

THE FOOD GUIDE.

Work out your numbers, build meals from what the shops actually sell, and learn what the scale is really telling you.

150KG TO LEAN IN EIGHT MONTHS.

Without tracking a single calorie for most of it, and cooking one dinner the whole family ate. This guide is the part of that I can hand you on a page. It is what I was taught, in the order I was taught it.

BEFORE YOU START.

Four parts, read in order. Part 1 decides which lane you are in, and everything after it depends on that answer. Do not skip to the numbers.

- 1. THE STARTING LINE** — the self-assessment, and the three lanes it drops you into
- 2. CALORIES & PROTEIN** — your two anchor numbers, and how to hit the protein one without misery
- 3. FATS & CARBS** — the fat floor, and why carbs take whatever is left
- 4. WHICH WAY, AND HOW HARD** — deficit, surplus, and how to read what is actually happening

THE BIT THE LAWYERS WANT

General educational guidance for healthy adults, not personalised coaching or medical or clinical nutrition advice. Figures are approximate starting points, not prescriptions. Not for anyone with a diagnosed medical condition, kidney issues, an eating disorder history, or anyone pregnant. Talk to your GP before starting any new diet. Follow it at your own discretion.

WHO WROTE THIS.

I am not a doctor and I am not a dietitian. I am a trained chef who got to 150 kilograms behind a desk, asked for help, and did what I was told for eight months. I am working through my Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications with HFE, and until those are signed off I am not taking clients.

So nothing in here is a promise. It is what worked on me, written down properly, with the reasoning attached so you can judge it for yourself. That is my experience, not a guarantee of yours.

THE STARTING LINE.

Work out where you actually are before you touch a single meal or workout.

Most guides skip this bit and just hand you a plan. That's exactly why most plans fail. A plan that's right for a lean guy who's never eaten properly is wrong for someone carrying 30kg that they want gone, and the other way round.

If I were assessing you in person I'd be doing three things: looking at you, listening to what you actually want, and working out whether you'll do the work. I can't do the first one through a page, so I'm going to make *you* do it honestly instead. Answer all three questions below. Where you land decides everything that comes after.

Lie on any of these and the only person you're cheating is you.

QUESTION 1: WHERE ARE YOU STARTING?

Forget callipers and clever gadgets. Look in a mirror, no shirt, honestly, and find the bracket that fits. If you're between two, pick the heavier one. Drop the BS, people almost always flatter themselves here.

BRACKET A: CARRYING REAL WEIGHT

- Belly is the first thing you see. Waist is gone or going
- Out of breath on stairs, clothes tight, scale well above where you want it
- You know you're overweight, you're not asking whether you are

BRACKET B: SKINNY-FAT

- Not heavy, but soft. Little belly, no shape, no muscle underneath
- Look thin in clothes, worse out of them
- Never trained properly and never eaten properly

BRACKET C: AVERAGE / UNTRAINED

- Roughly normal weight, maybe a bit soft in the middle
- Not fat, not lean, no real muscle, just untrained
- Want to change your body but there's no obvious emergency

NOTE YOUR BRACKET A / B / C

QUESTION 2: WHAT DO YOU REALLY WANT?

Be honest, not aspirational. You cannot sprint towards lean and big **and** strong at the same time from where you're standing. Pick the one that matches where you are, not the one that sounds best.

- **Lean first.** You want the weight off and to see your body underneath it.
- **Build first.** You're not carrying much; you want to grow, get stronger, fill out.

THE TRUTH ABOUT THIS ONE

If you're in Bracket A, your honest answer is almost always **lean first**. Chasing size under a layer of fat you can't see through is a waste of a year. If you're in Bracket B, the fun answer is "get lean" but the *right* answer is usually "build", you've got nothing to reveal yet. Match the want to the starting point.

QUESTION 3: HOW WILL YOU ACTUALLY EXECUTE?

This is the question that decides whether any of this works. There is no wrong answer here, but there is a dishonest one.

- **All in.** You'll weigh everything, hit your numbers, and not negotiate with yourself when it gets boring.
- **Sustainable.** You know yourself, and a brutal plan you quit in three weeks is worse than a moderate one you actually run for six months.

Pick the truth, not the version of you that exists in your head on a good day.

WHERE YOU LAND.

