

The Eatwell Guide

Top tips for how to eat a healthy, balanced diet using the food groups in the Eatwell Guide!



Fruit and vegetables

Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta, and other starchy carbohydrates



Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins



Dairy and alternatives



Oil and spreads



In the UK, our healthy eating model is called the Eatwell Guide. It shows the different types of foods and drinks to consume, and in what proportions to have a healthy, balanced diet that is also more sustainable than the current average UK diet.

Fruit and vegetables

We should try to eat **at least 5 portions** of a **variety** of fruit and vegetables every day.

- Fruit and vegetables should make up just **over a third** of what we eat.
- They provide a wide range of **vitamins** and **minerals**, and **fibre**.
- Eating fruit and vegetables can help with weight management - you can **eat plenty** to help you feel fuller!
- Choose a **variety** of coloured fruit and vegetables as they contain different combinations of important nutrients our bodies need to stay healthy.



What counts?

Portion sizes

Fresh, frozen or canned fruit and vegetables	80g
Dried fruit	30g
Unsweetened 100% fruit or vegetable juice or smoothie	150ml

Think Variety! Melon, papaya, spinach, guava, okra, Pak choi, peppers, squash, ackee, apricots, turnips, dates, cabbage, pumpkin, kumquat, pears, apples.

Why eat these foods?

Fruit and vegetables give us:

- ✓ **Fibre** – helps to maintain a healthy gut.
- ✓ **Folate** – important for normal and healthy blood formation.
- ✓ **Vitamin C** – helps the immune system to work as it should.
- ✓ **Vitamin A** – important for maintenance of normal vision and skin.
- ✓ **Potassium** – helps to maintain a healthy blood pressure.

Note: 150ml unsweetened 100% fruit or vegetable juices and smoothies only counts as one of your 5 A DAY.

TOP TIPS

Canned and **frozen** fruit and vegetables with no added sugar or salt – can last longer and be cheaper!

Try looking for fruit and vegetables at your **local market** or in the **world foods section** of your supermarket. You may find a greater **variety!**

Choose **fresh** fruit and vegetables to support your local farmers, where possible.

Try **grating** carrots or courgettes into your meals to add **flavour** and **texture**.

Meal Ideas for Fruit and Vegetables

Breakfast

Add fruit or vegetables to your porridge, toast or poha.

Lunch

Try adding lettuce, watercress, cucumber, tomato, radish and/or sweetcorn to your sandwich.

Choose soup with more vegetables.

Dinner

Add extra vegetables to your meals, such as: Pak choi to a stir fry, frozen peas to a fish pie, spinach to a curry or stew, and peppers to a chilli.

Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates

- Base your meals around starchy foods such as wholewheat pasta, brown rice, wholewheat noodles, wholemeal breads and potatoes with the skins on.
- Choose **wholegrain** varieties as these contain more **fibre**, as well as **vitamins** and **minerals**.

What counts?

Wholewheat varieties of **pasta**, **noodles** and **couscous**

Grains such as brown rice, bulgur wheat, barley, rye, quinoa, corn, oats and freekeh

Wholegrain bread and bread products such as wholemeal varieties of bread rolls, sourdough, pitta, chapattis, bagels and roti

Potatoes with the skins on: baked, boiled or roasted

Yams, cassava, breadfruit, plantain and associated products such as fufu

Why eat these foods?

Wholegrain starchy foods give us:

- ✓ **Fibre** – helps to maintain normal bowel function.
- ✓ **B Vitamins** – for example thiamine which helps the body use the energy from the carbohydrates we eat.
- ✓ **Folate** – needed for the formation of healthy red blood cells and for the nervous system.
- ✓ **Magnesium** – contributes to reduction of tiredness and fatigue.
- ✓ **Copper** – helps the immune system to function as it should.

TOP TIPS

Experiment with potatoes – try oven baked potato wedges with spices, potatoes with herbs, or stuffed potato skins.

