

MYPYRAMID



You've probably seen MyPyramid on the Web. Did you know you can use it to give your food choices a checkup? With a little pyramid know-how, you can tally your food choices and see whether they add up to a balanced diet. Even better, MyPyramid can help you plan tomorrow's food choices for good health.

Discover...

- ★ how MyPyramid can help you.
- ★ how to identify food amounts.
- ★ smart choices from the five food groups.

Key Term

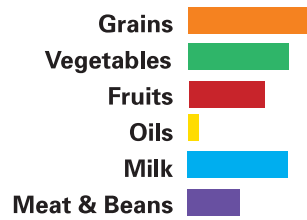
Calorie level

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

How many fruits and vegetables did you eat yesterday? Did you get enough? Read on to find out!

The Five Food Groups

MyPyramid makes healthy eating simple. It organizes foods into five food groups. As long as you eat the right amount of food from each group for your calorie level, you're likely to get the right balance of nutrients. Your **calorie level** is the number of calories you need to maintain a healthy body weight.



Using MyPyramid

MyPyramid is a symbol and food guidance system designed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The six bands of the pyramid represent the five food groups and oils.

Through color and shape, the bands send special messages. Since each band has a different color, the colors help identify food groups and oils. The different band widths show that more foods are needed from some groups than others. The bands for grains, vegetables, fruits, and milk are wider than those for meat and beans and oils. The top of each band represents foods with high fat and added sugars. The top is narrow to show that these foods should be limited. For example, in the Milk Group high-fat, fried cheese sticks are less healthful than low-fat milk.

The figure running up the pyramid's side promotes physical activity. For most teens, this means 60 minutes of physical activity daily.

Calorie Level

To use MyPyramid, first find out how many calories you need each day. Go to MyPyramid.gov on the Internet and enter your age, gender, and activity level. The result should be within these general numbers:

CALORIES NEEDED DAILY				
Gender	Age	Activity Level		
		Sedentary*	Moderately Active*	Active*
Females	9 to 13	1600	1600 to 2000	1800 to 2200
Females	14 to 18	1800	2000	2400
Males	9 to 13	1800	1800 to 2200	2000 to 2600
Males	14 to 18	2200	2400 to 2800	2800 to 3200

*Sedentary: less than 30 minutes of physical activity daily. Moderately active: 30 to 60 minutes. Active: over 60 minutes.

FOOD AMOUNTS

Based on your daily calorie need, MyPyramid tells you how much food to eat from each food group every day. For example, suppose a 13-year-old female who is moderately active looks for her numbers. MyPyramid says she needs 2000 calories through the following amounts of food every day:


- ◆ 6 ounces of grains
- ◆ 2 cups of fruits
- ◆ 2½ cups of vegetables
- ◆ 3 cups of milk
- ◆ 5½ ounces of meat and beans

The food amounts you need may be different, so check MyPyramid to find out what's right for you. Then you can compare your daily food choices to the amounts of food recommended and decide whether you need to make any changes in your eating habits. Keep these principles in mind:

- ◆ MyPyramid measures vegetables, fruits, and milk in cups. Grains and meat and beans are measured in ounces. If you eat an ounce of cheese, how does that equate to cups in the Milk Group? You need to know some equivalents, as described on pages 64 to 69.



This meal includes 1 cup of rice and a dinner roll. That counts as three ounces from the Grain Group.



Try It!

Your Food Choices

List everything you ate yesterday. Beside each item, identify its food group or groups and the amount you ate in ounces or cups.

- ★ Did you eat enough food from each food group as recommended?
- ★ Did you choose mainly nutrient-dense foods?
- ★ How might your food choices have been improved?

- ◆ Some foods, such as pizza and sandwiches, are mixtures. They have foods from more than one food group. Consider each part of the mixture when you add up food amounts. The cheese on pizza, for instance, counts in the Milk Group, but the crust counts in the Grain Group.
- ◆ Often people eat more than they need. A 3-ounce serving of meat, for example, is about the size of a computer mouse. How does this compare to what the 13-year-old on the previous page needs from the Meat and Beans Group? What would happen if she ate two 3-ounce servings? Eating more than what you need each day can lead to weight gain.

