

Traditional Food-Based Menu Planning Approach Meal Pattern for Lunch

Food Components	Minimum Quantities Required				Recommended Quantities
	Group I Ages 1 - 2 (Preschool)	Group II Ages 3 - 4 (Preschool)	Group III Ages 5 - 8 (Grades K-3)	Group IV Ages 9 and older ¹ (Grades 4-12)	Group V Ages 12 and older ² (Grades 7-12)
Fluid Milk (as a beverage) ³					
	¾ c or 6 fl oz	¾ c or 6 fl oz	½ pt or 8 fl oz	½ pt or 8 fl oz	½ pt or 8 fl oz
Meat or Meat Alternate (quantity of edible portion as served) ⁴					
• Lean meat, poultry or fish	1 oz	1½ oz	1½ oz	2 oz	3 oz
• Alternate protein product ⁵	1 oz	1½ oz	1½ oz	2 oz	3 oz
• Cheese	1 oz	1½ oz	1½ oz	2 oz	3 oz
• Large egg	½ egg	¾ egg	¾ egg	1 egg	1½ eggs
• Yogurt - plain or flavored unsweetened or sweetened	4 oz or ½ c	6 oz or ¾ c	6 oz or ¾ c	8 oz or 1 c	12 oz or 1½ c
• Cooked dry beans or peas	¼ c	3/8 c	3/8 c	½ c	¾ c
• Peanut butter or other nut or seed butters	2 T	3 T	3 T	4 T	6 T
• Nuts and/or seeds ⁶	½ oz = 50%	¾ oz = 50%	¾ oz = 50%	1 oz = 50%	1½ oz = 50%
Vegetable or Fruit (at least 2 different servings vegetables, fruits, or both)					
Full strength juice cannot count for more than 50% of the amount.	½ c	½ c	½ c	¾ c	¾ c
Grains or Breads (must be enriched or whole-grain) ⁷					
A serving is a slice of bread or equivalent serving or ½ c of cooked rice, pasta products, or cereal grains.	5 servings per week ⁸ Minimum ½ per day	8 servings per week ⁸ Minimum 1 per day	8 servings per week ⁸ Minimum 1 per day	8 servings per week ⁸ Minimum 1 per day	10 servings per week ⁸ Minimum 1 per day

¹ Group IV, Grades 4-12, is shaded because it is the one meal pattern which can be used for all grade groups.

² For Group V, Grades 7-12, the quantities are recommended but not required. Students may request smaller portions but the portions cannot be smaller than those specified for Group IV.

³ The selection of the types of milk offered must be consistent with the types of milk consumed in the prior year. In the event that a particular type of milk represents less than one percent of the total amount of milk consumed in the previous year, a school may elect not to make this type of milk available.

⁴ A minimum of 1 oz meat/meat alternate must be served daily. The amount of meat/meat alternate may vary daily; however, the weekly total must be provided.

⁵ Must meet the requirements in 7 CFR, Part 210, Appendix A.

⁶ These foods may be used to meet no more than 50 percent of the meat/meat alternate requirement. Nuts or seeds must be combined with another meat/meat alternate to fulfill the meat/meat alternate requirement.

⁷ Refer to the Grains/Breads Chart attached for portion sizes.

⁸ For purposes of this chart, a week equals five days.

Traditional Food-Based Menu Planning Approach Meal Pattern for Breakfast

Food Components	Minimum Quantities Required		
	Ages 1-2	Ages 3, 4, and 5	Grades K - 12
Fluid Milk (as a beverage, on cereal, or both)¹			
	½ c or 4 fl oz	¾ c or 6 fl oz	½ pt or 8 fl oz
Juice or Fruit or Vegetable (serve a fruit, vegetable, or both; or full-strength fruit or vegetable juice)			
	¼ c	½ c	½ c
Select One Serving From Each of the Following Components, Two From One Component, or an Equivalent Combination			
Meat or Meat Alternate (quantity of edible portion as served)			
• Lean meat, poultry or fish	½ oz	½ oz	1 oz
• Alternate protein product ²	½ oz	½ oz	1 oz
• Cheese	½ oz	½ oz	1 oz
• Large egg	½ egg	½ egg	½ egg
• Yogurt - plain or flavored unsweetened or sweetened	2 oz or ¼ c	2 oz or ¼ c	4 oz or ½ c
• Cooked dry beans or peas	2 T	2 T	4 T
• Peanut butter or other nut or seed butters	1 T	1 T	2 T
• Nuts and/or seeds ³	½ oz	½ oz	1 oz
Grains or Breads (must be enriched or whole-grain)⁴			
• Whole-grain or enriched bread	½ slice	½ slice	1 slice
• Whole-grain or enriched biscuit, roll, muffin, etc.	½ serving	½ serving	1 serving
• Whole-grain or enriched, or fortified cereal	¼ c or 1/3 oz	1/3 c or ½ oz	¾ c or 1 oz