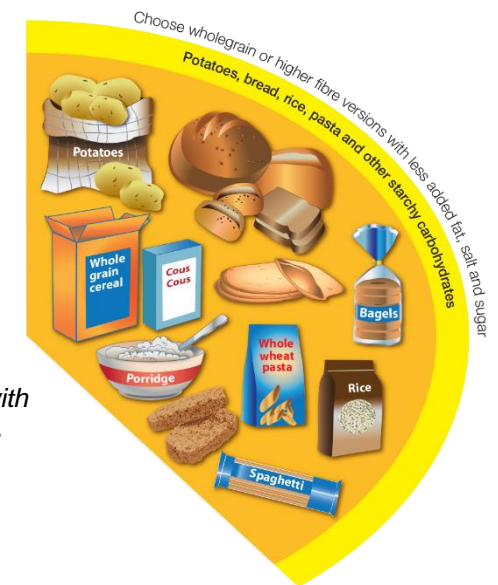
Look at the **ingredients list** to identify wholegrain products – look for **wholewheat** and **wholemeal**.

Wholegrain foods can also include wild rice, bulgur wheat, quinoa, oats, rye and barley.

Limit adding ingredients high in saturated fat to starchy foods like ghee in chapattis, butter on potatoes or cream in pasta sauces.

Note: Choose starchy foods with less added fat, salt, and sugar.

Note: Other root vegetables such as sweet potatoes, taro root, parsnips and turnips are part of vegetable group.



Meal Ideas for Starchy Foods

Breakfast

Wholegrain breakfast cereal, porridge using oats or cornmeal, wholemeal toast, poha or idli.

Lunch

Sandwiches with wholemeal bread, vegetable stew with wholemeal pitta, baked potato with the skin on or add grains to your salad.

Dinner

Spaghetti Bolognese with wholewheat pasta, stir fry with wholewheat noodles, curry with yams or cassava and injera with stews.

Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins

- These **protein-rich** foods are also good sources of **vitamins** and **minerals**.
- We are encouraged to eat more **plant sources of protein**, such as pulses, as these are low in fat and considered more sustainable.

What counts?

Pulses such as beans, lentils and peas

Other plant-based sources such as tofu, soya mince and mycoprotein

Fish: white fish (like tilapia, coley and hake), oily fish (like salmon and sardines) and shellfish (like prawns and mussels)

Meat, poultry, and game such as beef, lamb, chicken, turkey, pork and goat

Eggs

Unsalted nuts and seeds including nut butter and seed pastes

Why eat these foods?

Protein foods give us:

- ✓ **Protein** – for growth and maintenance of normal muscles and maintenance of healthy bones.
- ✓ **Iron** – found in red meat. Contributes to the normal formation of red blood cells and transport of oxygen around the body.
- ✓ **Zinc** – found in meat. For maintenance of normal skin, hair, nails, vision and the immune system.
- ✓ **Vitamin B12** – found in meat and fish. For healthy red blood cells and nerve function.
- ✓ **Vitamin D** – found in oily fish. For healthy teeth, bones and muscles.
- ✓ **Omega-3 fatty acids** – found in oily fish. Helps to maintain normal and healthy heart function.

TOP TIPS

Pulses are **low** in **fat** as well as being **high** in **protein, fibre, vitamins** and **minerals**. Pulses include chickpeas, black eyed beans, mung beans and many more!

Choose nut butters **without** palm oil or added salt and sugar – look for **100% nuts!**

Choose **leaner** cuts of meat and **lean** mince, **remove** the **skin** from poultry, and **trim** off **visible** white **fat** on meat.

Limit meat and fish in **batter** or **pastry**.

Grill, bake or **steam** meat and fish instead of frying.

Try a **boiled** or **poached** egg instead of a fried egg.

Note: Check the food labels on plant-based meat alternatives, such as vegetarian sausages or burgers, to choose those lower in saturated fat, salt and sugar.



Food for Thought? Reduce saturated fat and increase fibre intake by replacing half the red meat in your meals with your choice of pulses.

Meal Ideas for Protein

Breakfast

Add unsalted nuts to your wholegrain breakfast cereal or 100% nut butter on your wholemeal toast.

Lunch

Tuna salad sandwich on wholemeal bread.
Add pulses to your salad – try mixed bean salad!

Dinner

Lean beef mince and kidney beans in your chilli.
Swap half chicken for chickpeas in a curry.
Tofu in a ramen or stir fry.

