

Backpacks

OUTDOOR BACKPACKS

The following is a general guide for which pack sizes (measured in liters) typically work well for backpackers during warm-weather hikes of varying lengths. Colder-weather trips usually require a larger pack, while ultralight backpackers may choose to go smaller than the recommendations here. (For more information, see our Expert Advice article on Ultralight Backpacking.)

Length of trip	Pack capacity (liters)
Weekend (1–3 nights)	35–50
Multiday (3–5 nights)	50–80
Extended (5+ nights)	70+

Weekend (1–3 nights; 35–50 liters)



Efficient packers using newer, less-bulky gear can really keep things light on 1- to 3-night trips by using a pack in this range. Be aware that packing light requires self-discipline and careful planning. If you can pull it off, though, the light-on-your-feet rewards are fantastic.

Multiday (3–5 nights; 50–80 liters)



These are the most popular backpacking packs sold at REI, and they're an excellent choice for warm-weather trips lasting 3 or more days. 50–80 liter packs are also used for backcountry skiing, for day trips, overnights and sometimes 2-night trips.

Extended-trip (5+ nights; 70 liters or larger)



Extended trips of 5 days or more usually call for packs of 70 liters or larger. These are also usually the preferred choice for:

- Winter treks lasting more than 1 night. Larger packs can more comfortably accommodate extra clothing, a warmer sleeping bag and a 4-season tent (which typically includes extra poles).
- Adults taking young children backpacking. Mom and Dad wind up carrying a lot of kids' gear to make the experience enjoyable for their young ones.

Climbing Packs



REI also carries packs designed primarily as climbing packs. Most have modest capacities that are appropriate only for day trips or overnights. Common features include:

- The ability to strip down the pack to its minimal weight (removing the lid, framesheet and possibly the hipbelt) for use during a summit push.
- A narrower, sleeker, sometimes higher profile than a usual packbag, permitting unencumbered arm movement.
- Several lash-on points for external tool attachment.
- A daisy chain—a length of webbing stitched to the outside of a pack—to provide multiple gear loops for attaching a helmet or tools.
- A reinforced crampon patch (to prevent crampon points from gouging holes in the packbag).
- Gear loops on the hipbelt or low on the pack body, useful as clip-on points for gear or possibly as attachment points for skis.
- Shop REI's selection of backpacks.

Backpack Fit

Once you've chosen the type of backpack you want, the next step is to work with an REI sales specialist to expertly fit you to your pack.

The right fit is one that offers:

- A size appropriate for your torso length (not your overall height).
- A comfortably snug grip on your hips.

If you're unable to work with a fit specialist in a store, you can enlist a friend and follow the directions provided in the REI Expert Advice article on Finding Your Torso and Hip Size.

Torso Length

Some packs are available in multiple sizes, from extra small to large, which fit a range of torso lengths. These ranges vary by manufacturer and by gender. Check the product specs tab for size details of a specific pack.

Other packs may feature an adjustable suspension, which can be modified to fit your torso, especially if you're in between sizes. The drawback: An adjustable harness adds a little weight to a pack.

Waist Size

The majority of a backpack's weight, 80% or more, should be supported by your hips.

Backpack hipbelts usually accommodate a wide range of hip sizes, from the mid-20 inches to the mid-40 inches.

People with narrow waists sometimes find they cannot make a standard hipbelt tight enough and need a smaller size. Some packs offer interchangeable hipbelts, making it possible to swap out one size for another.

Women-Specific Backpacks

These are engineered specifically to conform to the female frame. Torso dimensions are generally shorter and narrower than men's packs. And hipbelts and shoulder straps are contoured with the female form in mind.

Youth-Specific Backpacks

These typically offer smaller capacities and include an adjustable suspension to accommodate a child's growth. Women's backpacks, with their smaller frame sizes, often work well for young backpackers of either gender. So do small versions of some men's packs.

Additional Backpack Fit Adjustments

Load lifter straps

Are stitched into the top of the shoulder straps, and they connect to the top of the pack frame. Ideally, they will form a 45° angle between your shoulder straps and the pack. Kept snug (but not too tight), they prevent the upper portion of a pack from pulling away from your body, which would cause the pack to sag on your lumbar region.

Sternum strap

This mid-chest strap allows you to connect your shoulder straps, which can boost your stability. It can be useful to do so when traveling on uneven cross-country terrain where an awkward move could cause your pack to shift abruptly and throw you off-balance.

For tips on pack loading, see the REI Expert Advice article on How to Load a Backpack.

Backpack Frame Type

Internal-frame backpacks

The majority of packs sold at REI today are body-hugging internal frame packs that are designed to keep a hiker stable on uneven, off-trail terrain. They may incorporate a variety of load-support technologies that all function to



transfer the load to the hips.

External-frame backpacks

An external-frame pack may be an appropriate choice if you're carrying a heavy, irregular load. Toting an inflatable kayak to the lake or heading out to the backcountry with surveying tools? An external frame pack will serve you best. External frame packs also offer good ventilation and lots of gear organization options.

Frameless backpacks

Ultralight devotees who like to hike fast and light might choose a frameless pack or a climbing pack where the frame is removable for weight savings.

Backpack Features

Main compartment access:

- Top-loading openings are pretty standard. Items not needed until the end of the day go deep inside.
- Some packs also offer a zippered front panel that folds open exposing the full interior of the pack, or a side zipper, which also makes it easier to reach items deeper in your pack.

Sleeping bag compartment

- This is a zippered stash spot near the bottom of a pack. It's a useful feature if you don't want to use a stuff sack for your sleeping bag. Alternately, this space can hold other gear that you'd like to reach easily.
- Top lid: Many packs offer a zippered top lid where most backpackers store quick-access items: sunscreen, insect repellent, camera, snacks, map. Some lids detach from the main pack and convert into a hipbelt pack for day trips.

Pockets

Typical offerings:

- Elasticized side pockets: They lie flat when empty, but stretch out to hold a water bottle, tent poles or other loose objects.
- Hipbelt pockets: These accommodate small items you want to reach quickly—a smartphone, snacks, packets of energy gel, etc.
- Shovel pockets: These are basically flaps stitched onto the front of a packbag with a buckle closure at the top. Originally intended to hold a snow shovel, they now pop up on many 3-season packs, serving as stash spots for a map, jacket or other loose, lightweight items.
- Front pocket(s): Sometimes added to the exterior of a shovel pocket, these can hold smaller, less bulky items.