¹ The selection of the types of milk offered must be consistent with the types of milk consumed in the prior year. In the event that a particular type of milk represents less than one percent of the total amount of milk consumed in the previous year, a school may elect not to make this type of milk available.

² Must meet the requirements in 7 CFR, Part 210, Appendix A.

³ No more than 1 oz of nuts and/or seeds may be served in any one breakfast.

⁴ Refer to the Grains/Breads Chart attached for portion sizes.

Calorie and Nutrient Standards for Grade Levels

Calories and Nutrient Levels for School Lunch (Traditional Food-Based) (School Week Averages)				
Nutrients and energy allowances	Pre-school	Grades K-3	Grades 4-12	Optional Grades 7-12
Energy Allowances (calories)	517	633	785	825
Total Fat (g) ³	1	1	1	1
Total Saturated Fat (g) ³	2	2	2	2
Protein (g)	7	9	15	16
Calcium (mg)	267	267	370	400
Iron (mg)	3.3	3.3	4.2	4.5
Vitamin A (RE)	150	200	285	300
Vitamin C (mg)	14	15	17	18

Calories and Nutrient Levels for School Lunch (All Menu Planning Approaches) (School Week Averages)				
Nutrients and energy allowances	Pre-school	Grades K-6	Grades 7-12	Optional Grades K-3
Energy Allowances (calories)	517	664	825	633
Total Fat (g) ³	1	1	1	1
Total Saturated Fat (g) ³	2	2	2	2
Protein (g)	7	10	16	9
Calcium (mg)	267	286	400	267
Iron (mg)	3.3	3.5	4.5	3.3
Vitamin A (RE)	150	224	300	200
Vitamin C (mg)	14	15	18	15

¹ Total fat must not exceed 30 percent of the calories offered over a school week.

² Saturated fat must be less than 10 percent of the calories offered over a school week.

³ The grams of fat will vary depending on the actual level of calories offered. To calculate the maximum allowable fat grams, multiply the number of calories by the maximum allowable percentage and then divide by nine (9).

Calories and Nutrient Levels for School Breakfast (All Menu Planning Approaches) (School Week Averages)			
Nutrients and energy allowances	Pre-school	Grades K-12	Optional Grades 7-12
Energy Allowances (calories)	388	554	618
Total Fat (g) ³	1	1	1
Total Saturated Fat (g) ³	2	2	2
Protein (g)	5	10	12
Calcium (mg)	200	257	300
Iron (mg)	2.5	3.0	3.4
Vitamin A (RE)	113	197	225
Vitamin C (mg)	11	13	14

¹ Total fat must not exceed 30 percent of the calories offered over a school week.

² Saturated fat must be less than 10 percent of the calories offered over a school week.

³ The grams of fat will vary depending on the actual level of calories offered. To calculate the maximum allowable fat grams, multiply the number of calories by the maximum allowable percentage and then divide by nine (9).

Grains/Breads Requirement for the Food-Based Menu Planning Approaches

The Traditional Food-Based and Enhanced Food-Based Menu Planning Approaches for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program contain a grains/breads requirement. This instruction sets forth the foods that meet the grains/breads requirement of meals served in the programs, the criteria to be used to determine crediting, and the suggested equivalent minimum serving size for a wide variety of items that meet the grains/breads requirement. This instruction applies to all Child Nutrition Programs.

Note that grain-based desserts may count toward the grains/breads requirement only in NSLP using the Enhanced Food-Based Menu Planning Approach for meal planning and as specified on the grains/breads chart attached.