Dairy and alternatives

- Milk and dairy products are good sources of **protein**, and a wide range of **vitamins** and **minerals**.
- If choosing dairy alternatives, go for those **fortified** with calcium and other vitamins and minerals where possible.
- We should choose **lower fat and sugar** options where possible – use food labels to help you!
- Butter, cream and ice cream are **not** included in this group as they are high in saturated fat.

What counts?

Milk such as skimmed, semi-skimmed, whole

Cheese such as cheddar, parmesan, paneer

Yogurt and fromage frais

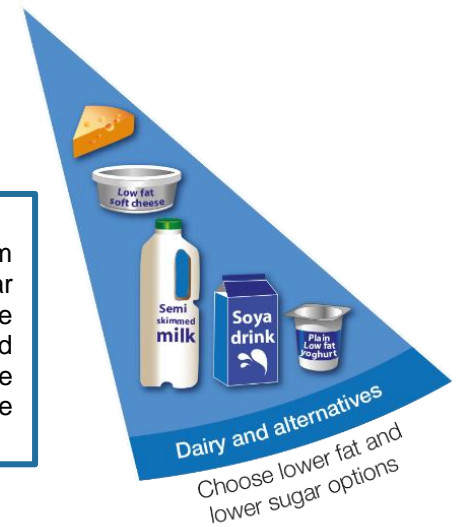
Drinks such as some smoothies, kefir and lassi

Cream cheese and **quark**

Dairy alternatives made from **soya, nut, oat, rice, quinoa, coconut** and **pea** such as soya drinks and yogurts

Did you know?

Lactose intolerance is a digestive problem where the body cannot digest lactose, a sugar found in milk and dairy products. If you are lactose intolerant, go for lactose-free milk and dairy products. Lactose-free milk contains the same nutrients as regular milk without the lactose.



Note: Read the food labels to choose those that are unsweetened and fortified with vitamins and minerals such as calcium, B-vitamins and iodine.

Why eat these foods?

Dairy foods give us:

- ✓ **Protein** – for growth and repair function.
- ✓ **Calcium** – for development and maintenance of strong, healthy bones.
- ✓ **Iodine** – important for healthy nerve and brain function, and healthy skin.
- ✓ **Vitamin B2 (riboflavin)** – to help release energy from carbohydrate and protein.
- ✓ **Vitamin B12** – for healthy red blood cells and nerve function.

TOP TIPS

Try a glass of **low-fat milk after exercising** – you will benefit from **rehydration** and the **protein** found in milk.

Add **fruit** to **low-fat plain yogurt, kefir, lassi** or **ayran** as a dessert or snack.

Grate hard cheeses, such as cheddar, to avoid using more than you need!

Swap whole milk for **skimmed** or **semi-skimmed** milk (only adults and children over the age of 2 years).

For older adults with a poor appetite, try **fortifying** a pint of whole milk with 2-4 heaped tablespoons of dried skimmed milk powder.

Meal Ideas for Dairy and Alternatives

Breakfast

Semi-skimmed milk or fortified dairy alternative on your wholegrain breakfast cereal or porridge.

Lunch

Low-fat cream cheese mixed with herbs in your sandwich using wholemeal bread.

Dinner

Low-fat plain yogurt to thicken sauces, marinade meat, or as part of a dip such as tzatziki. Try paneer in your curry.

Oils and spreads

- Dietary fat provides us with **essential fatty acids** (those the body cannot make itself) and helps us to absorb the **fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E and K**.
- Most of us need to **cut down on saturated fat**, as it can raise blood cholesterol levels and increase the risk of heart disease and stroke.
- All fats are high in calories, even unsaturated fats, so it's important to use them in **small amounts** to avoid consuming more calories than you need.

Examples of Oils and Spreads

High in Unsaturated Fats	High in Saturated Fats
Vegetable oil	Goose fat
Olive oil	Coconut oil
Sunflower oil	Palm oil
Rapeseed oil	Ghee
Spreads made from these oils	Butter or lard

Did you know? Swapping saturated fats for unsaturated fats has been shown to reduce blood cholesterol and the risk of heart disease and stroke.



Choose unsaturated oils and use in small amounts

Note: Store oils in the cupboard as they are sensitive to heat, light, and oxygen!