Ventilation

This can be a drawback of internal-frame designs. Much of the pack rides on your back, cutting airflow and accelerating sweaty-back syndrome. Designers have addressed this in a variety of ways—ventilation “chimneys” built into back panels, for example.

A few packs have engineered a suspended mesh back panel, sometimes called “tension-mesh suspension.” This is a trampoline-like design where the frame-supported packbag rides along a few inches away from your back, which instead rests against the highly breathable mesh.

Padding

If you're using a lightweight pack with a fairly minimalistic hipbelt and lumbar pad, you can encounter sore spots on your hips and lower back. If this is the case for you, consider using a cushier hipbelt.

Attachment points

If you frequently travel with an ice axe or trekking poles, look for tool loops that allow you to attach them to the exterior of the pack. Rare is the pack that does not offer at least a pair of tool loops.

Backpack Accessories

Raincover

Pack fabric interiors are usually treated with a waterproof coating. Yet packs have seams and zippers where water can seep through, and the fabric's exterior absorbs some water weight during a downpour.

The solution is a raincover, which could be a plastic garbage bag (cheap but clumsy) to a more customized packcover. If you expect rain on your trip, this is a good item to carry. An alternative: bundling gear internally in waterproof "dry" stuff sacks. Lightweight dry sacks can be a better option in windy conditions; strong gusts have the potential to abruptly peel a cover right off a pack.

Hydration reservoir

Nearly all packs offer an internal sleeve into which you can slip a hydration reservoir (almost always sold separately) plus 1 or 2 "hose portals" through which you can slip the sip tube.

Reference:

REI, <http://www.rei.com/learn/expert-advice/backpack.html>

Fast Food

FAST FOOD MEALS

Fast foods are quick and easy substitutes for home cooking, and a reality with the busy schedules many families maintain. However, fast foods are almost always high in calories, fat, sugar, and salt.

Fast food used to mean fried food. However, today there are many more healthy alternatives available at fast food restaurants. Some restaurants still use hydrogenated vegetable oils for frying. These oils contain trans fats, which increase your risk for heart disease. Some cities have banned or are trying to ban the use of these fats. Now, many restaurants are preparing foods using other types of fat.

Even with these changes, it is hard to eat healthy when you eat out often. Many foods are still cooked with a lot of fat, and many fast-food restaurants do not offer any lower-fat foods. Large portions also make it easy to overeat, and few restaurants offer many fresh fruits and vegetables.

Before heading out, it is important to know your personal calorie limit. Staying within yours can help you get to or maintain a healthy weight. Most adolescents need 1800 (girls) to 2200 (boys) calories; however, knowing how many calories one needs is based upon age, sex, height, weight, and activity level. When choosing what to eat and drink, it's important to get the right mix – enough nutrients, but not too many calories.

In general, eat at places that offer salads, soups, and vegetables. Select a fast-food restaurant that you know offers a variety of food selections that fit in your healthy eating plan. Along with that, the following tips can help you make healthier selections when dining at fast-food restaurants.

Check and compare nutrition information. Knowing the amount of calories, fat, and salt in fast foods can help you eat healthier. Many restaurants now offer information about their food. This information is much like the nutrition labels on the food that you buy. If it is not posted in the restaurant, ask an employee for a copy.

Have it your way. Remember you don't have to settle for what comes with your sandwich or meal – not even at fast-food restaurants. Ask for healthier options and substitutions. Adding bacon, cheese, or mayonnaise will increase the fat and calories. Ask for vegetables instead, such as lettuce or spinach, and tomatoes. With pizza, get less cheese. Also pick low-fat toppings, such as vegetables. You can also dab the pizza with a paper napkin to get rid of a lot of the fat from the cheese.

Keep portion sizes small. If the fast-food restaurant offers several sandwich sizes, pick the smallest. Bypass hamburgers with two or three beef patties, which can pack close to 800 calories and 40 grams of fat. Choose instead a regular- or children's-sized hamburger, which has about 250-300 calories. Ask for extra lettuce, tomatoes, and onions, and omit the cheese and sauce. If a smaller portion is not available, split an item to reduce calories and fat. You can always take some of your food home, and it is okay if you leave extra food on your plate.

Skip the large serving of french fries or onion rings and ask for a small serving instead. This switch alone saves 200 to 300 calories. Or, ask if you can substitute a salad or fruit for the fries.

Strive to make half your plate fruits and vegetables. Take advantage of the healthy side dishes offered at many fast-food restaurants. For example, instead of french fries choose a side salad with low-fat dressing or a baked potato, or add a fruit bowl or a fruit and yogurt option to your meal. Other healthy choices include apple or orange slices, corn on the cob, steamed rice, or baked potato chips.

When choosing an entrée salad, go with grilled chicken, shrimp, or vegetables with fat-free or low-fat dressing on the side, rather than regular salad dressing, which can have 100 to 200 calories per packet. Vinegar or lemon juice are also healthier substitutes for salad dressing. Watch out for high-calorie salads, such as those with deep fried shells or those topped with breaded chicken or other fried toppings. Also skip extras, such as cheese, bacon bits and croutons, which

quickly increase your calorie count. If you forgo the dressing, you can find salads for around 300 calories at most fast food chains.

Opt for grilled items. Fried and breaded foods, such as crispy chicken sandwiches and breaded fish fillets, are high in fat and calories. Select grilled or roasted lean meats – such as turkey or chicken meat, lean ham, or lean roast beef. Look for meat, chicken, and fish that are roasted, grilled, baked, or broiled. Avoid meats that are breaded or fried. If the dish you order comes with a heavy sauce, ask for it on the side and use just a small amount.

Go for whole grains. Select whole-grain breads or bagels. Croissants and biscuits have a lot of fat. People who eat whole grains as part of a healthy diet have a reduced risk of some chronic diseases.

Slow down on sodium. Americans have a taste for salt, but salt plays a role in high blood pressure. Everyone, including kids, should reduce their sodium intake to less than 2,300 milligrams of sodium a day (about 1 tsp of salt). Adults age 51 and older, African Americans of any age, and individuals with high blood pressure, diabetes, or chronic kidney disease should further reduce their sodium intake to 1,500 mg a day.

When eating at a fast food restaurant, pay attention to condiments. Foods like soy sauce, ketchup, pickles, olives, salad dressings, and seasoning packets are high in sodium. Choose low-sodium soy sauce and ketchup. Have a carrot or celery stick instead of olives or pickles. Use only a sprinkling of flavoring packets instead of the entire packet.

