

# Canada's Food Guide

We know you've seen it. Canada's Food Guide needs no introduction, but it's always good to refresh your memory from time to time!

## What the Food Guide says

### Balance

We create balance by simply making room for the four food groups. Each food group takes up a different amount of space in our diet. The rainbow in Canada's Food Guide gives us a visual reference of the proportion each food group should have in our daily eating habits.

### Variety

Of course, we want variety between food groups, but also within food groups. We can alternate meats and alternatives, such as red meat, poultry, legumes, tofu, fish, eggs, etc. Each food adds something unique to the group. When we eat a wide range of foods, we benefit from what each of those foods has to offer. Remember that variety means having a colourful plate. To learn more about variety, see the sheet "The Importance of Variety."

### Moderation

Every person, children and adults alike, has different needs. Portion sizes should meet each person's needs, nothing more, nothing less. The only way that will happen is if we each eat in accordance with our own hunger. The Guide encourages daily consumption of basic foods that are nourishing with minimal processing. It tells us to eat other foods less often, but does not forbid them. It doesn't even say they are "bad"!

### Eat and... move

Eating well helps us stay healthy. Eating well AND moving is even better. Choose activities that are practical and fun:

- ▶ Walk to the grocery store or to do other errands.
  - ▶ Go to the park or the gym.
    - ▶ Go on a family hike.
- ▶ Dance to your favourite music to stretch out after lunch at school.
  - ▶ Take the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator.

## More on the Food Guide

Learn the 4 Ps, for your own knowledge or to discuss with parents.

### Prepare

Cooking food from scratch is enjoyable.

- ▶ It's the best way to know what is in your meals and to make sure you are eating quality food.
- ▶ It is also a good way to carry on traditions in the kitchen and make use of family recipes.

### Participate

It can be so nice to cook and share meals with family and friends.

- ▶ It's an opportunity to spend time together, discuss and learn.
- ▶ When children participate, they learn about habits and foods that are different from theirs.

It piques their curiosity and opens their minds.

### Pause

Eating well is fun! Remember to do these things:

- ▶ Slow down and take time to eat a meal and savour each bite.
- ▶ Give food the attention it deserves.

After all, eating is an essential part of life!

### Protect

It takes a lot of our precious resources to feed us. We all have the duty to care for them.

- ▶ Choose sustainably caught fish.
- ▶ Prioritize local foods with minimal packaging.
- ▶ Plan ahead to reduce waste.
- ▶ Give imperfect foods a chance, e.g., misshapen apples and crooked carrots.



There are no good or bad foods, because there is no one food that can make or break our health. Avoid focusing on a single food or meal. We should assess the quality of our diet over the course of several weeks.

## Don't go crazy!

The Guide is just that—a guide. It's not the law.