Tips for Choosing Foods

Some foods in a food group are more healthful than others. Remember these suggestions in order to choose wisely:

- ◆ Choose foods from all the food groups. Each one provides some, but not all, of the nutrients you need. Include limited amounts of healthful oils.



- ◆ Eat a variety of foods from each group. Not all foods have the same kinds and amounts of nutrients. You might choose carrots, lettuce, and broccoli one day and spinach, tomatoes, and corn the next.



- ◆ Choose mainly nutrient-dense foods that limit the intake of saturated and trans fats, cholesterol, added sugar, and salt.



GRAIN GROUP TIPS

- ◆ Make half of your grain foods whole grain every day to be sure you get enough fiber.
- ◆ When you include grain products as breakfast foods, snacks, and side dishes, the food amounts add up quickly.

Grain Group

Foods Included

- Baked products—whole-grain breads, rolls, bagels, English muffins
- Flat breads—tortillas, pita bread, pizza crust
- Breakfast cereals—ready-to-eat or cooked, whole-grain
- Grain products—rice, pasta, grits, bulgur
- Snacks—pretzels, air-popped popcorn, tortilla chips, crackers



Key Nutrients

Foods in this group are a good source of:

- Carbohydrates
- B vitamins
- Vitamin E
- Minerals
- Fiber

What Counts as an Ounce?

- 1 slice of bread
- 1 cup dry cereal
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked cereal, rice, or pasta
- 1 ounce dry pasta or rice



VEGETABLE GROUP TIPS

For nutrient variety, include these several times a week:

- ◆ Dark green leafy vegetables (such as spinach, romaine lettuce, broccoli).
- ◆ Deep yellow vegetables (carrots, sweet potatoes, winter squash).
- ◆ Starchy vegetables (potatoes, sweet corn, green peas).
- ◆ Dry beans and peas (kidney beans, baked beans, split peas, lentils).
- ◆ Other vegetables (tomatoes, green beans, onions, and more).

Vegetable Group

Foods Included

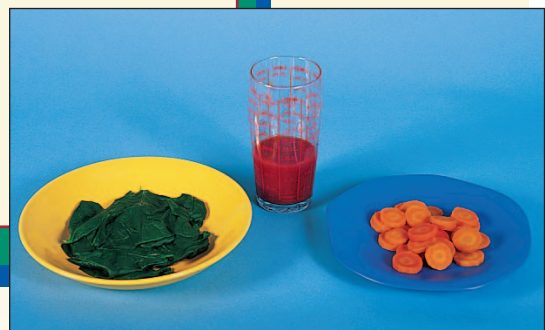
- All vegetables—fresh, frozen, canned, and dried

Key Nutrients

- Carbohydrates
- Beta carotene
- Vitamins, especially vitamin C
- Minerals, such as iron and magnesium
- Fiber

What Counts as a Cup?

- 2 cups leafy raw vegetables, such as lettuce or spinach
- 1 cup all other vegetables, cooked or chopped raw
- 1 cup vegetable juice



FRUIT GROUP TIPS

- ◆ Eat citrus fruits, melons, and berries regularly. They're rich in vitamin C.
- ◆ Eat whole fruits often. They have more fiber than fruit juices.
- ◆ For less sugar, select fruits canned in natural juices instead of heavy syrup. Look for fruit juices and frozen fruits without added sugars.
- ◆ Count only 100% fruit juice as fruit.

Fruit Group

Foods Included

- All fruits—fresh, frozen, canned, and dried



Key Nutrients

- Carbohydrates
- Beta carotene
- Vitamins, especially vitamin C
- Minerals, such as potassium
- Fiber

What Counts as a Cup?

