

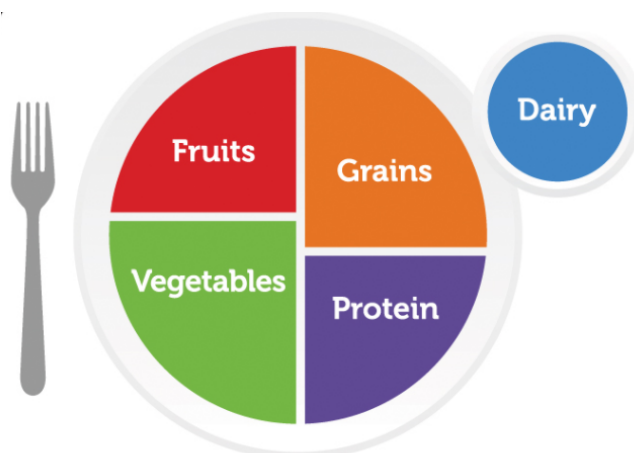


JUNIOR LEAGUE OF
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Understanding the Food Groups¹



- A healthy eating routine is essential at every stage of life and can have positive benefits to your health.
- It's important to eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy and fortified soy alternatives
- Eating a diet rich in vegetables and fruits may reduce risk for heart disease, including heart attack, stroke and some cancers.
- Whole-grains, fruits, and vegetables can help increase intake of fiber; Many Americans do not get enough fiber in their diet.
- Consuming dairy is important for building strong bones and is nutrient rich in calcium, potassium, vitamin D, and protein; About 90% of Americans do not get enough dairy.
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture created the [MyPlate](https://www.myplate.gov) to provide recommendation on the five food groups: Fruits, Vegetables, Grains, Protein Foods, and Dairy.



MyPlate.gov

¹ Information and materials in this guide obtained and adapted from the U.S. Department of Agriculture MyPlate website: <https://www.myplate.gov/resources>



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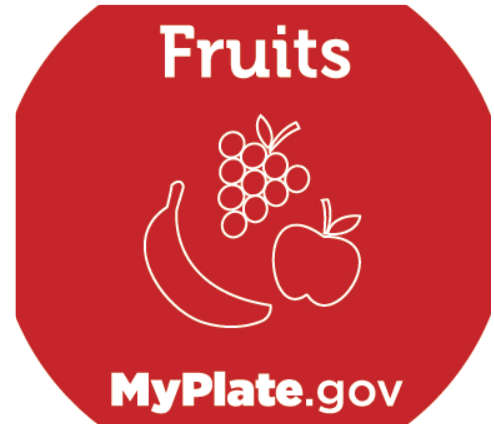
The Fruit Group¹

What foods are in the Fruit Group?

Any fruit or 100% fruit juice counts as part of the Fruit Group. In general, 1 cup of fruit or 100% fruit juice, or ½ cup of dried fruit can be considered as 1 cup from the Fruit Group.

How much fruit should you eat per day?

The amount of fruit you need to eat depends on age, sex, and level of physical activity. The amount each person needs can vary between 1 and 2 cups each day. Below are general recommendations.



Daily Recommendations for Fruit		
Children	2-3 yrs	1 cup
	4-8 yrs	1 to 1½ cups
Girls	9-13 yrs	1½ cups
	14-18 yrs	1½ cups
Boys	9-13 yrs	1½ cups
	14-18 yrs	2 cups
Women	19-30 yrs	2 cups
	31-50 yrs	1½ cups
	51+ yrs	1½ cups
Men	19-30 yrs	2 cups
	31-50 yrs	2 cups
	51+ yrs	2 cups

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The Vegetable Group¹

What foods are in the Vegetable Group?

Any vegetable or 100% vegetable juice counts as a member of the Vegetable Group. Vegetables may be raw or cooked; fresh, frozen, canned, or dried/dehydrated; and may be whole, cut-up, or mashed.

Vegetables are organized into five subgroups: dark green; red and orange; beans, peas, and lentils; starchy; and other vegetables.

How many vegetables should you eat per day?

The amount of vegetables you need to eat depends on your age, sex, and level of physical activity. The amount each person needs can vary between 1 and 3 cups each day. Below are general recommendations.



Daily Recommendation of Vegetables		
Children	2-3 yrs	1 cup
	4-8 yrs	1½ cups
Girls	9-13 yrs	2 cups
	14-18 yrs	2½ cups
Boys	9-13 yrs	2½ cups
	14-18 yrs	3 cups
Women	19-30 yrs	2½ cups
	31-50 yrs	2½ cups
	51+ yrs	2 cups
Men	19-30 yrs	3 cups
	31-50 yrs	3 cups
	51+ yrs	2½ cups

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The Grains Group¹

What foods are in the Grains Group?