Put your three answers together. They drop you into one of three lanes. The rest of this guide is built around these. Read the section for your lane and follow it.

YOUR ANSWERS	YOUR LANE	WHAT IT MEANS
A + lean first + all in	Lane 1: Aggressive Cut	Full send. Fat comes off fast, with a rate cap and a fat floor so it stays safe.
A + lean first + sustainable	Lane 2: Moderate Cut	Still real, visible fat loss, just at a pace you won't quit. Same destination, gentler road.
B or C + build first	Lane 3: Eat & Build	Stop dieting. Eat proper protein for the first time in your life, train, recomp. The cut comes later, once you've built something to show.

Not a clean match? Start with the lane closest to your honest answers. You can adjust once you're moving.

A WORD FOR THE BRACKET A CROWD BEFORE YOU START

You're going to lose fast early and it'll feel brilliant. Enjoy it, but know now what took me a while to learn: after the first stretch, the last bit of leanness is slow, and that's normal, not failure. The fast phase is a gift, not the whole job. Expecting the slowdown is what stops you quitting when it arrives.

CALORIES & PROTEIN.

Find your numbers, then build meals from what the shops actually sell.

Two numbers run the whole thing: how many calories you burn in a day, and how much protein you eat. Get those right and everything else is detail. This section shows you how to work both out yourself, in pounds and kilos, and then how to hit the protein number without weighing out annoying little portions of steak.

THE THREE NUMBERS BEHIND ALL OF THIS

Protein 4 · Carbs 4 · Fat 9

Calories in a single gram. Every sum in this guide is built out of those three, so it's worth knowing them before you start rather than working them out backwards later.

Here's what they mean before you've done any arithmetic at all. Your protein is set by your target weight. Your fat has a floor it doesn't drop under. Once those two are costed in calories, there is only one number left in the budget that can move.

Every calorie change you ever make comes out of carbs.

STEP 1: YOUR MAINTENANCE CALORIES.

Maintenance is the number of calories that keeps your weight exactly where it is. Eat below it, you lose. Eat above it, you gain. Everything starts here.

Here's the important twist: we work it out for your **target** weight, not your current one. Work to the body you're building, not the one you're leaving behind. As you get closer to that target, your maintenance and your goal move toward each other, so the plan quietly self-corrects instead of needing constant recalculating.

THE MATHS

You don't need a fancy calculator. Take your target weight and multiply it by an activity number:

ACTIVITY LEVEL	PER LB	PER KG
Desk job, little exercise	× 13	× 29
Training 3–4 days a week	× 15	× 33
Active job or training 5+ days	× 17	× 37

WORKED EXAMPLE

Say your target weight is 95 kg (210 lb) and you train 4 days a week:

$$95 \text{ kg} \times 33 = 3,135 \text{ calories}$$

(or $210 \text{ lb} \times 15 = 3,150$, near enough the same)

That's your maintenance for the body you're aiming at. It's an estimate, not gospel. The scale over two to three weeks tells you the truth: if your weight isn't moving the way the plan says it should, adjust the number by 100 to 200 calories and carry on. The formula gets you in the right postcode; the scale finds the house.

A CUT OR A BUILD SITS ON TOP OF THIS

Maintenance is the anchor. To lose fat you eat below it; to build you eat around or slightly above it. How big that gap is, and how you move it over time, depends on your lane (Aggressive Cut, Moderate Cut, or Eat & Build). This section just gets you the anchor number. Your lane section does the rest.

STEP 2: YOUR PROTEIN.

Protein is the one macro you don't get to be lazy about. It's what holds onto your muscle while you diet and builds it when you train, and it's the most filling thing on your plate, which makes everything else easier.

THE NUMBER

Aim for **1g of protein per pound of bodyweight**, which is about **2.2g per kg**. That's your floor. Hitting it is the win.

OVER THE NUMBER IS FINE

This is a **floor, not a ceiling**. If you land at 260g on a day you were aiming for 240, that's not a problem, it's a good day. Extra protein won't make you fat and won't hurt you. So never stress about going over, only about coming up short. Round up when in doubt.

Work this off your **target** weight, same as your calories, not the weight you're carrying today. If you start heavy, 1g per pound of current bodyweight is a brutal amount of protein: hard to eat, expensive, and it crowds out the carbs and volume food that actually fuel your training and keep you sane. Feeding the body you're building keeps the number realistic the whole way down. As your target shifts over time, recalculate. That's the only thing that moves this number, and it's worth being clear about the difference: carbs change week to week as you adjust, protein changes only when your target does.