Watch what you drink. What you drink is as important as what you eat. Teenagers often drink more carbonated and caffeinated beverages and eat more fast foods. This, along with peer pressure related to eating and exercise, make teenagers particularly vulnerable to becoming sedentary, overweight, and obese. An obese teenager has a greater than 70% risk of becoming an obese adult.

Many beverages are high in calories, contain added sugars and offer little or no nutrients, while others may provide nutrients but too much fat and too many calories. For example, a large regular soda (32 ounces) has about 300 calories. Instead, order diet soda, water, unsweetened iced tea, sparkling water or mineral water. Also, skip the shakes and other ice cream drinks. Large shakes can contain more than 800 calories and all of your saturated fat allotment for the day.

Drink water. This is a better choice over sugary drinks. Regular soda, energy or sports drinks, and other sweet drinks usually contain a lot of added sugar, which provides more calories than needed. Water is usually easy on the wallet. You can save money by drinking water from the tap when eating out. When water just won't do, enjoy the beverage of your choice, but just cut back, avoiding the supersized option.

Don't forget dairy. Many fast food restaurants offer milk as an option for kids' meals, but you can request it! Dairy products provide calcium, vitamin D, potassium, protein, and other nutrients needed for good health throughout life. When you choose milk or milk alternatives, select low-fat or fat-free milk or fortified soymilk. Each type of milk offers the same key nutrients such as calcium, vitamin D, and potassium, but the number of calories are very different. Older children, teens, and adults need 3 cups of milk per day, while children 4 to 8 years old need 2 ½ cups, and children 2 to 3 years old need 2 cups.

The American Heart Association recommends some examples of healthier alternatives to common fast food picks.

Instead of...	Try...
Danish	Small bagel
Jumbo cheeseburger	Grilled chicken, sliced meats or even a regular 2 oz. hamburger on a bun with lettuce, tomato and onion
Fried chicken or tacos	Grilled chicken or salad bar (but watch out for the high-calorie dressing and ingredients)
French fries	Baked potato with vegetables or low-fat or fat-free sour cream topping

Potato chips	Pretzels, baked potato chips
Milkshake	Juice or low-fat or fat-free milk or a diet soft drink (Limit beverages that are high in calories but low in nutrients, such as soft drinks.)

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- Choose My Plate
- Make Half Your Grains Whole
- Salt and Sodium
- Make Better Beverage choices
- Enjoy Your Food, But Eat Less

Choose My Plate – Calories: How Many Can I Have?

<http://choosemyplate.gov/weight-management-calories/calories/empty-calories-amount.html>

Mayo Clinic

www.mayoclinic.com/health/fast-food/MY01268

National Institutes of Health – Medline Plus

www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplu/ency/patientinstructions/000105.htm

US Department of Health & Human Services - Office on Women's Health

www.girlshealth.gov/nutrition/fsatfood/fastfood_tips.cfm –

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Healthy Snacks Selection

SELECTING HEALTHY SNACKS +

Snacks can help us meet the nutritional needs that may otherwise go unmet if only consuming three meals per day. Nutrient intake can be improved by including healthy snacks as part of your daily schedule. Learning about proper nutrition and how to read a nutrition facts label can help you make healthy snacking choices.

Key Terms

- **Cost per Serving** – The cost of one serving of a food item. The cost per serving can be determined by dividing the total cost of a food package by the number of servings indicated on the nutrition facts label.
Total cost / Total Number of Servings = Cost per Serving
- **Daily Values (DVs)** – The amount of a nutrient needed daily as determined by the Food and Drug Administration.
- **Fiber** – the part of plant foods that cannot be digested. Fiber is beneficial because it reduces the risk of coronary heart disease, reduces constipation and promotes a full feeling.
- **Food Group** – The basic food groups are grains, fruits, vegetables, dairy, and protein.
- **Nutrients** – Substances the body needs to grow and function. The six classes of nutrients are: carbohydrates, protein, fats, water, vitamins and minerals. Carbohydrates, protein and fats are the only three nutrients that provide calories.
- **Nutrient-Dense Foods** – Those that provide substantial amounts of vitamins and minerals and relatively fewer calories.
- **Portion Size** – the amount of food eaten at one time.
- **Serving Size** – A standardized amount of a food, such as a cup or an ounce, used in providing dietary guidance or in making comparisons among similar foods.
- **Whole Grains** – Foods made from the entire grain seed, usually called the kernel, which consists of the bran, germ and endosperm. Nutrients found in whole grains offer protective health benefits such as reducing constipation, aiding in weight management and reducing the risk of heart disease.

Reading Labels When Making Snack Choices

To know what you're getting from your snack, be sure to read the nutrition facts label. Try these tips to make smart food choices quickly and easily.

- Keep these low: calories, saturated fats, trans fat, cholesterol and sodium
- Get enough of these: potassium, fiber, vitamins A and C, calcium and iron
- Check for added sugars using the ingredient list.
- Use the % Daily Value (DV) column when possible: 5% DV or less is low, 20% DV or more is high

Additional items to look for on a Nutrition Facts Label include:

Serving size: Look at the serving size and the number of servings per package. Then, determine how many servings you are actually consuming. If you double the servings you eat, you double the calories and nutrients. Remember, the serving size provided on the nutrition facts label is not a recommended amount to eat; it's a way to let you know the calories and nutrients in a certain amount of food.

Calories: 2,000 calories is the value used as a general reference on the food label. However, the amount of calories you need each day depends on your age, gender, activity level and whether you are trying to gain, maintain or lose weight. Be sure to look at the serving size and how many servings you are actually consuming. If you double the servings you eat, you double the calories.

You can easily consume your calories on a few high-calorie food items, but you most likely will not get the vitamins and nutrients your body needs. Instead, choose nutrient-rich foods that are packed with vitamins, minerals, fiber and other nutrients but are lower in calories.

Look at the calories on the label and compare them with what nutrients you are also getting to decide whether the food is worth eating. When one serving of a single food item contains 400 or more calories, it is high; 40 calories is low.

Food packages also contain information about the amount of calories in the food, including various claims, such as:

- Calorie free – means there is less than 5 calories per serving.
- Low calorie – means there is 40 calories or less per serving.
- Reduced calorie or lower in calories – means there is at least 25 percent fewer calories than the regular version.
- Light or lite – means there is half the fat or a third of the calories of the regular version.

Remember that calories come from both food and beverages, so make your calories count!

