Department for Education

Guidance

Portion sizes and food groups

Updated 2 July 2021

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Primary (4 to 10 years old)

Typical portion sizes (grams/mls/household measures) raw and cooked food

Starchy foods

This includes:

- all breads
- barley
- buckwheat
- bulgur wheat
- cassava
- cornmeal
- couscous
- maize
- millet
- noodles and pasta
- oats
- plantain
- potatoes
- rice
- rye
- semolina
- spelt
- sweet potato
- tapioca
- yam

Bread

This includes:

- white, wholemeal, granary, brown, wheatgerm, multigrain, potato bread: 1 to 2 slices of medium bread
- chappattis, plain baked naan, rotis: 1 small
- rolls: 1 small roll
- bagels: 1 small or half a large bagel
- pitta, wraps: 1 small pitta, 2 x 6 inch wraps: 1 x 10 inch wrap

50g to 70g

Potatoes or sweet potato

This includes:

- boiled and mashed potatoes: Raw, 120g to 170g
- jacket and baked potatoes: Raw, 200g to 280g

Other starchy root vegetables

This includes:

- yam
- plantain
- cocoyam
- cassava

Raw, 100g to 150g.

Pasta and noodles

This includes:

- white and wholemeal spaghetti
- noodles and pasta shapes

Dried, 45g to 65g (based on average weight change of wholemeal and white spaghetti, pasta shapes and noodles)

Rice

This includes:

- white and brown rice

Dried, 35g to 55g (based on average weight change of white and brown rice).

Other grains

This includes:

- couscous
- bulgur wheat
- maize (polenta)
- cornmeal

Dried, 40g to 60g.

Starchy foods where fat or oil has been added before or during the cooking process

This includes:

- roast or sautéed potatoes
- chips
- potato wedges
- pre-prepared potato products
- fried rice
- bread
- noodles
- hash browns
- garlic bread
- Yorkshire pudding
- chapattis and naan made with fat
- pancakes and waffles cooked in oil

Potatoes cooked in oil or fat including:

- roast or sautéed potatoes
- chips
- potato wedges
- other processed potato products such as waffles

Raw, 70g to 100g.

Garlic bread

- as an accompaniment: 20g or one slice

Bread

Bread with no added fat or oil must be available every day.

All types of plain bread with no added fat or oil, including:

- brown
- wholemeal
- granary
- white
- mixtures of white and wholemeal
- pitta
- rolls
- chapattis
- naan
- ciabatta
- herb bread

Wholegrain

Starchy wholegrains including:

- wholemeal and granary flours
- wholemeal and granary breads and bread products
- whole-wheat pasta
- brown rice
- oats

Also look out for higher-fibre white bread, half and half wholegrain and white mixes such as 50/50 mix of brown and white rice, 50/50 whole wheat and white pasta.

Fruit and vegetables

This includes vegetables in all forms, including:

- fresh
- frozen
- canned
- dried
- juiced
- pulses such as beans and lentils

Vegetables or salad should be offered as an accompaniment to every meal, in addition to any vegetables used as ingredients in composite dishes such as casseroles and stews. Potatoes are classed as a starchy food and are not included in this food group.

- vegetables or mixed salad
- salad bars

Raw, 40g to 60g.

Vegetables

This includes:

- peas
- green beans
- sweetcorn
- carrots
- mixed vegetables
- cauliflower
- broccoli
- swede
- turnip
- leek
- brussels sprouts
- cabbage
- spinach
- spring greens

Cooked, 40g to 60g or 1 to 2 tablespoons.

Pulses

This includes:

- lentils
- kidney beans
- chickpeas

Dried, 15g to 20g. Cooked, 40g to 60g or 1 to 2 tablespoons (based on average weight change of chickpeas, kidney beans and green lentils).

Baked beans in tomato sauce

As an accompaniment.

Cooked, 50g to 70g or 1 to 2 tablespoons.

Vegetable-based soup

Cooked, 200g to 250g.