WORKED EXAMPLE — THIS IS THE ONE WE'LL BUILD MEALS AROUND

This is how I ran my own. I started at 150 kg with a target of **109 kg (240 lb)**, and I set my protein off the target, not the 150 kg I was carrying.

240 lb × 1g = 240g protein a day

(109 kg × 2.2 = 240g, same answer)

Had I worked off 150 kg I'd have been chasing 330g, most of it unnecessary, and I'd have had no room left for the carbs that got me through the sessions. The target-weight number served me the whole way to it.

STEP 3: HITTING THE NUMBER WITHOUT THE MISERY.

Here's where most guides lose people. They tell you to eat “150g of chicken and 37g of steak” and expect you to stand at the counter weighing out oddball amounts. Nobody keeps that up. It's annoying, and annoying plans get quit.

So, we do it the other way round, the way a cook actually shops. **Start from the whole portions the shops already sell**, the ones you'd buy anyway, count what they give you, and then fill the gap with a handful of flexible foods that are easy to nudge up or down.

THE TWO JOBS FOOD DOES HERE

Split your protein sources into two mental buckets:

- **Anchors.** The proper portions your meals are built on, bought whole: a sirloin off the counter, a salmon fillet, a chicken breast. You don't carve these to a number. You buy the size that's sold and let it be what it is.
- **Fillers.** The easy, cheap, adjustable stuff you use to close the gap to your number: eggs, a scoop of whey, a tin of tuna, some cooked chicken. These are the dial you turn.

WHAT COMMON PORTIONS ACTUALLY GIVE YOU

Rough protein per typical portion (raw/retail weights, rounded to what's useful, not lab-perfect):

ANCHORS

PORTION (AS SOLD)	PROTEIN
Sirloin steak, 220g	~55g
Rump / ribeye, ~250g	~60g
Salmon fillet, 140g	~28g
Chicken breast, one medium (~130g)	~30g
Pork chop, one (~150g)	~33g

FILLERS — YOUR DIAL

PORTION	PROTEIN
Whole egg, each	~6g
Whey, one scoop	~24g
EAA's, one serving	~10g
Tinned tuna, one drained tin	~24g
Cooked chicken, per 100g	~30g
FAGE 5% / Greek yoghurt, per 100g	~10g

STILL WEIGH YOUR FOOD

This system means you're not weighing out *weird* amounts, not that you stop weighing. Buy the whole portions, but still put them on the scale so you know what they gave you, and weigh your fillers too. "A chicken breast" is anywhere from 120g to 250g. The scale is how the numbers above stay true. Weigh raw where you can, it's the only consistent reference.

STEP 4: STACKING UP TO 240G.

Now the fun bit. We take the 240g target and build up to it, anchors first, then fillers to close the gap. Watch how the number gets shared across the day and across a workout, instead of dumped into one giant meal.

THE STACK — DAILY TOTAL

FOOD	PROTEIN	RUNNING TOTAL
Sirloin steak, 220g (<i>anchor</i>)	55g	55g
Chicken, ~180g cooked (<i>anchor</i>)	54g	109g
Whole eggs, 4 (<i>filler</i>)	24g	133g
Oats, berries (<i>incidental</i>)	6g	139g
Whey, 2 scoops across the day (<i>filler</i>)	48g	187g
FAGE 5%, ~200g (<i>filler</i>)	20g	207g
EAA's, intra-workout (<i>filler</i>)	10g	217g

217g off the foods as listed. Two anchors, the steak and the chicken, did over half the work; everything else is easy, adjustable filler. To reach 240 you just turn a dial: more chicken, an extra scoop, or whey through the oats. Not one oddball weight in sight, and the gap closes without thinking.

THE SAME 240G ACROSS A REAL TRAINING DAY

Nobody eats all that in one sitting, and a training day has jobs to do beyond just hitting protein: fuel the session, recover from it. Here's the structure I actually run, built around a workout, landing on the number.

