

# FOOD PORTIONS FOR KIDS



Children need several servings of each food group to meet nutrient needs and energy requirements for normal growth and development. This chart only gives you a serving size to start with, based on age.

Your child should be allowed to eat an array of food groups at mealtime, in amounts that satisfy her appetite. Starter portions are simply a place to begin with food amounts. This chart will help you start off with a reasonable amount of food for your child.

Ultimately, children should eat an amount of food that leaves them satisfied, while ideally striking a balance of varied foods from the different food groups.

Foods	2-3 years	4-6 years	6-9 years	10-12 years	13-18 years
<b>Grains</b>					
Bread, Bagel	¼ -1/2	1 slice, ½	1 slice, ½	1 slice, ½	1 slice, ½
Cold cereal	½ cup	½-1 cup	1 cup	1 cup	1 cup
Cooked cereal Pasta, rice	¼ - ½ cup	½ cup	½ cup	½ cup	½ cup
Crackers	2 - 3	4 - 6	5 - 7	5 - 7	5 - 7
<b>Fruits</b>					
Whole, fresh	½-1 small	½ -1 small	½ -1 cup, 1 medium	1 cup, 1 medium	1 cup, 1 medium
Cooked/canned,	1/3 cup	½ cup	½ - 1 cup	1 cup	1 cup
Dried Juice	¼ - 1/3 cup	2 Tbsp. ½ cup	¼ cup ½ cup	¼ cup ½ cup	¼ cup ½ cup

Do your best to offer starter serving sizes that are right for your child's age. Include a **variety of foods** from each food group and at **predictable times** throughout the day.

**Starter portions** teach a point of reference for kids. Think of them as a visual learning tool. Without them, kids may not understand portion sizes or may be over-served portions.

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<b>Vegetables</b>					
Whole, fresh	½ small	½-1 small	½-1 cup	1 cup	1 cup
Raw, leafy greens	¼ - ½ cup	½ - 1 cup	1 cup	1 - 2 cup	1 - 2 cup
Cooked/canned	2-3 Tbsps	¼ -½ cup	½-1 cup	½-1 cup	½-1 cup
Juice	¼ - 1/3 cup	1/3 - ½ cup	½ cup	½ cup	½ cup
<b>Dairy/Non-Dairy</b>					
Milk or Yogurt	½- ¾ cup	½ - 1 cup	¾ -1 cup	¾ - 1 cup	1 cup
Cheese	½ oz	¾ oz	1 - 1 ½ oz	1 ½ oz 1/3 c. shred	1 ½ oz 1/3 c. shred
<b>Protein</b>					
Beef, poultry, fish	1-2 Tbsp	1-2 Tbsp	2 oz	3 oz	3 oz
Beans, cooked	1-2 Tbsp	2-3 Tbsp	¼ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup
Nuts, seeds	¼ oz	¼ - ½ oz	½ ounce	½ oz	½ z
Nut butter	1 - 2 tsp	2 - 3 tsp	1 Tbsp	1 Tbsp	1 Tbsp
Egg	½ - 1	1	1	1	1
<b>Fats</b>					
Butter, margarine	1 tsp	1 tsp	1 tsp	1 tsp	1 tsp
Oil	1 tsp	1 tsp	1 tsp	1 tsp	1 tsp
Salad dressing, Mayonnaise	1-2 tsp.	½-1 Tbsp	1 Tbsp	1-2 Tbsp	1-2 Tbsp

**Most children** will have appetites that vary day-to-day and month-to-month—this is very normal. When children are growing, their **appetites naturally spike**, and you will likely see more hunger and food intake. Allowing seconds, or even thirds during these growth periods is perfectly fine.