Fruits in all forms

This includes:

- fresh
- frozen
- canned
- dried
- juiced

Fruits can be provided within other dishes, for example, fruit-based desserts such as crumbles.

Large-size fruit

For example:

- apples
- pears
- bananas
- peaches

Raw, 75g to 100g or 1 small sized fruit with skin.

Medium-size fruit

For example:

- satsumas
- tangerines
- plums
- apricots
- kiwis

Raw, 50g to 100g or 1 fruit with skin.

Small fruits

For example:

- strawberries
- raspberries
- grapes

Raw, 40g to 60g or 10 to 15 fruits.

Dried fruit

For example:

- raisins
- sultanas
- apricots

Dried, 15g to 30g or half to 1 tablespoon.

All fruit-based desserts should have a content of at least 50% fruit measured by weight of the raw ingredients (for example, fruit crumble, fruit pie, fruit sponge, fruit cobbler, fruit jelly). Fruit used as a decoration or jam added to a dessert does not count towards this standard.

- Fruit salad
- fruit tinned in juice
- stewed fruit

Raw or cooked, 65g to 100g (40 g min fruit) or 2 to 3 tablespoons.

Meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein

This includes:

- fresh and frozen meat
- poultry
- fresh, frozen and canned fish
- shellfish
- eggs

Meat alternatives

This includes:

- soya and mycoprotein-based meat substitute
- tofu

Pulses

This includes:

- beans (cannellini, kidney, pinto, borlotti, haricot, butter, but not green beans)
- chickpeas
- lentils (red, green, brown and puy)
- nuts

Roast red meat

This includes:

- beef
- lamb
- pork
- veal
- venison
- goat

This is also the portion size for fillings for baked potatoes and sandwiches.

Raw, 50g to 80g.

Roast poultry

This includes:

- chicken
- turkey
- duck

This includes dishes or products made from these meats. This is also the portion size for fillings for baked potatoes and sandwiches.

Raw, 60g to 85g.

Red meat or poultry

In dishes such as:

- casserole
- stew
- pie
- curry

Note: weight may be reduced proportionately in composite dishes if adding another protein based food, such as:

- beans
- cheese
- milk:

Raw, 50g to 75g.

Meat-based soup

Cooked, 200g to 250g.

White fish

This includes:

- pollock
- hake
- coley
- cod
- haddock
- plaice

Whether cooked alone, or in a dish such as a casserole or fish pie, or as a breaded or battered product.

Raw, 60g to 90g.

Oily fish

This includes:

- fresh, tinned or frozen salmon
- sardines
- pilchards
- mackerel
- herring
- fresh or frozen tuna

Tuna only counts as an oily fish when it is fresh or frozen because the omega-3 fatty acids are removed during the canning process.

Raw, 55g to 80g.

Fish or shellfish

This includes:

- tuna
- salmon
- mackerel
- prawns

Served in a salad, baked potato or sandwich.

Cooked, 50g to 70g.

Breaded or battered fish portions and products

This includes:

- fish cakes
- fish fingers
- fish goujons

Cooked, 55g to 80g.

Egg

Served in a:

- salad
- baked potato
- sandwich

Cooked, 1 egg.

Meat alternatives

Made from:

- soya beans (such as soya mince and tofu)
- mycoprotein-based meat substitute (in dishes such as vegetarian casserole, stew, pie, or curry).

Note: weight may be reduced proportionately in composite dishes if adding another protein-based food such as beans, cheese, or milk.

Cooked, 50g to 70g

Pulses

This includes:

- beans (cannellini, kidney, pinto, borlotti, haricot, butter, but not green beans)
- chickpeas
- lentils (red, green, brown and puy)

Raw, 20g to 25g. Cooked, 50g to 60g or 1 to 2 heaped tablespoons.

Vegetarian

This includes vegetarian:

- sausages
- burgers
- nut cutlets

Raw or Cooked: 50g to 70g.

Meat products

Sausages

Made from:

- beef
- lamb
- pork

Raw, 50g to 75g or 1 sausage.

