

4 steps to a healthy, balanced main meal

This guide refers to the main meal only and builds on popular meal choices.

1.

Three core ingredients

At every meal use:



Vegetables

+



Protein foods

+



Carbohydrate foods

2.

Portion size

Serve the right amount of vegetables, protein foods and carbohydrate foods

3.

Variety

Vary your choice of foods within food groups

4.

Healthier choices

Use swaps and healthy flavours



What is a serve?

Use the guide below to work out main meal portion sizes.

3+ serves per meal

Vegetables*

1 = serve

1/2 carrot, zucchini, cucumber, celery, sweetcorn

1/2 large or 1 small tomato, capsicum, beetroot, onion 

1/4 avocado

A handful of beans, snowpeas, peas (~10 pieces)

2-3 florets of broccoli, cauliflower 

2-3 slices (~1cm) sweet potato, eggplant, pumpkin,

3-4 mushrooms, asparagus 

A large handful of lettuce, cabbage, bok choy


* Includes fresh, frozen or canned vegetables


1-2 serves per meal

Protein foods


1 = serve

100g (raw weight) beef or lamb or fish or chicken or pork



2 eggs 

1 cup (150g) cooked or canned legumes (if used as a protein food in the meal)




170g cooked tofu


1-2 serves per meal *

Carbohydrate foods


1 = serve

1/2 cup (75g) cooked or canned legumes (if used as a carbohydrate food in the meal)



1/2 large or 1 small potato 

1/2 cup (75-120g) cooked rice, pasta, noodles, barley, buckwheat, semolina, polenta, bulghur or quinoa



1 slice (40g) bread

1/2 medium (40g) roll or flat bread

* Active people may need more serves

You may wish to add other foods recommended in the Australian Dietary Guidelines to your main meal, including:

- Dairy foods
- Nuts and seeds
- Fruit

Dairy foods

1 = serve

40g cheese 

200g yoghurt

250ml milk

To work out portion sizes for other meals and snacks, visit www.eatforhealth.gov.au for information on the total number of serves recommended from all five food groups each day.