



If you're serious about eating more superfoods, greens are the way to go. Here's how to become a superfan.

Overwhelming research confirms that greens are an important part of a healthy diet, but for some people the thought of a plate full of greens hardly sounds appetizing. Before you start feeling anxious, the first thing you need to do is take a step back and think about what is really stopping you from getting more greens into your diet.

Is it the texture you dislike? For example, if your first taste of spinach involved something from a can, your aversion is completely understandable. Compared to fresh, canned spinach can have a strong, intense flavor and a slimy texture that few find appealing.

Do you find that some green vegetables taste especially bitter? You may be what researchers refer to as a "super taster," a person with a genetic sensitivity to the flavor of certain compounds found in some vegetables. The good news is that with repeated exposure, you can eventually find a way to enjoy just about any vegetable.

Depending on where you fall on the greens-loving spectrum, use this 4-week plan to focus on one particular type of green – spinach is usually the most versatile and mild-tasting place to start – or take advantage of the opportunity to switch gears and try a new type of green every week. The point is that by making a plan and gradually finding more ways to enjoy greens you'll be able to prove to yourself – and your tastebuds – that shifting gears is easier than you think.

YOUR 4-WEEK PLAN TO BECOMING A GREENS-LOVING VEGETABLE FANATIC

WEEK 1: SNEAK IT IN

The goal for this week is to try incorporating small amounts of greens into your meals in ways that you'll barely notice. Try adding a handful of spinach or kale to a breakfast smoothie, or whirl some spinach in a blender with water and mix it into a batch of brownie mix. The point this week is to overcome your initial resistance to greens by finding new ways to enjoy small amounts and prove to yourself that you actually can find a way to enjoy them, however slight the portion may be.

WEEK 2: START SMALL

Remember that Rome wasn't built in a day, and reorienting your taste buds requires a little time, too. This week try incorporating some tender and mild-tasting fresh greens, like arugula or baby spinach, as a complimentary ingredient to flavors that you already love. Add a handful to a salad with your favorite dressing or toss a small amount into a rice dish (coarsely chop them first if you find the texture not to your liking). And don't forget to celebrate your success. Greens are so nutrient dense, you're on the road to better health when you incorporate even a small amount into your meals!

WEEK 3: SAVOR A SIDE DISH

Now that you've had a few weeks to get more comfortable eating greens, it's time to step it up and focus on enjoying a side dish that really celebrates them while appealing to other flavors you enjoy. The key here is to focus on how you season them. A small amount of bacon, browned butter or a generous amount of garlic (if you're a garlic fan) can help distract your tastebuds with much more pleasurable flavors. If you are sensitive to bitter flavors, a generous pinch of salt or squeeze of fresh lemon juice will make those qualities less pronounced. You might want to consider these Mindful recipes:

- [Potato Salad with Kale Pesto](#)
- [BBQ Cod, Turkey Bacon, Mashed Potato and Spinach](#)

WEEK 4: PUT IT IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Congratulations! You've just worked your way to true superfood-loving status. And now that you've spent time focusing on which complementary ingredients will help make greens most palatable to you, it should be easier to enjoy a dish that incorporates them a main ingredient. This week pay attention to how different cooking techniques affect both texture and flavor. Keep in mind that any cooking process will usually intensify flavors, so stick with salads if you need more time to overcome bitter qualities. Here are some great Mindful recipes to get you started:

- [Curried Crunchy Cabbage](#)
- [Ellie Krieger's Spinach Salad with Grapes & Butternut Squash](#)
- [Kale-Stuffed Chicken Breasts with Mustard Sauce](#)