Sugars: The 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends consuming less than 10 percent of calories per day from added sugars. Since sugars contribute calories with few, if any, nutrients, one should look for foods and beverages low in added sugars. The Nutrition Facts label lists how many grams of sugar the food contains, but does not list added sugars separately. The amount listed includes sugars that are naturally present in foods and sugars added to the food during processing or preparation. Although the body's response to sugars does not depend on whether they are naturally present in food or added to foods, sugars found naturally in foods are part of the food's total package of nutrients and other healthful components. In contrast, many foods that contain added sugars often supply calories, but few or no essential nutrients and no dietary fiber.

High sugar snacks can serve as a quick energy boost but are followed by a drop in blood sugar, which can cause you to feel hungry and tired. Read the ingredient list and make sure that added sugars are not one of the first few ingredients. Some names for added sugars (caloric sweeteners) include sucrose, glucose, high fructose corn syrup, corn syrup, corn sweetener, honey, dextrose, fruit juice concentrates, lactose, maltose, malt syrup, molasses, maple syrup and fructose. These added sugars provide calories but few or no vitamins and minerals.

The food package can also provide guidance. Sometimes the label will say "sugar-free" or "no added sugars." Even with these claims, it is important to read the Nutrition Facts label.

Fats: Look for foods low in saturated fats, trans fats and cholesterol to help reduce the risk of heart disease. Most of the fats you eat should be polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans (2015) suggest that a healthy eating pattern limits saturated fats and trans fats. The guidelines also recommend that less than 10 percent of calories per day come from saturated fats. Foods that are high in fats are usually high in calories.

Many food packages also contain various claims regarding the amount of fat in the food. Some examples of these claims are "fat free," "low saturated fat" or "light."

Sodium: Sodium is an essential nutrient and is needed by the body in relatively small quantities, provided that substantial sweating does not occur. Reducing sodium intake can reduce one's blood pressure. Keeping blood pressure in normal range reduces an individual's risk of cardiovascular disease, congestive heart failure, and kidney disease.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans (2015) recommends consuming less than 2,300 milligrams (mg) of sodium per day. Most of the sodium people eat comes from processed foods, not from the salt shaker. Take a look at the sodium content on the Nutrition Facts label, using it to make selections that are lower in sodium. Use the % DV to determine the levels of sodium in the food product – 5% DV or less is low and 20% DV or more is considered high.

Claims on the food packaging, such as “low sodium,” can also be used to quickly identify foods that contain less salt. However, such claims should still prompt a look at the Nutrition Facts label.

Protein-Packed Snacks

The idea of eating more protein has gained popularity in recent years. Some people may think the way to build body muscle is to eat high-protein diets and use protein powders, supplements and shakes. However, most of us get what we need from the foods we eat. Protein is in many foods that you eat, including snacks, and plays a key role in our bodies. They function as building blocks for bones, muscles, cartilage, skin, and blood. They are also building blocks for enzymes, hormones, and vitamins. They help build and repair all body tissue, build blood, and form antibodies to fight infection. Proteins are also digested more slowly and, therefore, act as longer lasting fuel.



Source: www.1hourathlete.com
The photograph above is only provided as an example of common protein powders and is not being endorsed or condoned.

Proteins are one of three nutrients that provide calories, supplying food energy at 4 calories per gram. To keep calories in check, it's good to have higher-protein foods in place of other foods. For example, choose a glass of skim or low-fat milk instead of drinking a sweetened beverage and you'll take in 8 extra grams of protein. You can add lean protein at any meal, but research has shown that adding it to your breakfast may be especially helpful. Lean protein incorporated into meals and snacks is also an easy strategy for working a hunger-fighting food into your diet.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends eating a variety of protein foods, including seafood, lean meats and poultry, eggs, legumes, and nuts, seeds, and soy products. While meat, in general, is a good source of protein, it can be high in fat. That's why it is always good to check the Nutrition Facts Label for the saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, and sodium content of packaged foods. Processed meats have added sodium, so it's best to choose lean turkey, roast beef, ham or low-fat luncheon meats. Eating peanuts and certain tree nuts (i.e. walnuts, almonds, and pistachios) may reduce the risk of heart disease when consumed as part of a diet that is nutritionally adequate and within calorie needs. Because nuts and seeds are high in calories, eat them in small portions and use them to replace other protein foods, like some meat or poultry, rather than adding them to what you already eat. In addition, choose unsalted nuts and seeds to help reduce sodium intakes.

Energy/Power Bars

A variety of what is referred to as sports bars, energy bars or power bars are offered at grocery stores and in vending machines. Marketing for these bars often leads many people to believe they can work wonders with some purported benefits including burning of fat, buildup of muscle, and improved athletic performance. In terms of nutritional benefits, it depends on the benefits you are looking for.

All energy bars provide energy because energy refers to calories. Energy bars were actually first developed for endurance athletes who had difficulty taking in enough calories to sustain them during their athletic endeavors. It's true that they are a quick and convenient form of energy or calories. However, will these bars energize you? Probably not. If one has not eaten in a while and is feeling slightly fatigued, one of these bars may help take away that sluggishness, but so would a slice of whole wheat toast and a cup of skim milk or juice. However, if one is exhausted due to lack of sleep, for example, an energy bar won't provide any more pep.



Source: breakingmuscle.com

The photograph above is only provided as an example of common protein powders and is not being endorsed or condoned.

On the nutrition side of things, some energy bars contain over 400 calories (more than many candy bars) and up to ten grams of fat. For many people, this may be more than they need or want to take in before exercising. Many energy bars do contain added vitamins, minerals, amino acids, and other important substances, but they are not meal replacements. They do not contain natural fibers, phytochemicals, and high quality protein found in less-processed foods.

For a fraction of the cost, and just as convenient to eat, one might consider some other snacking options, such as:

Granola bars	Bananas	Oranges	Carrot sticks
Juice	Skim milk	Low-fat yogurt	Whole grain crackers
Graham crackers	Mini-bagels		

Energy bars are not a replacement for a healthy lifestyle; it's still important to eat a balanced diet, sleep, manage stress, and be physically active in order to achieve optimum performance. So rather than banking on bars, it's important to be a smart consumer and consider your caloric needs, choose to eat a balanced diet, read energy bar labels carefully (checking for calories, fat and sugar content and think how they fit in with your overall diet).

