

Top Down, Side Up: Effects of Food Architecture on Consumption of Hedonic and Healthy Foods

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Abstract

Prior research has shown that consumers mindlessly eat more of larger food portions relative to smaller ones, a tendency referred to as the portion size effect (PSE). We examine whether this effect still holds when people are mindfully focused on taste, especially of hedonic foods, and investigate how the architecture of such foods might affect the PSE. Across three studies, we test differences in consumption of small versus large desserts constructed with garnishes that are either on top of the dessert or to the side. While the PSE appears robust when garnish is placed to the side of a hedonic dessert, irrespective of whether the garnish is hedonic or healthy, we find that the PSE is mitigated when a healthy garnish is placed on top of a hedonic dessert. In contrast, we find that consumption of healthy foods can be increased by adding hedonic garnishes, whether to the side or on top.

Keywords: *Self-Control; Portion Size; Visual Cues*

Track: Consumer Behaviour