Shopping on an empty stomach can cause you to overeat.
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YOU DAYDREAM ABOUT lunch (even though it's only 10:30 in the morning) and sniff around the fridge 30 minutes after a big dinner. What's behind that insatiable need to feed? In some cases, the problem may lie in subpar food choices. "Feeling full isn't just a numbers game," says Jennifer McDaniel, RDN, spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. "You can consume plenty of calories and still feel famished because you aren't eating satisfying, nutrient-dense foods." But seemingly innocent everyday habits (like your smartphone addiction) can also send your appetite into overdrive. Read on for some easy ways to quiet those cravings—along with your growling stomach—for good.

CULPRIT #1
You skimp on protein at breakfast

If your hunger seems more intense at night, you may need to add more protein in the morning. Eating a breakfast rich in protein improves appetite control and makes people less likely to reach for fat- or sugar-loaded snacks in the evening, according to research published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. "Unfortunately, most of us eat grab-and-go breakfasts that are high in fat and carbs because they're convenient," says study author Heather Leidy, PhD, assistant professor of nutrition and exercise physiology at the University of Missouri. **THE FIX** Give your morning meal a makeover. Include foods that are packed with protein and require little or no prep, such as Greek yogurt, high-protein cereals and make-ahead hard-boiled eggs. If you prefer oatmeal or pancakes, add a scoop of protein powder to make them more filling. Or head to your supermarket's frozen-food aisle: Companies such as Amy's Kitchen and Weight Watchers offer protein-rich microwavable breakfasts.

CULPRIT #2
You cut too many calories

It's only natural to feel a little hungrier while you're on a diet. But if you're always starving, you may have slashed more calories than necessary. "Just because a diet plan advises eating *x* number of calories a day doesn't mean that's enough for everyone," McDaniel says. (Generally, the taller/heavier/younger/more active you are, the more calories you need.) Eating too little could sabotage your weight-loss goals by making you more likely to binge or too tired to exercise. **THE FIX** Before you start a weight-loss program, determine your daily calorie needs. Apps such as Lose It and MyFitnessPal and the USDA's calculator (supertracker.usda.gov) will do the numbers for you. It's also helpful to keep a food journal to see how much you're eating before you diet. "You may discover you've been consuming 2,800 calories a day when you should be eating 1,500, but that might be too big of a cut to make overnight," McDaniel says. Instead, consider making tweaks to trim 200 to 500 daily calories at a time to avoid hunger pangs.

CULPRIT #3
You're a big fan of smoothies and juices

Depending on how it's made, a smoothie can be a healthy choice—but compared with most