Nutritious Snacking Tips

- Choose foods high in nutrients and low in fat.
- Eat snacks that include at least two food groups. For example, pair apple slices with cheese or a mini bagel with peanut butter.
- Plan ahead! Plan and pack snacks for when you are on the go so you can avoid less healthful snack choices such as chips and soda.
- Incorporate fruits and vegetables into your snacking plans.
- Aim for whole grain snacks, as at least half of your grains should be whole.
- Remember that calories come from both food and beverages. So, consider for overall, daily caloric needs when choosing snacks. Water and milk are your best beverage choices at snack time.

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Smoothies

SMOOTHIES

CONSUMER DECISION MAKING 2018

Smoothies have become a popular choice for snacks and meals. While once something that you could only get from your home blender and a few basic ingredients, now smoothies can be purchased in ready-to-drink form at grocery and convenience stores, purchased frozen ingredients in pouches that you must add milk, water, or juice to, or from a fast food restaurant or coffee shop counter or drive through window. There are even entire stores devoted to selling smoothies where customers can choose everything from fruits, to caffeine, to added protein powders and vitamins and minerals.

The good news is that smoothies can be very nutritious and provide a convenient way to get a few of daily MyPlate food group needs met, as well as vitamins and minerals. However, some restaurants and food manufacturers add lots of extra sugar, fat, or other unnecessary ingredients with few vitamins, minerals, protein, or fiber. Smoothies can be economical or can be very costly. With all the options, it can be hard to know which smoothie is the best choice for you and your situation. The following information will help you choose a healthy and affordable smoothie to meet your specific needs.



Cost

The cost of smoothies varies a lot. The packaging, brand name, ingredients, and whether you're buying them at a store ready-to-drink, to make at home, or at a restaurant, coffee shop or fast food location all contribute to the cost. When you're on the go and buying your smoothie ready-to-drink from a store or restaurant, you probably plan to drink the whole smoothie at one time. In this situation, you should compare cost per unit (i.e. large smoothie at a fast food restaurant, one bottle purchased at a store). Some smoothies may cost a little more than others, but spending a little more money to make a healthier choice is generally a better investment in your health.

When buying smoothies to have at home, you might buy a larger, "family size" bottle containing many servings. In this case, you can compare price per serving. To determine the price per serving, check the Nutrition Facts label to see how many servings are in the container (Servings per container). Divide the price by the number of servings to determine the price per serving. For example, a large family sized smoothie costs \$4 and has 8 servings would cost \$0.50 per serving ($\$4/8$ servings = \$0.50 per serving). If you are mixing ingredients yourself, then you have an extra step of adding the price per serving of each ingredient together to get the total cost per serving.

Nutritional Value

Whether you are choosing your smoothie for a snack or to have as a meal will influence the nutritional value you should expect from your smoothie. Remember, meals are where we get most of our energy (calories) and nutrition (MyPlate food groups, carbohydrates, protein, fats, vitamins, minerals). Snacks should provide fewer calories, carbohydrates, protein, and fat, and may contain only one MyPlate food group. Let's review each of these topics.

MyPlate Food Groups: Smoothies typically are made primarily from fruit and/or dairy (usually yogurt or milk). Some smoothies have vegetables or additional protein.

- Smoothies that are a meal should provide foods from at least two food groups (dairy and fruit).
- Smoothies that are a snack can provide only one food group (dairy or fruit)

Remember, dairy foods provide calcium, protein, vitamin A, vitamin D, potassium, and much more. Vegetables and fruits are good sources of vitamins A & C and minerals, such as potassium. Look for smoothies that have more of these healthy nutrients.

Calories: Carbohydrates, Fat, and Protein

When a smoothie will be a meal, you will need a few more calories, carbohydrates, protein, and fat than when a smoothie might be a snack. Reading the Nutrition Facts label on products lets you know how many total calories are in each serving and where the calories come from. Carbohydrate and protein provide 4 calories per gram, while fat provides 9 calories per gram.



Calories: Consider the calories per amount you or someone plans to drink. This might be per unit (like when you buy a medium sized smoothie from a fast food restaurant, or one 8 ounce serving out of a 48 ounce family sized bottle).

- Smoothies that are a meal can provide more than 300 calories. But remember, you want to maximize vitamins and minerals, for the amount of calories, fat, and sugar.
- When having a smoothie as a snack, the amount you plan to drink should provide about 300 calories or less.

Carbohydrates: Carbohydrates are our bodies' favorite source of energy and the only source of energy that your brain can use. It's important to get carbohydrates from your food, but our bodies like some sources more than others. Look on the nutrition label to see how much total carbohydrate, sugar, and fiber per serving of smoothie.

Fiber: Carbohydrates from fiber are beneficial to your health by causing you to feel full for longer and helping with digestion. Eating enough fiber can also reduce your risk for

heart disease. Smoothies that use whole fruits will have more fiber than smoothies that use fruit juices. Look for smoothies with more fiber.

Sugars: Carbohydrates from sugar are present in naturally sweet foods like fruits, but may also be added as an additional ingredient to further sweeten the food. Many smoothies contain fruits like bananas, berries, oranges, and pineapple. Some contain fruit juices. These fruits provide a quick energy boost from the natural sugar and often bring some vitamins and fiber along with them. Added sugars only supply calories with few or no nutrients and no dietary fiber. Sugars are listed on the nutrition label under carbohydrates. Added sugars may be listed in the ingredient list as dextrose, cane sugar, and high fructose corn syrup. When comparing smoothies, you want to look for the smoothies with less sugar, particularly when the smoothie will be a snack.

Fat

Our bodies need fat to provide energy and carry nutrients, but not too much. Some types of fat are better for our health than others. Saturated fat and trans fat are bad for your heart health. The 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) recommends that you limit saturated fat to less than 10% of calories, and avoid trans fat. Look for smoothies lower in saturated fat and contain 0 grams trans fat. If you look at the ingredient list, you do NOT want to find “partially hydrogenated oils” listed, as these are sources of trans fat.

Protein

Protein does so many things in your body, but it’s best known for helping you build muscle. Protein also may help you feel full for longer. When a smoothie is going to be a meal, you’ll definitely want it to have some protein. If a smoothie will be a snack, it may not have much protein, and that’s OK. In general, choose smoothies with more protein.

Vitamins and Minerals

Vitamins and minerals are listed on nutrition labels as a percent daily value (%DV). The goal is to get 100% of the DV from foods each day. A vitamin and mineral-rich smoothie provides all four that are listed on the Nutrition label: Vitamin A, which is good for eyes and skin; Vitamin C, which helps the immune system protect from disease; Calcium, which helps build strong bones; Iron, which helps circulation and energy levels. When a smoothie has calcium in the amount of 10% or more, it probably contains some foods from the dairy group, such as milk or yogurt. In general, you want to choose smoothies with more vitamins and minerals.

