Baked potatoes + a filling of your choice + a side. Review toppings and the way shared ingredients are handled.

Your short shopping list

Choose your meals first, then fill in the spaces. This keeps the list useful for your tastes, budget, and household.

Meal 1: _____ **Meal 2:** _____

Produce: _____

Proteins: _____

Rice / potatoes / GF bread or pasta: _____

Checked sauces and seasonings: _____

Questions worth asking.

Menus and reviews can help you find places to contact. They do not establish how your particular meal will be prepared.

Start with your actual need

If you have celiac disease, say so. For example: 'I have celiac disease and need to avoid gluten, including cross-contact. Can someone familiar with your preparation process help me choose a meal?' [3]

Ask about the whole meal

What is in the sauce, marinade, seasoning, and garnish? Can the kitchen check the current ingredient information? Is anything added just before serving?

Ask about the preparation

How will the food be kept separate during preparation and serving? Are fryers, pasta water, utensils, or preparation areas shared with gluten-containing foods? Who can confirm the process for this order?

Know what to do with uncertainty

If the team cannot answer, it is okay to use your backup plan. When visiting friends, discuss the meal beforehand and offer a practical option, such as bringing your own food. [3]

Keep your care team in the loop

For ongoing or returning symptoms, contact your clinician rather than using this guide to diagnose the cause. Celiac follow-up may include a review of diet and other possible problems. [4]

My backup plan: _____

Someone I can ask: _____

Sources and next steps.

Use the original sources for more detail. These links support the health and labeling guidance; the daily prompts are editorial planning suggestions.

[1] NIDDK: Diagnosis of Celiac Disease

[Open the original source](#)

[2] FDA: Questions and Answers on the Gluten-Free Food Labeling Final Rule

[Open the original source](#)

[3] NIDDK: Eating, Diet, & Nutrition for Celiac Disease

[Open the original source](#)

[4] NIDDK: Treatment for Celiac Disease

[Open the original source](#)

Your next useful step

Choose one meal, one question, or one routine to work on. You can return to this guide whenever you need it.

[Explore recipes at Let's Go Gluten Free](#)

[Meet Katie](#)

Sources checked September 13, 2026. U.S. labeling context. Use these original sources alongside advice from your own care team.