WHEN	WHAT	PROTEIN
Meal 1 Breakfast	Oats, berries, 4 whole eggs (<i>swap or add a scoop of whey if a later meal's running short</i>)	~30g
Meal 2 Pre-workout	Whey, banana, rice crispies, peanut butter if you need the fat	~24g
Intra-workout	Carbs + EAAs through the session	~10g
Meal 3 Lunch	Chicken breast slices with rice and veg (~180g cooked chicken)	~54g
Meal 4 Dinner	220g sirloin, pan-seared, with a starch and veg	~55g
Meal 5 Dessert	FAGE 5% (~200g) with a scoop of whey and a piece of fruit	~44g
Day total		217g

CLOSING THE GAP

$30 + 24 + 10 + 54 + 55 + 44 = 217\text{g}$. A touch short of 240, so nudge the easy dials: a bit more chicken at lunch, a second scoop in the dessert, or whey into breakfast. Five meals plus intra, real food, the session fuelled, and you close the gap without a single fiddly weigh-out.

HOW TO DO THIS FOR YOURSELF.

- 1. Work out your number.** Target weight in lb = your daily protein in grams (or target kg $\times$ 2.2).
- 2. Pick your anchors.** Choose the whole proteins you want to buy and eat this week. Count what they give you.
- 3. Add up the anchors.** See how much of the number they cover.
- 4. Close the gap with fillers.** Eggs, whey, tuna, yoghurt, cooked chicken. Nudge until you reach the number.
- 5. Spread it across your meals.** Aim for a decent hit of protein at each one rather than one enormous plate.

FATS & CARBS.

Set your fat floor, then let carbs fuel the work.

You've got two of your three numbers already: calories (the ceiling) and protein (locked). Fat and carbs split what's left. The order matters, and it's simple: **protein first, fat down to its floor, carbs take everything that remains.** Do it in that order and you'll never accidentally starve your hormones of fat or your training of carbs.

WHY FAT GOES SECOND AND CARBS GO LAST.

Protein and fat both have a job that can't be skipped. Protein holds and builds muscle. Fat keeps your hormones working, which matters more the leaner and harder you diet. So we protect both with a floor, then hand whatever calories are left to carbs.

Carbs go last on purpose, and it's not because they're unimportant. It's the opposite. Carbs are the lever you pull to fuel training and to drive the deficit. They're the number that *moves*, so it makes sense to let them absorb whatever's left after the two non-negotiables are covered.

THE ONE RULE PEOPLE GET WRONG

When people slash calories, fat is usually the first thing that quietly disappears, and that's exactly backwards. Cutting fat too far tanks your hormones, your mood, and your recovery.

Fat has a floor. Carbs have a lever.

Hold the floor, pull the lever.

STEP 5: YOUR FAT FLOOR.

Set a minimum you don't drop below, whatever your calories are doing. A sensible floor for most people sits around **0.7g per kg of target weight** (roughly 0.3g per lb). That's enough to keep everything running without eating into the calories your carbs want.

WORKED EXAMPLE — MY NUMBERS

Target weight 109 kg. My fat floor is **77g a day** ($109 \times 0.7 \approx 77$).

77g × 9 = 693 calories

That's the slice of the budget fat takes before carbs get a look in.

Remember the three numbers from the start of Part 2: fat is 9 calories a gram against 4 for protein and carbs. Fat is the calorie-dense one, so a little goes a long way. You don't chase fat like you chase protein. You cover the floor and stop thinking about it. Most of it comes along for free with your protein anyway, the fat in your steak, your eggs, your FAGE 5%, and a spoon of peanut butter tops it off if you're short.

FLOOR, NOT TARGET

Landing a bit over 77g is fine, fat isn't the enemy. The floor is there so you never go *under* it, not so you hit it to the gram. If you're a little over, that just means slightly fewer carbs. No drama.

STEP 6: CARBS TAKE THE REST.

Here's the whole calculation in one move. Start with your calorie target, subtract the calories from protein and fat, and whatever's left, divide by 4. That's your carbs in grams.

THE FORMULA

$$\text{Carbs (g)} = (\text{calorie target} - \text{protein cals} - \text{fat cals}) \div 4$$

WORKED EXAMPLE: MY NUMBERS AT MAINTENANCE

Target 109 kg, training 4 days a week, so maintenance $\approx 109 \times 33 = 3,600$ calories. Protein 240g, fat floor 77g.

