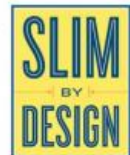
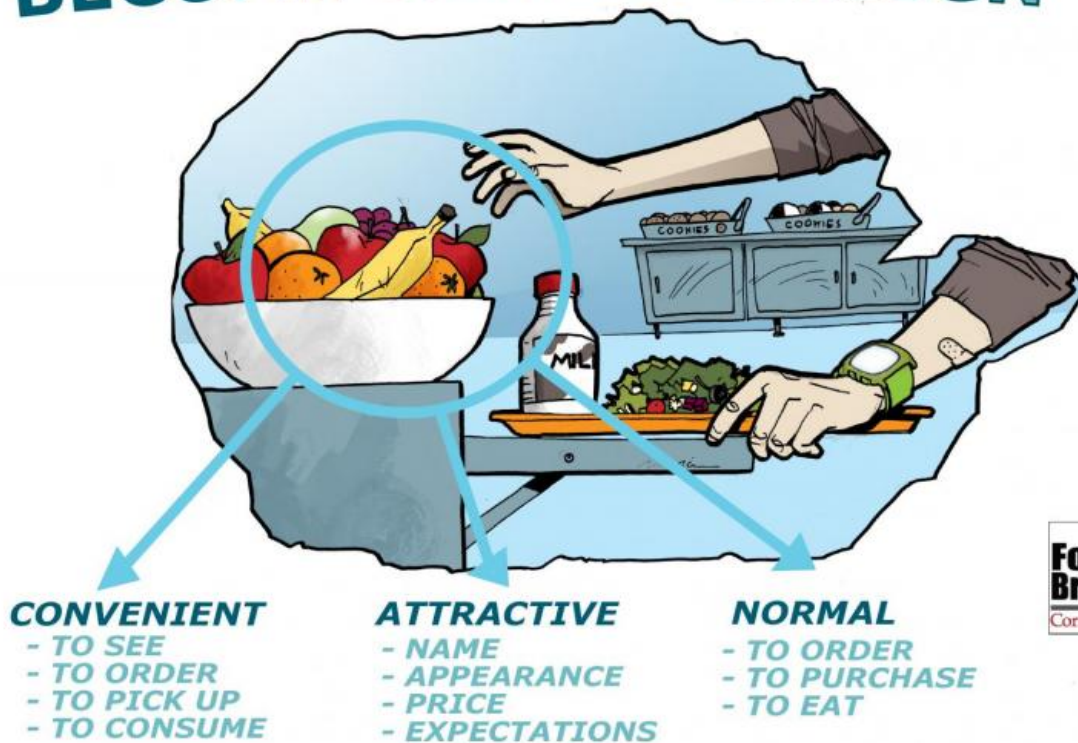


# Three secrets to healthier eating

April 29 2015, by Brian Wansink

## USE THE C.A.N. APPROACH TO BECOME SLIM BY DESIGN



© WANSINK (PSYCHOLOGY & MKTG 2015); WANSINK (SLIM BY DESIGN 2014)

Credit: Daniel Miller

If you want to know the secrets of healthier eating, think of the kitchen fruit bowl. A fruit bowl makes fruit more convenient, attractive, and

normal to eat than if the same fruit were in the bottom of the refrigerator.

A new Cornell study analyzed 112 studies that collected information about [healthy eating](#) behaviors and found that most healthy eaters did so because a restaurant, grocery store, school cafeteria, or spouse made foods like fruits and vegetables visible and easy to reach (convenient), enticingly displayed (attractive), and appear like an obvious choice (normal). "A healthy diet can be as easy as making the healthiest choice the most convenient, attractive, and normal," said Brian Wansink, Ph.D. author of *Slim by Design* and Director of the Cornell Food and Brand Lab.

The study, published in *Psychology and Marketing*, shows that when [fruit](#) is put in a nice bowl next to your car keys—or when a cafeteria puts it next to a well-lit cash register—it becomes more convenient, attractive, and normal to grab a banana than the chocolate chip cookie dough ice cream in the far back of the freezer. When restaurants give the high-profit shrimp salad appetizer an enticing name, highlight it on the menu, and have the waitress point it out as a special, it becomes more convenient, attractive, and normal to order that than the deep-fried onion rings on the back of the menu.

"With these three principles, there are endless changes that can be made to lead people—including ourselves—to eat healthier," said Wansink. For instance, if a school wants children to drink more white milk than [chocolate milk](#), they can make white milk more convenient (put it in the front of the cooler), more attractive (sell it in a shapely bottle), or more normal (give it half of the cooler space instead of a small corner of the cooler). In previous studies conducted by Dr. Wansink each of these changes increased white milk consumption by 30-60% in schools.

## From Can't to CAN: Convenient, Attractive, and Normal

	1. Make it More Convenient	2. Make it More Attractive	3. Make it More Normal
A mother who wants her kids to eat better at home . . .	Puts pre-cut vegetables on the middle shelf of the fridge and the cookies out of sight	Offers more tempting salad dressings with cool names and less tempting bread	Sets salad bowls on the dinner table every day
A restaurant owner who wants to sell more high-margin shrimp salad . . .	Makes it easy to find on the menu by putting it on the first page and in a bold font	Gives it a catchier or more appealing name	Describes it as a Special or a Manager's Favorite
A grocery store manager who wants to sell more fish at full price . . .	Places fish in a center cooler at the end of the vegetable section	Offers easy fish recipe ideas on note cards next to the fish	Puts floor decals near it or a green dashed line pointing toward the fish
An office manager who wants her workers to leave their desk and eat in the new healthy cafeteria . . .	Adds a \$5 Grab & Go line filled with healthier foods, and maybe an honor system cash box	Has a more attractive cafeteria or break room, or an appealing brown bag series	Posts notices and news on bulletin boards in the cafeteria, break room, or fitness room, and not in the work area
A school lunch manager who wants to get more kids to take and eat fruit . . .	Puts it within easy reach in two different parts of the line--beginning and end	Puts it in a colorful bowl and/or promotes it with a colorful sign	Puts it in front of the cash register with a sign saying, "Take an extra one for a snack"

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Credit: Cornell Food & Brand Lab

**More information:** Wansink, Brian (2015). Change Their Choice! Changing Behavior Using the CAN Approach and Activism Research. *Psychology & Marketing*, forthcoming. [onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/mar.20794/abstract](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/mar.20794/abstract)

Provided by Cornell Food & Brand Lab

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