- 1 large orange (other fresh fruits vary)
- 1 cup of chopped, cooked or canned fruit
- 1 cup 100% fruit juice



MILK GROUP TIPS

- ◆ For less fat, choose fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products.
- ◆ If you don't like to drink milk, have cheese, yogurt, or foods made with milk, such as pudding.
- ◆ Be sure to include 3 cups of fat-free or low-fat milk, or the equivalent, everyday.

Milk Group

Foods Included

- Milk and milk products

Key Nutrients

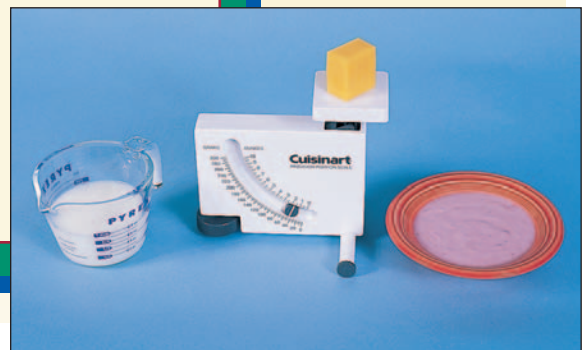
Foods in this group are a good source of:

- Protein
- Vitamins
- Minerals, especially calcium



What Counts as a Cup?

- 1 cup milk or yogurt
- 1 1/2 ounces of natural cheese
- 2 ounces of processed cheese



MEAT & BEANS GROUP TIPS

- ◆ Choose dry beans often. They have little or no fat and are a good source of fiber. (You can count dry beans in this group or the Vegetable Group.)
- ◆ Other choices for less fat are fish, poultry without skin, and lean meat.
- ◆ Go easy on nuts and seeds. They're high in fat.

Meat & Beans Group

Foods Included

- All meats, poultry, fish, legumes, eggs, nuts, and seeds



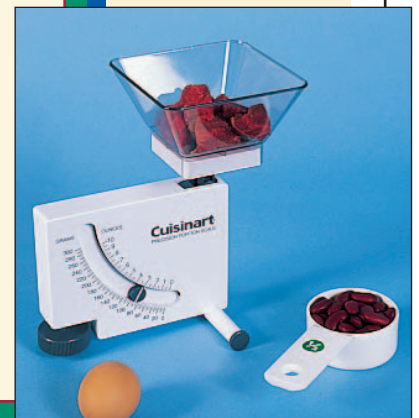
Key Nutrients

Foods in this group are a good source of:

- Protein
- B vitamins
- Minerals, such as iron and zinc

What Counts as an Ounce?

- 1 ounce lean meat, poultry, or fish
- 1/4 cup cooked dry beans
- 1 egg
- 1 Tbsp. peanut butter
- 1/2 ounce nuts or seeds



Oils

Description

- Healthful oils, such as vegetable and olive oils; liquid at room temperature
- 5 to 6 tsp. allowed daily

Key Nutrient

- Fat

What Counts as a Teaspoon?

- 1 tsp. vegetable oil
- 1 Tbsp. low-fat mayonnaise
- 1 tsp. soft margarine



CHAPTER 8 REVIEW

Understanding Key Ideas

1. Briefly explain what type of information MyPyramid gives you. How does this help you plan a healthful diet?
2. What nutrients do foods in the Grain Group provide?
3. Use MyPyramid to estimate the amounts of food you need from each food group daily.
4. For each food group, give an example of advice for choosing foods.

Applying Knowledge and Skills

- ◆ **Meal Planning:** Use MyPyramid to plan meals and snacks for one day

for Marcus, age 14, who is active on the track team.

- ◆ **Food Group Ideas:** In a small group, brainstorm creative ways to enjoy foods in one of the five food groups.

Exploring Further

- ◆ **Food Guides Around the World:** Like the U.S., many other countries have food guides to teach people about making healthy food choices. Using the Internet or other resources, learn about at least three of them. How do they compare with MyPyramid?