MACRO	GRAMS	CALORIES
Protein	240g	960
Fat (floor)	77g	693
Carbs (what's left)	487g	1,947
Total		3,600

3,600 minus 960 minus 693 = 1,947 calories left for carbs. Divide by 4 and that's **487g of carbs**. Plenty of fuel, which is the point at maintenance.

NOW PULL THE LEVER: THE SAME ME IN A DEFICIT

To lose fat I eat below maintenance. Say a 500-calorie deficit, so 3,100 calories. Watch what changes and what doesn't:

MACRO	MAINTENANCE	IN A 500 DEFICIT
Protein	240g (fixed)	240g (fixed)
Fat	77g (floor held)	77g (floor held)
Carbs	487g	362g
Calories	3,600	3,100

Protein didn't move. Fat didn't move. **The whole deficit came out of carbs**, 487g down to 362g. That's the lever in action: when calories change, carbs take the hit while the two floors stay protected. Still a serious amount of carbs to train on, even while cutting.

THIS IS WHY THE ORDER MATTERS

If you'd set carbs first and let fat be "whatever's left," that 500-calorie cut could have dropped your fat to 20g and wrecked your recovery. Protecting fat with a floor and cutting from carbs instead is what keeps a hard diet sustainable. It's the difference between leaning down and falling apart.

WHERE TO PUT YOUR CARBS.

Total carbs matter most, but a couple of simple habits make them work harder:

- **Around training.** Put a good chunk near your workout, the pre-workout meal and intra carbs, because that's when your body uses them best and your session benefits most.
- **Mostly whole, some fast.** Rice, oats, potatoes, fruit for the bulk of it. Faster carbs like rice crispies or a banana earn their place around training where quick fuel helps.
- **Don't fear carbs at night.** The old "no carbs after 6pm" line is a myth. Total for the day is what counts, so put them where they help you train and sleep.

THE FULL PICTURE.

That's the whole engine. Here's every number from Part 2 in one place, my example at maintenance:

MACRO	HOW IT'S SET	MY NUMBER	CALORIES
Calories	Target weight × activity	3,600	—
Protein	1g / lb of target	240g	960
Fat	~0.7g / kg floor	77g	693
Carbs	Everything left ÷ 4	487g	1,947

YOUR TURN

1. **Calories:** target weight × your activity number (Step 1).
2. **Protein:** target weight in lb, in grams (Step 2).
3. **Fat floor:** target kg × 0.7, in grams. Multiply by 9 for its calories.
4. **Carbs:** (calories – protein cals – fat cals) ÷ 4.

To cut, lower calories and take it out of carbs. Protein and fat hold. That's it.

WHICH WAY, AND HOW HARD.

Deficit, surplus, and how to read what's actually happening.

The engine gave you your maintenance calories. Now you decide two things: which direction you're eating (below maintenance to lose, above it to build), and how hard you push. Both answers come straight from the lane you landed in back at the start.

WHICH DIRECTION: READ IT OFF YOUR LANE.

You already did the hard thinking in the self-assessment. Your lane tells you which way to eat:

YOUR LANE	DIRECTION	ROUGHLY
Lane 1: Aggressive Cut	Deficit	A big gap below maintenance
Lane 2: Moderate Cut	Deficit	A smaller, steadier gap
Lane 3: Eat & Build	Maintenance to slight surplus	At, or a little above, maintenance

That's the whole decision. If you're carrying real weight and you want it gone, you're in a deficit. If you're lean-ish and want to grow, you eat at or just over maintenance and let training do the work. Don't overthink it, your starting point already answered this.

HOW HARD: PICK A RATE, NOT A NUMBER.

Here's the mindset shift. You don't chase a calorie number, you chase a **rate of change on the scale**. The calories are just the tool; the weekly rate is the target. Set your deficit or surplus, watch what the scale does over a few weeks, and adjust the calories until the rate is where you want it.

IF YOU'RE LOSING

- **Aim for 0.5 to 1kg a week.** The bigger you are and the more you have to lose, the higher in that range you can sit. As you get leaner, drift toward the slower end.

IF YOU'RE BUILDING

- **Aim for around 0.5kg a week, no more.** Muscle is built slowly. Gain faster than that and the extra is mostly fat you'll only have to diet off later. Slow is the point, not a compromise.