Burgers

Raw, 55g to 80g.

Other items

For example:

- scotch pies
- bridies
- sausage rolls
- cornish pasties
- encased meat pastry pies
- cold pork pie

Cooked, 80g.

Breaded or battered shaped chicken and turkey products

For example:

- nuggets
- goujons
- burgers

Cooked, 50g to 70g.

Milk and dairy

This includes all types of:

- milk
- cheese
- yoghurt (including plain or fruit, frozen and drinking yoghurt), or fromage frais
- milk-based sauces
- custard (made with milk)
- puddings made from milk
- milk-based sauces

Lower-fat drinking milk

150 to 200mls.

Milk puddings and whips made with milk

100g to 120g.

Custard made with milk

For example served with fruit.

Portion size excludes fruit: 80 to 100g.

Yoghurts

80g to 120g

Cheese

Added to:

- salads
- baked potatoes
- sandwiches
- crackers

20g to 30g.

Foods high in fat, sugar and salt

Deep fried foods including those deep fried or flash fried in the kitchen or in the manufacturing process, such as:

- chips (including oven chips)
- potato waffles
- hash browns
- samosas
- plantain chips
- spring rolls
- doughnuts
- pakora
- bhajis

Refer to relevant portion size.

Batter-coated and breadcrumb-coated foods

This includes any bought-in or homemade products such as:

- chicken nuggets
- fish fingers
- battered onion rings
- tempura

Refer to relevant portion size.

Pastry

This includes:

- shortcrust
- flaky
- filo
- choux
- puff

Used in:

- quiches
- meat pies
- fruit pies
- fruit tarts
- sausage rolls
- pasties
- samosa

Refer to relevant portion size.

Desserts

This includes cereal and starch based desserts such as:

- rice
- semolina
- tapioca pudding

Fruit-based desserts

This includes:

- jelly
- fruit compote
- crumbles
- sponge puddings

Vegetable-based desserts

This includes:

- soya-based mousse

Egg-based desserts

This includes ready to eat products and products prepared from egg such as:

- flans
- egg custard
- custard fillings in pies
- meringues

Dairy-based desserts

This includes:

- puddings with dairy-based fillings
- fruit or flavoured yoghurt or other fermented milk and milk products
- ice cream
- mousse

Fat-based desserts

This includes:

- ice cream, made with vegetable fats.

Fruit pies, sponge puddings or crumbles

80g to 100g.

Fruit jelly

Portion size excludes fruit. 80g to 100g.

Cakes and biscuits

Including:

- manufactured, bought-in products
- prepared from scratch cakes
- biscuits such as individual cakes, buns and pastries, scones, sweet and savoury biscuits

Cakes, tray bakes, muffins, scones, doughnuts

40g to 50g

Biscuits and flapjack

25g to 30g.

Ice cream

60g to 80g.

Pizza base

50g – 70g.

Savoury crackers, bread sticks

Served with fruit, vegetables or dairy foods.

Portion size excludes fruit: 10g to 15g or 1 to 2 crackers.

Condiments

This includes:

- ketchup
- mayonnaise
- salad cream
- brown sauce
- chutney

No more than 10g, or one teaspoonful.

Gravy

20g to 30g or 1 tablespoon.

Snacks

Snacks means pre-packaged items other than confectionery, sandwiches, cakes or biscuits, which are ready to eat without further preparation and which consist of or include as a basic ingredient potato, cereals, soya, nuts, seeds, fruit or vegetables.

Refer to relevant portion size for fruit, vegetables and crackers.

Confectionery

Confectionary is not permitted.

No portion sizes provided.

This includes:

- cereal bars
- processed fruit bars
- non-chocolate confectionary (whether or not containing sugar)
- chocolate in any form (except hot chocolate)
- any product containing or wholly or partially coated with chocolate
- any chocolate-flavoured substance

Cocoa is permitted.

Healthy drinks

Fruit or vegetable juice

Maximum portion size: 150mls.

Drinking milk

150mls to 200mls.