Criteria for Determining Acceptable Grains/Breads

The following criteria are to be used as a basis for crediting items to meet the grains/breads requirement under the Food-Based Menu Planning Approach:

1. All grains/breads must be enriched or whole-grain or made from enriched or whole-grain meal or flour; or if it is a cereal, the product must be whole-grain, enriched, or fortified. Bran and germ are credited the same as enriched or whole-grain meal or flour.
2. The label must indicate the product is enriched or whole-grain, made from enriched or whole-grain meal or flour as well as bran and/or germ, or fortified. If it is enriched, the item must meet the Food and Drug Administration's Standards of Identity (21 CFR §136, §137, §139) for enriched bread, macaroni and noodle products, rice, or cornmeal.
3. The item must be provided in quantities specified in the regulations. One quarter (1/4) of a serving is the smallest amount allowable to be credited toward the minimum quantities of grains/breads specified in program regulations.

Criteria for Determining Equivalent Minimum Serving Sizes

The following chart contains the equivalent serving sizes for a wide variety of purchased food items.

In lieu of using the minimum serving sizes listed on the chart, the contribution of grains/breads in a recipe may be calculated to determine the number of grains/breads servings the recipe provides. The crediting of a food item as a grains/breads serving is determined by the total amount of enriched or whole-grain meal and/or flour in the recipe divided by the number of servings the recipe yields. Bran and germ are calculated in the same manner as enriched or whole-grain meal or flour.

For the types of food items listed in Groups A through G of the chart to count as one full serving, an item must contain no less than 14.75 grams (0.52 ounces) of enriched or whole-grain meal and/or flour. For the types of food items listed in Groups H and I of the chart to count as one full serving, the weights and volumes listed therein must be used.

Foods That Qualify as Grains/Breads

Foods that qualify as grains/breads for the Child Nutrition Programs are foods that are enriched or whole-grain or made from enriched or whole-grain meal or flour. Bran and germ are credited the same as enriched or whole-grain meal or flour. Such foods include, but are not limited to:

- **Breads** that are enriched or whole-grain.
- **Biscuits, bagels, rolls, tortillas, muffins, or crackers** made from whole-grain or enriched meal or flour.
- **Cereal grains (cooked) such as rice, bulgur, oatmeal, corn grits, or wheat or couscous** that are whole-grain or enriched.
- **Ready-to-eat breakfast cereals** that are whole-grain, enriched, or fortified.
- **Cereals or bread products used as an ingredient in another menu item such as crispy rice treats, oatmeal cookies, or breading on fish or poultry** when they are whole-grain, enriched, or fortified.
- **Macaroni or noodle products (cooked)** made with enriched or whole-grain flour. Enriched macaroni products fortified with protein can be counted to meet either a grain/bread or meat/meat alternate requirement but not as both in the same meal.
- **Sweet foods such as toaster pastries, coffee cake, doughnuts, sweet rolls, cookies, cakes, or formulated grain-fruit products** when made with enriched or whole-grain meal or flour and served as permitted in the chart. When sweet foods are permitted, no more than one grain/bread serving per day may be a dessert.
- **Pie crust** when made from enriched or whole-grain meal or flour and served as permitted in the chart.
- **Non-sweet snack products such as hard pretzels, hard bread sticks, and chips** made from whole-grain or enriched meal or flour.

• **Grains/Breads for the Food-Based Menu Planning Approaches
In the Child Nutrition Programs¹**

Group A	Minimum Serving Size for Group A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bread-type coating • Bread sticks - hard • Chow mein noodles • Crackers – saltines and snack crackers • Croutons • Pretzels – hard • Stuffing – dry (weight applies to bread in stuffing) 	<p>1 serving = 20 gm or 0.7 oz 3/4 serving = 15 gm or 0.5 oz 1/2 serving = 10 gm or 0.4 oz 1/4 serving = 5 gm or 0.2 oz</p>
Group B	Minimum Serving Size for Group B
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bagels • Batter-type coating • Biscuits • Breads – white, wheat, whole wheat, French, Italian • Buns – hamburger and hot dog • Crackers – graham crackers (all shapes), animal crackers • Egg roll skins • English muffins • Pita bread – white, wheat, whole wheat • Pizza crust • Pretzels – soft • Rolls – white, wheat, whole wheat, potato • Tortillas – wheat or corn • Tortilla chips – wheat or corn • Taco shells 	<p>1 serving = 25 gm or 0.9 oz 3/4 serving = 19 gm or 0.7 oz 1/2 serving = 13 gm or 0.5 oz 1/4 serving = 6 gm or 0.2 oz</p>

¹ Some of the following foods or their accompaniments may contain more sugar, salt, and/or fat than others. This should be a consideration when deciding how often to serve them.

