

What's a Serving Anyway?

A *serving* is a specific measured amount of food, like the serving size given on a cereal box. The amount you heap onto your plate or pour into your cup is your *helping*. Helpings may be bigger—or smaller—than Pyramid servings. (The serving sizes on food labels might be different from Pyramid servings, too.)

Do you need to measure everything you eat? No. Instead, estimate pyramid serving sizes to make sure you're getting enough of a balanced variety of foods. **Use this chart to compare typical helping sizes with actual Pyramid serving sizes.**

A PYRAMID SERVING	A "TYPICAL" HELPING
1/2 cup rice or pasta	1 cup rice or pasta
1/2 bagel or 1/2 hamburger bun	1 bagel or 1 hamburger bun
1 chicken leg and thigh	1/4 chicken
1 order (1/2 cup) french fries	large order (3/4 to 1 cup) fries
1/2 cup cooked red beans	big bowl (1 to 2 cups) chili beans
1 cup leafy greens	large green salad (2 cups greens)

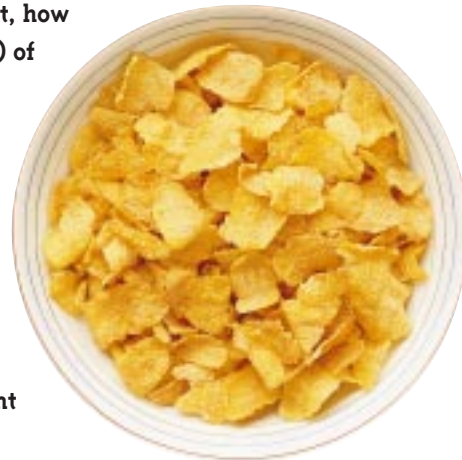


How Do Your Helpings Measure Up?

You're starving. You wolf down a huge bowl of cereal, then notice the serving size on the side of the box. You're curious . . . did you just eat a day's worth of food from the Bread Group? In fact, how much (or how little) of a good thing did you eat?

If you're not sure, measure. Then compare your helpings to actual Pyramid servings. Remember, bigger helpings could count as more than one serving.

For your next meal, estimate the serving sizes on your plate. How do they measure up? At school, figure out how many Pyramid servings you have on your school lunch tray.



How Pyramid Servings Stack Up

Serving sizes are a type of measuring tool. Knowing what an actual Pyramid serving is can help you estimate how much you're eating. This information can help you judge whether you're getting enough of different types of foods.

	The Food Groups	How Much Is One Serving?	Pyramid Serving
Eat Less	Fats, Oils and Sweets	These foods add extra calories and provide little or no nutrients. Use them in moderation to add flavor to other foods.	use sparingly
Eat Enough	Milk Group	1 cup milk or yogurt; 1-1/2 ounces natural cheese, 2 ounces processed cheese	3 servings or more for teens
	Meat Group	1/2 cup cooked dry beans, 1 egg, or 2 tablespoons peanut butter count as 1 ounce of meat. 2 - 3 ounces cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish count as a serving.	2 - 3 servings
Eat More	Vegetable Group	1 cup raw leafy vegetables; 1/2 cup vegetables (cooked or chopped raw); 3/4 cup vegetable juice	3 - 5 servings
	Fruit Group	1 medium apple, banana, or orange; 1/2 cup fruit (canned, cooked, or raw); 3/4 cup fruit juice; 1/4 cup dried fruit	2 - 4 servings
Eat Plenty	Bread Group	1 slice bread or tortilla; 1 ounce ready-to-eat cereal; 1/2 cup cooked cereal, rice, or pasta; 1/2 bagel, 1/2 hamburger bun, or 1/2 an English muffin	6 - 11 servings

What Do You Eat?



Find out what—and how much—you eat by keeping a Food Diary. Here's Janine's diary for one day. Check it out, then fill in your own in the Student Activity Booklet.

REMEMBER: The Food Guide Pyramid is your daily guide for healthful eating. What really matters is what and how much you eat over several days, not just for a single meal or a single day.

	MEAL	HELPING	PYRAMID SERVING SIZE?
MORNING	Orange Juice Ham on English Muffin	1-1/2 cup 2 ounce 1 muffin	2 fruit group servings 1 meat group serving 2 bread group servings
MID-DAY	Cheese on whole wheat bread lettuce baby carrots cookies	2 slices 2 slices 1/2 cup 1/4 cup 4	1 milk group serving 2 bread group servings 1/2 vegetable group serving 1/2 vegetable group serving 1 bread group serving
EVENING	chicken rice green salad with tomato slices dressing milk	2 drumsticks 1 cup 1 cup 1/4 cup 2 tablespoons 1 cup	2 meat group servings 2 bread group servings 1 vegetable group servings 1/2 vegetable group serving Fats, oils, and sweets 1 milk group serving
SNACKS	soft drink cookies candy bar	12 ounce 4 1	Fats, oils, sweets 1 bread group serving Fats, oils, sweets

Here's how Janine analyzed her food choices:

Did you eat at least the minimum number of servings from the five major food groups? **No.**

What food groups came up short?
Milk and Vegetable Groups.

What changes can you make in your eating?
I'll try to eat more dairy foods and vegetables—maybe I'll have yogurt and raw vegetables for snacks.

It's a Wrap

Outside in, inside out . . . whatever way you look at it, a taco is a delicious food that your body—particularly your taste buds—will thank you for eating. Here's how Derek's mouth-watering food combo wraps several food groups into one:



Pizza, cheeseburger, lasagna, a gyro. How do your favorite combo foods fit into the Food Guide Pyramid? To find out, make a list of each food in your favorite combo. Estimate how much food that is. Jot down the name of its food group. Is it a Pyramid serving size? Is it less or more?