Combination drinks

For example:

- fruit juice with water
- flavoured milk

Maximum portion size: 330mls.

Secondary (11 to 18 years old)

Typical portion sizes (grams/mls/household measures) raw and cooked food.

Starchy foods

This includes:

- all breads
- potatoes
- rice
- couscous
- bulgur wheat
- semolina
- tapioca
- maize
- cornmeal
- noodles and pasta
- oats
- millet
- barley
- buckwheat
- rye
- spelt
- plantain
- yam
- sweet potato
- cassava

Bread

This includes:

- white, wholemeal, granary, brown, wheatgerm, multigrain, potato bread: 2 thick slices of bread
- chappattis, rotis: 1 large
- plain baked naan: half of 1 large
- rolls: 1 large roll or sub roll
- bagels: 1 large bagel
- pitta, wraps: 1 large pitta, 1 x 12 inch wrap

80g to 100g

Potatoes or sweet potato

This includes:

- boiled and mashed potatoes: Raw, 200g to 250g
- jacket and baked potatoes: Raw, 330g to 410g

Other starchy root vegetables

This includes:

- yam
- plantain
- cocoyam
- cassava

Raw, 150g to 200g.

Pasta and noodles

This includes:

- white and wholemeal spaghetti
- noodles
- pasta shapes

Dried, 65g to 80g (based on average weight change of wholemeal and white spaghetti, pasta shapes and noodles).

Rice

This includes:

- white and brown rice

Dried, 55g to 65g (based on average weight change of white and brown rice).

Other grains

This includes:

- couscous
- bulgur wheat
- maize (polenta)
- cornmeal

Dried, 60 to 70g.

Starchy foods where fat or oil has been added before or during the cooking process

This includes:

- roast or sauteed potatoes
- chips
- potato wedges
- pre-prepared potato products
- fried rice
- bread
- noodles
- hash browns
- garlic bread
- yorkshire pudding
- chapattis and naan made with fat
- pancakes and waffles cooked in oil

Potatoes cooked in oil or fat including:

- roast or sauteed potatoes
- chips, potato wedges
- other processed potato products such as waffles

Raw, 120g to 150g.

Garlic bread

As an accompaniment: 40g or 2 slices.

Bread

Bread with no added fat or oil must be available every day.

All types of plain bread with no added fat or oil, including:

- brown
- wholemeal
- granary
- white
- mixtures of white and wholemeal
- pitta
- rolls
- chapattis
- naan
- ciabatta
- herb bread

Wholegrain

Starchy wholegrains including:

- wholemeal and granary flours
- wholemeal and granary breads and bread products
- whole-wheat pasta
- brown rice and oats

Also look out for higher-fibre white bread, half and half wholegrain and white mixes such as 50/50 mix of brown and white rice, 50/50 whole wheat and white pasta.

Fruit and vegetables

This includes vegetables in all forms, including:

- fresh
- frozen
- canned
- dried
- juiced
- pulses such as beans and lentils

Vegetables or salad should be offered as an accompaniment to every meal, in addition to any vegetables used as ingredients in composite dishes such as casseroles and stews.

Potatoes are classed as a starchy food and are not included in this food group.

Vegetables or mixed salad, salad bars

Raw, 80g.

Vegetables

This includes:

- peas
- green beans
- sweetcorn
- carrots
- mixed vegetables
- cauliflower
- broccoli
- swede
- turnip
- leek
- brussels sprouts
- cabbage
- spinach
- spring greens

Cooked, 80g or 2 to 3 tablespoons.

Pulses

This includes:

- lentils
- kidney beans
- chick peas

Dried, 30g. Cooked, 80g or 3 tablespoons (based on average weight change of chickpeas, kidney beans and green lentils).

Baked beans in tomato sauce

As an accompaniment.

Cooked, 90g to 100g or 3 tablespoons.

Vegetable-based soup

Cooked, 250g to 300g.

Fruits in all forms

This includes:

- fresh
- frozen
- canned
- dried
- juiced.