Salt

Our bodies need sodium (salt) to function, but getting too much leads to high blood pressure and is harmful to your health. The 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans and MyPlate recommend that you consume no more than 2300 milligrams (mg) of sodium per day. Be sure to check the label and look for smoothies that are lower in sodium.

Ingredients:

Smoothies are typically made from fruit, fruit juices, dairy (milk or yogurt), and some might contain vegetables. Much of the “designer” type smoothies contain more additives than is necessary to get your daily nutrition needs met.

Fruit juices: It’s best if a smoothie contains whole fruit. If a smoothie contains juice, it is best if that is 100% fruit juice.

Sugar, sugar substitutes/non-nutritive sweeteners: There are several sugar substitutes and non-nutritive sweeteners that are used to make foods sweet with fewer calories. The non-nutritive sweeteners on the market today used in soft drinks, with table top version listed in parentheses, include aspartame (Equal® or Nutrasweet®), sucralose (Splenda®), acesulfame potassium (Sunette®) and saccharin (Sweet’n Low®). All of these non-nutritive sweeteners have been approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). However, the long term health effects for children and adolescents are unknown, so it may be best to avoid smoothies that use these non-nutritive sweeteners.

Stevia comes from a plant, tastes very sweet, and is used as sugar substitute in some foods. A highly processed form is allowed to be used in foods in the US. Because the long term health effects of stevia are unknown, particularly for children and adolescents, it is best to avoid smoothies that use stevia.

Caffeine: Caffeine, a stimulant, is added to some smoothies and must be listed as an ingredient if it is added. Caffeine is not necessary for health, and little is known about the safety of caffeine for children and adolescents. It’s best to avoid caffeine in smoothies.

Additional B vitamins: many smoothie companies add additional B vitamins that they advertise as “giving you more energy.” Vitamins don’t provide energy, but they help your body use the energy you get from carbohydrates, protein, and fats. We can get plenty of B vitamins from the foods we eat. We don’t need additional vitamin supplements and powders, unless recommended by your doctor.

Amino acids like Taurine, Arginine, and Creatine: Many smoothie companies add additional amino acids that they advertise as “giving you more energy,” “help with recovery,” or “build muscle.” Protein from food is made up of amino acids, and we can get plenty of protein from the foods we eat. We don’t need additional amino acid supplements and powders, unless recommended by your doctor.

Other Additional Ingredients: If you eat a well-balanced diet, you truly don’t need additional ingredients in your smoothie other than those that add taste, not calories. Cinnamon, turmeric, ginger, coconut water, vegetables like kale or spinach, or raw cacao can add lots of taste for more satisfaction and variety.

Reading a Smoothie Label

Practice by reading these various smoothie labels. Pay attention to sugars, calories, fat, protein, ingredients, serving sizes, etc.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size ½ pouch (107g)
8 FL. OZ Prepared
Servings Per Container 2

Amount Per Serving	As packaged	Prepared
Calories	70	110
Calories from Fat	10	15
% Daily Value**		
Total Fat 1.5g*	2%	2%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%	0%
Trans Fat 0g		
Cholesterol 0mg	0%	1%
Sodium 30mg	1%	4%
Total Carbohydrate 14g	5%	7%
Dietary Fiber 2g	8%	8%
Sugars 10g		
Protein 2g		
Vitamin A	0%	4%
Vitamin C	25%	25%
Calcium	50%	60%
Iron	4%	4%

* Amount as packaged. As prepared with 94m milk, one serving provides 1.5g total fat, less than 5mg cholesterol, 90mg sodium, 20g total carbohydrate (10g sugars), and 5g protein.
** Percent Daily Values are based on a diet of 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Calories	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than 20g	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g	375g	
Dietary Fiber	25g	30g	

Ingredients: Strawberries, Blueberries, Water, Raspberries, Nonfat Yogurt (skim milk, yogurt cultures), Sugar, Fructose, Calcium Phosphate, Milkfat, Corn Starch, Banana Puree, Natural Flavor, Nonfat Milk, Gelatin, Xanthan Gum, Pectin, Carrageenan, Sucralose, Citric Acid.

CONTAINS MILK INGREDIENTS.

DISTRIBUTED BY YOPLAIT USA, INC., MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55440
**one full serving of fruit = ½ cup of fruit
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Item

**McDonald's®, McCafe Mango
Pineapple Smoothie**

Price	\$2.25
Size	16 oz
Calories	250
Fat (g)	1
Saturated Fat (g)	0
Trans Fat (g)	0
Carbohydrates (g)	57
Sugar (g)	52
Fiber (g)	1
Protein (g)	3
Sodium (mg)	45
Vitamin A (%)	35
Vitamin C (%)	25
Calcium (%)	8
Iron (%)	2
Caffeine (mg)	0



Item	Bolthouse® Farms, green goodness
Cost per bottle	\$3.12
Bottle size	15.2 oz
Serving Size	8 fl oz
Cost per oz	\$0.21
Cost per serving	\$1.64

Nutrition information (per 8 fl oz serving)

Calories	130
Fat (g)	0
Saturated Fat (g)	0
Trans Fat (g)	0
Carbohydrates (g)	30
Sugar (g)	26
Fiber (g)	1
Protein (g)	2
Sodium (mg)	20
Caffeine (mg)	0



Item

Smoothie King®, Acai Adventure

Price	\$3.50
Size	16 oz
Calories	435
Fat (g)	5
Saturated Fat (g)	2
Trans Fat (g)	0
Carbohydrates (g)	92
Sugar (g)	75
Fiber (g)	2
Protein (g)	2
Sodium (mg)	163
Vitamin A (%)	0
Vitamin C (%)	0
Calcium (%)	15
Iron (%)	0
Caffeine (mg)	0

CHECK YOUR KNOWLEDGE (answers below)

1. If you are looking only at price, and you plan to drink 2 servings from a family sized bottle, which smoothie is the better buy?
 - a. Arthur's Juicy Smoothie - \$4 for 6 servings.
 - b. Blueberry Blast - \$5 for 8 servings.
2. If you wanted a smoothie to be your breakfast, how many MyPlate food groups should it have?
 - a. 1
 - b. 2 or more
3. If a smoothie has 450 calories, does it make a better meal or snack?
 - a. Meal
 - b. Snack
4. Which smoothie is the best choice in regard to salt/sodium?
 - a. 240 mg
 - b. 900 mg
5. Which smoothie is the best choice in regard to Saturated fat?
 - a. 0.5 grams
 - b. 2 grams

References

ChooseMyPlate.gov. USDA. Retrieved from www.choosemyplate.gov

Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2015. (2015). U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Retrieved from <http://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/>.