Unsaturated oils give us **vitamin E** – contributes to the protection of cells from oxidative stress. Sunflower, olive and rapeseed oil are all high in vitamin E.

Oils and spreads higher in saturated fats such as coconut oil, butter and ghee can be used for flavour. If you like these, try to use in smaller amounts and less often.

TOP TIPS

Experiment with **spray oils** containing **unsaturated** fats as you will use much less.

Choose a **small amount** of **spread** made from **unsaturated** oils instead of butter, lard or ghee.

Avoid adding extra fat when cooking - try using a **non-stick pan**.

Higher smoke point oils, such as sunflower and rapeseed oils, are good for **roasting**.

Lower smoke point oils, such as olive and walnut oils, are good in salad **dressings** and for **drizzling!**

Most supermarket **vegetable oils** are **rapeseed oil**.

Meal Ideas for Oils and Spreads

Breakfast

Use a small amount of unsaturated spread on your wholemeal toast instead of butter.

Lunch

Drizzle olive oil and add herbs to your salad.

Dinner

Roast your vegetables using sunflower oil instead of oils high in saturated fat. Make chapattis using unsaturated oils, such as olive oil, instead of ghee.

Foods high in fat, salt and sugar

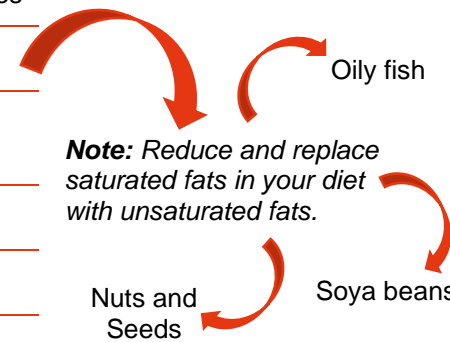
- Most people in the UK eat **too much** saturated fat, salt and sugar, and need to reduce the amount they consume.
- If these foods are included in your diet, try to eat them **less often** and in **small amounts**.
- These foods are **NOT** needed as part of a healthy, balanced diet.



Eat less often and in small amounts

Examples of Foods High in Fat, Salt and Sugar

Chocolate	Savoury snacks such as crisps and patties
Confectionary such as sweets and mithai	Cream and ice cream
Cakes and biscuits such as shortbread and moon cakes	Fried foods such as chips and samosas
Puddings and pastries such as rice pudding	Sugar-sweetened beverages
Jams, honey, and syrups	Rich sauces and gravies
Butter, lard, and ghee	Condiments such as mayonnaise and soy sauce



Recommendations for Adults

SATURATED FAT
No more than 20g per day (female)
No more than 30g per day (male)

SALT
No more than 6g per day

FREE SUGAR *
No more than 30g per day

↑ Too much saturated fat can... **... raise blood cholesterol levels and increase risk of heart disease and stroke.**

Too much salt can... **... raise blood pressure and increase risk of developing heart disease or having a stroke.**

Too much sugar can... **... increase the risk of weight gain and increase the risk of tooth decay.**

TOP TIPS

- Use **low-fat plain yogurt** instead of cream, condensed milk or coconut milk when cooking.
- Choose **canned fruit** in **natural juice** or **water with no added sugar** rather than in syrup.
- Try **wholegrain** breakfast cereals **not** coated in sugar or honey.
- Go for **reduced** or **lower salt** versions of **stock cubes, sauces** and **condiments**.

Example of how to make healthier choices – try swapping:

- Syrup for mashed **banana** and **cinnamon** in porridge
- Puddings, cakes, and pastries for **fruit loaf, scones** or **fruit**
- Coconut oil, butter, and ghee for **rapeseed** or **olive oil**
- Fatty/salty savoury snacks for **oatcakes** or **rye crackers** with houmous
- Salt for **black pepper, herbs** and **spices** when cooking to add flavour!



Note: Look for greens and ambers on food labels to help you choose foods lower in fat, salt, and sugar!

* any sugars **added** to food or drink, and those found naturally in **honey, syrups,** and **unsweetened fruit juice**
Note: free sugars are **not** included in nutrition information on food labels - look at the ingredients list!