Fruits can be provided within other dishes, for example, fruit-based desserts such as crumbles.

Large-size fruit

For example:

- apples
- pears
- bananas
- peaches

Raw, 100g to 150g or 1 medium sized fruit with skin.

Medium-size fruit

For example:

- satsumas
- tangerines
- plums
- apricots
- kiwis

Raw, 80g to 100g or 1 to 2 fruits with skin.

Small fruits

For example:

- strawberries
- raspberries
- grapes

Raw, 80g or 15 to 20 fruits.

Dried fruit

For example:

- raisins
- sultanas
- apricots

Dried, 25g to 30g or 1 tablespoon.

All fruit-based desserts should have a content of at least 50% fruit measured by weight of the raw ingredients (for example, fruit crumble, fruit pie, fruit sponge, fruit cobbler, fruit jelly). Fruit used as decoration or jam added to a dessert does not count towards this standard.

Fruit salad, fruit tinned in juice and stewed fruit

Raw or cooked. 130g (80 g min fruit) or 3 to 4 tablespoons.

Meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein

This includes:

- fresh and frozen meat
- poultry
- fresh
- frozen and canned fish
- shellfish
- eggs

Meat alternatives

This includes products such as:

- soya and mycoprotein-based meat substitute Quorn
- tofu
- pulses such as beans (cannellini, kidney, pinto, borlotti, haricot, butter, but not green beans)
- chickpeas
- lentils (red, green, brown and puy)
- nuts

Roast red meat

This includes:

- beef
- lamb
- pork
- veal
- venison
- goat

This is also the portion size for fillings for baked potatoes and sandwiches.

Raw, 80g to 95g.

Roast poultry

This includes:

- chicken
- turkey
- duck

As well as dishes or products made from these meats.

This is also the portion size for fillings for baked potatoes and sandwiches.

Raw, 85g to 125g.

Red meat or poultry

In dishes such as:

- casserole
- stew
- pie
- curry

Note: weight may be reduced proportionately in composite dishes if adding another protein based food, such as beans, cheese, or milk.

Raw, 75g to 90g.

Meat-based soup

Cooked, cooked 250g to 300g.

White fish

This includes:

- pollock
- hake
- coley
- cod
- haddock
- plaice

Whether cooked alone, or in a dish such as a casserole or fish pie, or as a breaded or battered product.

Raw, 90g to 125g.

Oily fish

This includes:

- fresh, tinned or frozen salmon
- sardines
- pilchards
- mackerel
- herring
- fresh or frozen tuna. Tuna only counts as an oily fish when it is fresh or frozen because the omega-3 fatty acids are removed during the canning process

Raw, 80g to 110g.

Fish or shellfish

This includes:

- tuna
- salmon
- mackerel
- prawns

Served in a salad, baked potato or sandwich: Cooked, 70g to 100g.

Breaded or battered fish portions and products

This includes:

- fish cakes
- fish fingers
- fish goujons

Cooked, 85g to 95g.

Egg

Served in a salad, baked potato or sandwich.

Cooked, 1 to 2 eggs.

Meat alternatives made from soya beans

This includes:

- soya mince and tofu
- mycoprotein-based meat substitute

In dishes such as vegetarian casserole, stew, pie, or curry

Note: weight may be reduced proportionately in composite dishes if adding another protein-based food such as beans, cheese, or milk.

Cooked, 70g to 100g

Pulses

This includes:

- beans (cannellini, kidney, pinto, borlotti, haricot, butter, but not green beans)
- chickpeas
- lentils (red, green, brown and puy)

Raw, 40g to 45g. Cooked, 100 to 120g or 2 to 3 heaped tablespoons.

Vegetarian sausages, burgers, nut cutlets

Raw or Cooked: 70g to 100g.

Meat products

Sausages

Made from:

- beef
- lamb
- pork

Raw, 75g to 95g or 1 or 2 sausages.

Burgers

Raw, 80g to 100g.