Check Your Knowledge Answers

1. b
 - a. $\$4 \text{ per bottle} \div 6 \text{ servings per bottle} = \$0.67 \text{ per serving}; \times 2 \text{ servings} = \1.33
 - b. $\$5 \text{ per bottle} \div 8 \text{ servings per bottle} = \$0.63 \text{ per serving}; \times 2 \text{ servings} = \1.25
2. b
3. a
4. a
1. a

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Toys

TOYS

Toys bring a great deal of joy to children, and they also can be valuable learning tools. Exploring, pretending, and sharing are just a few of the important skills children develop when they play. Toys don't have to be expensive. A variety of toys for children exist. Some of them are safe and some of them are dangerous. How do you know which is which? The main idea is to pick the right toy for a particular child at the right time.



Here are a few helpful suggestions related to purchasing toys in general:

Acceptable Toys
Are safe. Any toy can be unsafe if given to the wrong child, to a child at the wrong age, or when it is misused. A child's safety depends on the types of toys selected, the way they are maintained, and the amount of safe handling taught and practiced in the home.
Are durable. Toys are mauled, hugged, dropped, stood on, chewed on, washed and dried. They need to stand up to all this normal wear and tear.
Work like they're supposed to. Nothing causes loss of interest as readily as a toy that fails to perform. It often results in frustration, anger and discouragement.
Are appropriate for the child's age. Toys should suit the physical, mental, and emotional abilities of the child. For example, an infant can not play with a two-wheeled bicycle; a school-aged child does not need a mobile for a crib. Many toys can be used by children at different stages, like blocks and modeling dough.
Stimulate creativity. The toy can be used in several ways and leaves room for imagining and reaming.
Capture the child's interest and are fun. Children are drawn to appropriate toys and play with them spontaneously. Toys should reflect the child's interests.
Involve interaction with others. Encourages or even requires others like friends, siblings, or adults to play along with.
Can be kept clean easy.

Unacceptable Toys
Are dangerous. Unsafe toys have sharp corners, edges, and protrusions; are flammable; have easily lost or broken parts; toxic paint; might give an electrical shock; use glass instead of plastic in toy vehicle windows; have detachable parts that can be put into mouth, ears, nose; have fluffy trimmings that can be pulled off and swallowed; or are stuffed with toxic or unclean materials.
Are poorly constructed. Do not have proper labeling.
Cause anger or frustration by not working properly.
Are too mature for a particular child related to their physical, mental, and emotional abilities.
Have only one purpose and can be used only one way. Foster values the parents do not have. Cost too much.
Appear to contribute to misbehavior. They may stimulate too much excitement, aggression, or dangerous play.
Offer little chance of interaction. Wind-up or automated toys do not allow the child to be in control. The child merely becomes a passive observer of the toy's repetitive actions. These toys are often easily broken and irreparable, dangerous and expensive. Cannot be cleaned with soap and water.

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Read the Label

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission requires toy manufacturers to meet stringent safety standards and to label certain toys that could be a hazard for younger children. Look for labels that give age recommendations and use that information as a guide. Labels on toys that state "not recommended for children under three...contains small parts," are labeled that way because they may pose a choking hazard to children under three. Toys should be developmentally appropriate to suit the skills, abilities and interests of the child. Effective January 1, 1995 products that are manufactured in or imported into the United States must comply with the Child Safety Protection Act. Look for this symbol on toy packaging:

<p>⚠ WARNING: CHOKING HAZARD-with a description of the actual hazard Not for children under 3 yrs or Adult Supervision Required</p>

When purchasing art materials and supplies, including crayons and paint sets, look for the designation "ASTM D-4236." This means the product has been reviewed by a toxicologist and, if necessary, labeled with cautionary information.

When purchasing electronic toys, look for the Underwriter's Laboratories (UL) seal. This means the toy has been tested for safety. The labeling requirements specify that certain precautionary information shall be listed on labels on children's electrical products. The labeling is designed to help buyers choose the right toy for the right age and to warn the user of potential hazards. The package of every such product must carry a cautionary message and a minimum age recommendation. No item with a heating element may be recommended for children under 8 years of age. There are some hobby items, such as wood burning kits, that reach very high temperatures and have been exempted from certain maximum surface temperature regulations. These items cannot be recommended for, and should be kept out of reach of, children under 12 years of age.

Certain areas of electronic products also must be labeled:

- accessible surfaces that exceed certain specified temperatures must carry a warning of the danger
- toys with replaceable electric lights must carry a warning of the maximum safe wattage for a replacement bulb and a notice to disconnect the plug before changing the bulb
- products with non-replaceable lights will be so marked
- products not designed to be immersed in water must carry a notice to that effect.

Storing and Caring for Toys

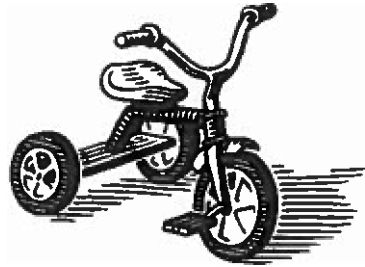
Toy safety involves choosing the right toy, checking it regularly for damage, and storing it safely. One of the greatest dangers in toy storage is the toy chest with a free-falling lid. Children are injured when the lid falls on their head, neck, or arms. Upright lids in trunks and footlockers pose this kind of hazard. Open chests or bins, chests with lightweight removable lids, or chests with sliding doors or panels do not present the hazard of a falling lid. Low, open shelves where toys can be reached easily and put away are a safer alternative and are often preferred by children. Caring properly for toys will extend their usefulness and avoid accidents and injuries. Don't leave indoor toys outdoors overnight. Rain or dew could damage them, making them unsafe. Store toys in a special closet or shelf so they won't be tripped over or broken. Train toddlers to put their toys away. Throw away broken toys; they are hazardous.



