

# WHAT'S YOUR DEADLINE FUEL?

*Imogen Hope* unwraps journalists' snacking habits

What do you do when your deadline is looming, the panic is starting to set in, and you need an energy boost to get through the hours ahead? Hot cross buns; a ginger shot chaser to your coffee; or perhaps some crisps dipped in mayo? *XCITY* asks journalists what they nibble on when they're under pressure, and nutritional practitioner Pippa Campbell offers insight into what your snack choices say about YOU.

**POLLY VERNON**, interviewer, columnist and features writer for *The Times*, says: "If I'm at home, whatever's in the fridge (slithers of cheese, chocolate digestives probably). If I'm at a cafe: brownies. Sugar, basically."

What our expert says: "That cheese is good, one of the better options. Work more on the cheese!"

**GILES COREN**, columnist and restaurant critic for *The Times*, says: "Fruit. Tangerines are good at the moment, so a few of those. And then some Comice pears, maybe three. If they're a bit hard I hold them under a very hot tap for 30 seconds."

What our expert says: "Three pears all in one go? That's a lot of pears!"

**LUCAS OAKELEY**, Senior Content Editor at *Mob Kitchen*, says: "A Braeburn apple, a black coffee and two pieces of cool breeze Extra chewing gum, in that order."

What our expert says: "This is pretty weird, it was all sounding normal until we got to the chewing gum. You could try celery instead, celery actually takes quite a lot of chewing."



**ESTHER WALKER**, freelance writer and columnist for *iNews*, says: "I usually start off with chopped apple and peanut butter but – as I have small children so have a lot of junk food in the house – invariably I end up eating salt and vinegar Hula Hoops, chocolate-covered raisins and slices of bread smeared with Nutella and folded over. I can usually do one of those in three bites."

What our expert says: "Starts off well... have you seen how much sugar there is in Nutella?"

**COLIN PATERSON**, BBC Entertainment Correspondent, says: "If I'm going onto red carpets I bring a banana, but to avoid it getting mashed I bring it in a banana guard. You arrive with a perfect banana, but when you pull it out people can think you are carrying something inappropriate!"

What our expert says: "Do people use banana guards? I know it's a thing but I didn't know anyone actually uses them."



**CHARLOTTE EDWARDS**, interviewer for *The Times*, says: "Black coffee, probably. Maybe with a ginger shot chaser. In the old days it would've been fags. I miss the old days."

What our expert says: "Good for you for quitting the fags, that ginger shot will be a zinger for the brain."

**HATTIE CRISSELL**, freelance writer and contributing editor of *Grazia*, says: "Obviously it's all about the crisps. My favourite are Co-op own brand salt and vinegar, and sometimes I have them with mayo on the side because I'm disgusting."

What our expert says: "The combination of crisps and mayo sounds absolutely revolting, but if that's what keeps you going!"

**FARRAH STORR**, head of writer partnerships at *Substack* and a freelance features writer, says: "Fruit gums. I take my anxiety out in every mastication."

What our expert says: "Is it the chewing or is it the sugar? I can imagine you grinding those fruit gums."

**DAVID SMYTH**, music critic for the *Evening Standard*, says: "I confess to being a man who eats hot cross buns all year round – it's Easter 24/7 with me. Also a mix of salted peanuts and raisins – needs to be sweet and salty simultaneously or I can't punctuate properly."

What our expert says: "I wonder how many hot cross buns you're getting through, sounds like a comfort food to me."



All illustrations by Ella Williams.