Other items

- scotch pies
- bridies
- sausage rolls
- cornish pasty
- encased meat pastry pies
- cold pork pie

Cooked, 110g.

Breaded or battered shaped chicken and turkey products

For example:

- nuggets
- goujons
- burgers

Cooked, 70g to 100g.

Milk and dairy

This includes all types of:

- milk
- cheese
- yoghurt (including plain or fruit, frozen and drinking yoghurt), or fromage frais
- milk-based sauces
- custard (made with milk)
- puddings made from milk
- milk-based sauces

Lower-fat drinking milk

150 to 200mls.

Milk puddings and whips made with milk

100g to 120g.

Custard made with milk

For example served with fruit.

Portion size excludes fruit 80g to 100g.

Yoghurts

80g to 120g

Cheese

Added to:

- salads
- baked potatoes
- sandwiches
- crackers

20g to 30g.

Foods high in fat, sugar and salt

Deep fried foods including those deep fried or flash fried in the kitchen or in the manufacturing process, such as:

- chips (including oven chips)
- potato waffles
- hash browns
- samosas
- plantain chips
- spring rolls
- doughnuts
- pakora
- bhajis

Refer to relevant portion size.

Batter-coated and breadcrumb-coated foods

This includes any bought-in or homemade products such as:

- chicken nuggets
- fish fingers
- battered onion rings
- tempura

Refer to relevant portion size.

Pastry

This includes:

- shortcrust
- flaky
- filo
- choux
- puff

Used in:

- quiches
- meat pies
- fruit pies
- fruit tarts
- sausage rolls
- pasties
- samosa

Refer to relevant portion size.

Desserts

Cereal and starch based desserts

This includes:

- rice
- semolina
- tapioca pudding

Fruit-based desserts

This includes:

- jelly
- fruit compote
- crumbles
- sponge puddings

Vegetable-based desserts

This includes:

- soya-based mousse

Egg-based desserts

This includes:

- ready to eat products
- products prepared from egg such as flans, egg custard, custard fillings in pies, meringues

Dairy-based desserts

This includes:

- puddings with dairy-based fillings
- fruit or flavoured yoghurt
- other fermented milk and milk products
- ice cream
- mousse

Fat-based desserts

This includes:

- ice cream, made with vegetable fats

Fruit pies, sponge puddings or crumbles

100g to 120g.

Fruit jelly

Portion size excludes fruit: 100g to 120g.

Cakes and biscuits:

This includes:

- manufactured, bought-in products
- prepared from scratch cakes

Biscuits such as:

- individual cakes
- buns
- pastries
- scones

- sweet and savoury biscuits

Cakes, tray bakes, muffins, scones, doughnuts

50g to 60g.

Biscuits and flapjack

30g to 40g.

Ice cream

100g.

Pizza base

80g to 100g.

Savoury crackers, bread sticks (served with fruit, vegetables or dairy foods)

Portion size excludes fruit: 15g to 30g or 2 to 3 crackers.

Condiments

This includes:

- ketchup
- mayonnaise
- salad cream
- brown sauce
- chutney

No more than 10g, or one teaspoonful.

Gravy

40g to 50g or 2 tablespoons.

Snacks

Snacks means pre-packaged items other than confectionery, sandwiches, cakes or biscuits, which are ready to eat without further preparation. They consist of, or include as a basic ingredient, potato, cereals, soya, nuts, seeds, fruit or vegetables.

Refer to relevant portion size for fruit, vegetables and crackers.

Confectionery

Confectionary is not permitted, no portion sizes provided.

This includes:

- cereal bars
- processed fruit bars
- non-chocolate confectionary (whether or not containing sugar)
- chocolate in any form (except hot chocolate)
- any product containing or wholly or partially coated with chocolate
- any chocolate-flavoured substance

Cocoa is permitted.

Healthy drinks

Fruit or vegetable juice

Maximum portion size: 150mls.

Drinking milk

200 to 250mls.

Combination drinks

For example:

- fruit juice with water
- flavoured milk

Maximum portion size: 330mls.

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