

## MyPyramid — Grains Group

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MyPyramid – the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) food guide system – is an interactive, online guide that provides individuals with recommended food amounts based on their sex, age and activity level. This personalized guide may be found at [www.MyPyramid.gov](http://www.MyPyramid.gov). For healthful diets, stay within your calorie limit while getting needed nutrients from each of the basic food groups. Learn to balance food intake and physical activity to maintain a healthy weight.



This fact sheet provides a look at the **Grains Group** from MyPyramid. Any food made from wheat, rice, oats, cornmeal, barley or another cereal grain is in this group. For a 2,000 calorie diet, six one-ounce-equivalents of grains are recommended daily. Eat more or fewer grains depending on individual recommended daily

calorie level. To find the calorie and grain level that is right for you, go to [www.MyPyramid.gov](http://www.MyPyramid.gov).

### What is an ounce-equivalent of grains?

An ounce-equivalent is the amount of a grain food that is equal to one ounce of grains. See the table for more information.

<i>Grains or Grain Products</i>	<i>Amount that counts as 1 ounce</i>	<i>Common Portions and Number of Ounce-Equivalents</i>
Bagels	1 “mini” bagel	1 large = 4 oz.
Biscuits	1 small (2”) diameter	1 large (3 1/2” diameter) = 2 oz.
Breads	1 regular slice, 1 small slice French bread	2 regular slices = 2 oz.
Bulgur	1/2 cup cooked	
Cornbread	1 small piece (2 1/2" x 1" x 1 1/2")	1 medium piece = 2 oz.
Crackers	5 whole wheat, 7 square or round	
English Muffin	1/2 muffin	1 muffin = 2 oz.
Muffin	1 small (2 1/2" diameter)	1 large (3 1/2" diameter) = 3 oz.
Oatmeal	1/2 cups cooked, 1 packet instant	
Pancakes	1(4 1/2"diameter), 2 small (3" diameter)	3 (4 1/2" diameter) = 3 oz.
Popcorn	3 cups popped	1 microwave bag = 4 oz.
Rice and Pasta	1/2 cup cooked and 1 ounce dry	1 cup cooked = 2 oz.
Tortillas	1 small flour tortilla (6" diameter) 1 corn tortilla (6" diameter)	1 large tortilla (12" diameter) = 4 oz.

## Make Half Your Grains Whole

Many Americans eat enough grains, but not enough whole grains. **At least half of all the grains eaten should be whole grains.** Whole grains contain the entire grain kernel – the bran, germ and endosperm. They are an important source of dietary fiber and several other nutrients. Dietary fiber from whole grains are helpful in reducing blood cholesterol levels, and may help with weight management. It also helps to reduce constipation. The USDA recommends eating at least three or more ounce-equivalents of whole grains each day to get these health benefits. **To find whole-grain foods, one of the following whole-grain ingredients will be first on the ingredients label:**

brown rice	bulgur
graham flour	oatmeal
whole oats	whole-grain corn
whole rye	whole wheat
wild rice	

Some tips to help eat more whole grains include:

- Substitute a whole grain product for a refined product — such as whole-wheat bread. for white bread; whole-wheat pasta for regular pasta; whole wheat tortillas for flour tortillas; brown rice for white rice; and whole wheat crackers for saltines.
- Use whole grains in mixed dishes such as barley in vegetable soup or stews and bulgur wheat in casseroles or stir-fries.
- Add whole grain flour or oatmeal when making cookies or other baked treats.

## References

United States Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture. *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005*. 6th edition, Washington DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, January 2005.

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### Buying

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