² Allowed only for desserts under the enhanced food-based menu planning approach.

³ Allowed for desserts under the enhanced food-based menu planning approach and for breakfasts.

⁴ Refer to program regulations for the appropriate serving size for supplements served to children aged 1 through 5 in the NSLP and breakfast served under the SBP. Breakfast cereals are traditionally served as a breakfast menu item but may be served in meals other than breakfast.

**Grains/Breads for the Food-Based Menu Planning Approaches
In the Child Nutrition Programs¹**

Group C	Minimum Serving Size for Group C
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cookies² – plain • Cornbread • Corn muffins • Croissants • Pancakes • Pie crust – dessert pies², fruit turnovers³ and meat/meat alternate pies • Waffles 	<p>1 serving = 31 gm or 1.1 oz 3/4 serving = 23 gm or 0.8 oz 1/2 serving = 16 gm or 0.6 oz 1/4 serving = 8 gm or 0.3 oz</p>
Group D	Minimum Serving Size for Group D
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doughnuts³ – cake and yeast raised, unfrosted • Granola Bars³ – plain • Muffins – all, except corn • Sweet Roll³ – unfrosted • Toaster pastry³ – unfrosted 	<p>1 serving = 50 gm or 1.8 oz 3/4 serving = 38 gm or 1.3 oz 1/2 serving = 25 gm or 0.9 oz 1/4 serving = 13 gm or 0.5 oz</p>
Group E	Minimum Serving Size for Group E
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cookies² – with nuts, raisins, chocolate pieces and/or fruit purees • Doughnuts³ – cake and yeast raised, frosted or glazed • French toast • Grain fruit bars³ • Granola bars³ – with nuts, raisins, chocolate pieces, and/or fruit • Sweet rolls³ – frosted • Toaster pastry³ – frosted 	<p>1 serving = 63 gm or 2.2 oz 3/4 serving = 47 gm or 1.7 oz 1/2 serving = 31 gm or 1.1 oz 1/4 serving = 16 gm or 0.6 oz</p>

¹ Some of the following foods or their accompaniments may contain more sugar, salt, and/or fat than others. This should be a consideration when deciding how often to serve them.

² Allowed only for desserts under the enhanced food-based menu planning approach.

³ Allowed for desserts under the enhanced food-based menu planning approach and for breakfasts.

⁴ Refer to program regulations for the appropriate serving size for supplements served to children aged 1 through 5 in the NSLP and breakfast served under the SBP. Breakfast cereals are traditionally served as a breakfast menu item but may be served in meals other than breakfast.

**Grains/Breads for the Food-Based Menu Planning Approaches
In the Child Nutrition Programs¹**

Group F	Minimum Serving Size for Group F
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cake² – plain, unfrosted • Coffee Cake³ 	1 serving = 75 gm or 2.7 oz 3/4 serving = 56 gm or 2 oz 1/2 serving = 38 gm or 1.3 oz 1/4 serving = 19 gm or 0.7
Group G	Minimum Serving Size for Group G
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brownies² – plain • Cake² – all varieties, frosted 	1 serving = 115 gm or 4 oz 3/4 serving = 86 gm or 3 oz 1/2 serving = 58 gm or 2 oz 1/4 serving = 29 gm or 1 oz
Group H	Minimum Serving Size for Group H
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barley • Breakfast cereals⁴ – cooked • Bulgur or cracked wheat • Macaroni – all shapes • Noodles – all varieties • Pasta – all shapes • Ravioli – noodle only • Rice – enriched white or brown 	1 serving = 1/2 cup cooked or 25 gm (0.9 oz) dry
Group I	Minimum Serving Size for Group I
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ready-to-eat breakfast cereal⁴ – cold, dry 	1 serving = 3/4 cup or 1 oz whichever is less

¹ Some of the following foods or their accompaniments may contain more sugar, salt, and/or fat than others. This should be a consideration when deciding how often to serve them.

² Allowed only for desserts under the enhanced food-based menu planning approach.

³ Allowed for desserts under the enhanced food-based menu planning approach and for breakfasts.

⁴ Refer to program regulations for the appropriate serving size for supplements served to children aged 1 through 5 in the NSLP and breakfast served under the SBP. Breakfast cereals are traditionally served as a breakfast menu item but may be served in meals other than breakfast.