MAKE THE RATE SCALE TO YOUR SIZE

Flat kg targets work fine for most people, but if you want it more precise, think in **percentage of bodyweight per week**: roughly **0.5 to 1% a week to lose**, about **0.25 to 0.5% a week to gain**. For a 120kg person that's a much bigger weekly number than for a 70kg person, which is exactly right, the same 0.7kg loss means very different things at those two sizes. Percentages keep "aggressive" honest across body sizes.

WHEN IT'S WORKING, LEAVE IT ALONE.

This is the bit most people get wrong. They start a deficit, lose well for two weeks, then start fiddling, dropping calories again, adding cardio, changing the plan, because they think progress means constant tinkering. It doesn't.

You change the plan when the plan stops working, not while it's still delivering.

If the scale is moving at your target rate, your job is to keep doing exactly what you're doing. No changes. Let it roll. The plan has earned your patience precisely because it's working.

HOW I DID IT

When I started with my coach, he put me in a hard, aggressive deficit and we just let it roll for months while it kept working. No constant tweaking. Only when the loss actually slowed down did we adjust, and even then only slightly. That patience is what got me from 150kg to my target. The temptation to fiddle is strong; resisting it is half the skill.

So the rule is simple: set it, run it, and only touch it when the scale tells you it's stopped. A stall of two to three weeks at genuine adherence is your signal to adjust, not a slow week, not a bad weekend, a real, sustained stop.

WHEN THE SCALE STOPS TELLING THE TRUTH.

The scale is a brilliant tool right up until it isn't. Two things you need to know about when it lies, or goes quiet.

IT BOUNCES DAY TO DAY

Water, salt, carbs, a big meal, poor sleep, needing the loo, all of it moves the scale by a kilo or more overnight, and none of it is fat. A single morning's weight is noise. **Weigh daily, but judge by the weekly average**, the trend over seven days is the signal. Never make a decision off one reading.

IT GOES QUIET AT MAINTENANCE AND DURING A RECOMP

Here's the one that catches people. When you're eating at maintenance and training hard, or you're fairly lean and recomping, you can be losing fat and gaining muscle at the same time. The two roughly cancel on the scale, so the number barely moves, even though your body is changing week to week.

The scale can't see body composition. It weighs fat and muscle the same. So in this situation the scale is the *wrong tool*, and trusting it will tell you "nothing's happening" when plenty is. This is exactly where I am now: at my target weight, leaning out and recomping, and the scale is close to useless for it. You switch tools.

YOUR FEEDBACK TOOLKIT WHEN THE SCALE WON'T WORK

Lean on these instead, and they're worth using alongside the scale even when it *is* moving:

- **The mirror.** Same spot, same light, same time of day. Your eye over a few weeks catches what a daily glance misses.
- **Photos.** Front, side, back, every week or two, same conditions. This is the big one. Progress is slow enough day to day that you forget where you started; photos don't.
- **The tape.** Waist especially. A waist coming down while your weight holds is fat loss the scale flat out can't show you.
- **Your clothes.** The most honest feedback there is. Belt notches, the fit of a shirt across the shoulders, jeans loosening. You feel this before the mirror shows it.

Use the right tool for the job. In a straight deficit or build, the scale trend leads and the others back it up. At maintenance or in a recomp, flip it: the mirror, the photos, the tape and your clothes lead, and the scale is just one more data point, not the boss.

PUTTING IT TOGETHER.

1. **Direction from your lane.** Cutting lanes eat below maintenance; the build lane eats at or just above it.
2. **Pick your rate.** 0.5 to 1kg a week to lose, around 0.5kg to gain (or use the percentages to scale it to your size).
3. **Set the calories to hit that rate.** Start from maintenance, open a gap or a surplus, and let the scale tell you if it's the right size.
4. **When it's working, don't touch it.** Change the plan only when progress genuinely stalls for two to three weeks.
5. **Match your feedback tool to the job.** Scale trend when it's moving; mirror, photos, tape and clothes when you're at maintenance or recomping.

ANDREW EAST

That's the engine and the strategy. Nothing in here is a shortcut, and none of it works in a week. It worked on me over eight months, and it will only work on you if you run it long enough to find out.

The current version of this guide is always at andreweastfit.com/resources/food-guide. If this copy was sent to you by someone else, that's where to check you've got the latest one.

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