Any food made from wheat, rice, oats, cornmeal, barley, or another cereal grain. This includes bread, pasta, breakfast cereals, grits, tortillas, popcorn, rice, and oatmeal. Grains are divided into two subgroups: Whole and Refined Grains. Whole grains contain the entire grain kernel (the bran, germ, and endosperm) and includes whole-wheat flour, bulgur, oatmeal, whole cornmeal, and brown rice. Refined grains have been milled, removing the bran and germ.

How much grains should you eat per day?

The amount of grains you need to eat depends on your age, sex, and level of physical activity. The amount varies between 3 and 8 ounce each day - at least half of the grains should be whole grains.



Daily Recommendation of Grains			
		Daily recommendation	Daily minimum of whole grains
Children	2-3 yrs	3 oz	1½ oz
	4-8 yrs	5 oz	2½ oz
Girls	9-13 yrs	5 oz	3 oz
	14-18 yrs	6 oz	3 oz
Boys	9-13 yrs	6 oz	3 oz
	14-18 yrs	8 oz	4 oz
Women	19-30 yrs	6 oz	3 oz
	31-50 yrs	6 oz	3 oz
	51+ yrs	5 oz	3 oz
Men	19-30 yrs	8 oz	4 oz
	31-50 yrs	7 oz	3½ oz
	51+ yrs	6 oz	3 oz

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The Protein Group¹

What foods are in the Proteins Group?

Protein includes seafood, meat, poultry, eggs, and other sources. Vegetarian options in the Protein Foods Group include beans, peas, and lentils, processed soy products, and nuts and seeds.

How much grains should you eat per day?

The amount of protein foods you need to eat depends on age, sex, and level of physical activity. Most Americans eat enough protein and should choose lean or low-fat proteins.

The amount each person needs can vary between 2 and 6½ ounce-equivalents each day. Young children need less, depending on their age/calorie needs. Aim to eat a variety of protein foods, including at least 8 ounces of cooked seafood per week.



	Amount that counts as 1 oz-equiv in the Protein Foods Group
Meats	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 ounce cooked lean beef• 1 ounce cooked lean pork or ham
Poultry	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 ounce cooked chicken or turkey, without skin• 1 sandwich slice of turkey (4½" x 2½" x ⅛")
Seafood	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 ounce cooked fish or shellfish
Eggs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 egg
Nuts and seeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ½ ounce of nuts• ½ ounce of seeds• 1 Tablespoon of peanut butter or almond butter
Beans, peas, and lentils	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ¼ cup of beans, peas, lentils• ¼ cup of baked beans, refried beans• ¼ cup (about 2 ounces) of tofu• 1 oz. tempeh, cooked• ¼ cup roasted soybeans• 1 falafel patty (2 ¼", 4 oz)• 2 Tablespoons hummus

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The Dairy Group¹

What foods are in the Dairy Group?

In general, 1 cup of milk, yogurt, or soy milk, or 1 ½ ounces of natural cheese can be considered as 1 cup from the Dairy Group.

How much dairy should you eat per day?

The amount of dairy you need depends on your age, sex, height, weight, and level of physical activity. For women, the amount can also depend on whether you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

Since most Americans do not get enough dairy, increasing intake of fat-free or low-fat dairy, milk, yogurt, cheese, or fortified soy milk or yogurt is beneficial. Dairy improves bone health especially in children and adolescents and promotes bone health and prevents the onset of osteoporosis in adults.



Daily Recommendation of The Dairy Group					
Children	2-3 yrs	2 cups	Women	19-30 yrs	3 cups
	4-8 yrs	2½ cups		31-50 yrs	
Girls	9-13 yrs	3 cups		51+ yrs	
	14-18 yrs		19-30 yrs		
Boys	9-13 yrs	3 cups	Men	31-50 yrs	
	14-18 yrs			51+ yrs	

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Following MyPlate at Home and School¹

How can I track what is on my plate?

Use a daily tracker to like the one linked below to record what foods you are eating each day. After one week of recording your meals compare which food groups you are consuming on a daily basis and which ones you should introduce into your diet.

[My Plate Weekly Tracker](#)

Do School lunches meet MyPlate guidelines?

The USDA guidelines for meals are followed in school lunches served across the country. Serving children a variety of grains, vegetables, fruits, dairy, and protein helps build strong healthy habits that last a lifetime. These well balanced meals help promote strong academic achievement and performance.

[MyPlate Guide to School Lunches](#)

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