Think Toy Safety

More than 120,000 children are taken to hospital emergency rooms each year for treatment of toy-related injuries. Evaluate toys for your children from the standpoint of safety. The following are some guidelines:

- Choose toys appropriate to the child's age. Some toys intended for children more than 3 years old may contain small parts, which could present a choking hazard for infants and toddlers.
- Toddlers should never play with any object that is smaller than a half dollar.
- Think BIG when selecting toys, especially for children under age three. Big toys without small parts can be enjoyed by youngsters of different ages. Keep toys intended for older children, such as games with small pieces, marbles, or small balls, away from younger children.
- Keep uninflated balloons out of reach for children under age 6, and discard pieces of broken balloons because of the choking hazard.
- Explain and show your child the proper use of safety equipment such as bicycle helmets. Studies show that helmets can reduce severe injuries from a fall.
- Check all toys periodically for breakage and potential hazards. Damaged toys can be dangerous and should be repaired or thrown away immediately.
- Store toys safely. Teach children to put toys away so they are not tripping hazards. Periodically check toy boxes and shelves for safety. Visit the Web sites listed on page 5 for more information.
- Some toys require adult supervision. Supervise children when playing with pull toys with long cords; they could strangle a child. Check toys with moving parts for safety. Make sure the child is mature enough for the toy.
- Follow instructions carefully and supervise children using any electronic toys. Failure to follow manufactures instructions may result in injury.
- Give outdoor play equipment and toys such as gym sets, skates and bikes to children who are old enough to use them safely.
- Teach children not to use bicycles, tricycles, or sleds where there is traffic, and to use them carefully in areas where other children play.
- Have children take off roller skates or in-line skates before crossing the street. They should always wear a helmet and other safety gear.



Age Appropriate Toys

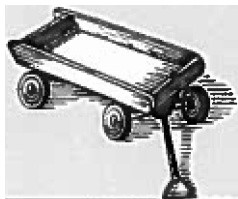
There are many toys to choose from, but most can be grouped into specific developmental categories: physical or muscle; sensory (sight, sound, hearing, touch); social; and intellectual or creative development. Finding age appropriate toys for children enables them to grow and develop at a level suitable for them. Refer to the table on the next two pages for information on which toys are best for which ages.

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Age	Toys to Choose	Toys to Avoid	Age	Toys to Choose	Toys to Avoid
Newborn to 1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brightly colored objects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toys with parts smaller than 1X inch 	2 to 3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play dough Large crayons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toys with sharp edges
Age of Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pictures within view but out of reach Mobiles that have objects attached with cords less than 12 inches long Unbreakable toys that rattle or squeak Washable dolls or animals with embroidered eyes Stacking ring cones Tapes or CDs with gentle music 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toys with sharp edges Toys with detachable small parts Toys with toxic paint Toys with cords more than 12 inches long Stuffed animals with glass or button eyes Balloons Flammable items 	Explorative Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pegboards with large pieces Low rocking horses Sandbox toys Soft balls different sizes Cars or wagons to push Simple musical instruments Simple dress-up items like hats, scarves, and shoes Sturdy riding toys Books that rhyme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toys with removable parts Small objects such as beads, coins, or marbles Electronic toys Tricycles with seats more than 12 inches high Riding toys Flammable items
1 to 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Push and pull toys Books with cloth or stiff pasteboard pages Non-glass mirrors Take-apart toys with large pieces Blocks-foam, plastic, or cardboard Nested boxes or cups Musical and chime toys Floating tub toys Pounding and stacking toys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small toys that can be swallowed Toys with small removable parts Stuffed animals with glass or button eyes Toys with sharp edges Flammable items 	3 to 4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dolls with simple cloths Balls, any size Non-electrical trucks, trains Building blocks Toy telephone Dress-up clothes Sturdy tea sets Plastic interlocking blocks Blunt scissors Play dough Washable markers, large crayons Sewing cards Simple board games Books 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electronic toys Flammable costumes Toys with sharp edges or small, removable parts Riding toys used in hilly or inclined driveways Heavy toys
Investigative Age	<p>Along with the items listed for infants, this age group also enjoys any item that can be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> stacked poured opened closed pushed pulled 		Imitative Age		
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn by doing Becoming more social Enjoy realistic toys 		

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Age	Toys to Choose	Toys to Avoid	Age	Toys to Choose	Toys to Avoid
<p>4 to 5 years</p> <p>Beginning or Creative Age</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoy painting and drawing • Enjoy building • Are energetic and active in their play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building blocks • Simple construction sets • Modeling clay • Nonelectrical trains, battery operated toys • Puppets and puppet theater • Finger paints • Stencils • Board and card games • Simple musical instruments • Small sports equipment • Books • Bicycles with 20 inch wheels and training wheels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toxic or oil based paint sets • Flammable costumes or ones that can be easily tipped over • Kites made of aluminized polyester film • Electronic toys unless battery operated • Shooting toys and darts with pointed tips • Fireworks of any kind 	<p>6 to 8 years</p> <p>Beginning of Dexterity Age</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoy activities with a finished product • Develop keen interest in sports • Better understanding of rules and enjoy playing with others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction sets • Sled, roller skates • Sewing materials • Simple camera • Printing and stamp sets • Paints, colored pencils • Sketch pad • Kites • Battery powered electronic toys • Jigsaw puzzles • Dominoes • Board games • Simple toy sets • Dolls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kites made of aluminized polyester film • Shooting toys and toys with loud noises like cap guns • Fireworks of any kind • Sharp-edged tools • Electronic toys that plug in • Bikes or skateboards without helmets
<p>8 to 12 years</p> <p>Specialization of Tastes and Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoy many of the same types of toys as younger children with more complex activities • Can learn math and problem solving skills through card and board games • Enjoy active and social toys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hobby materials • Arts and crafts materials • Musical instruments • Sports equipment • Camping equipment • Construction sets • Electronic trains • Bicycles (26 inch wheels for children age 10 and older) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fireworks of any kind • Air rifles • Chemistry sets • Darts • Skateboards • Arrows 	<h3>Web Resources for More Information on Selecting Toys</h3> <p>American Academy of Pediatrics http://www.aap.org/</p> <p>Toy Manufacturers of America http://www.toma.org/consumer/parents/safety/4toysafety.html</p> <p>US Consumer Product Safety Commission http://www.cpsc.gov</p> <p>References</p> <p><i>Understanding Children - Toys</i>, by Lesia Oesterreich. Iowa State University, University Extension</p> <p><i>Buying Age Appropriate Toys</i>, The Neblin, University of Nebraska, Cooperative Extension</p> <p>US Consumer Product Safety Commission,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Child Safety Protection Act Fact Sheet</i> • <i>The Dangers of Electric Toys</i> • <i>Toy Safety Shopping Tips</i> 		



Tumer, 2006

