

TRADITIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PATTERN

U.S. Department of Agriculture, National School Lunch Program		Minimum Quantities		Recommended Quantities	Specific Requirements
USDA recommends, but does not require, that portions be adjusted by age/grade group to better meet the food and nutritional needs of children according to their ages when following this basic meal pattern. <i>Meals must meet the Dietary Guidelines and nutrition standards when averaged over the course of a week.</i>		Grades K-3 (ages 5-8)		Grades 4-12 (age 9 and over)	
		Grades 7-12 (age 12 and over)			
Food Components	Food Items				
MEAT OR MEAT ALTERNATE (quantity of the edible portion as served)	A serving of one of the following or a combination to give an equivalent quantity:				Must be served in the main dish or the main dish and only one other menu item. • Vegetable protein products, cheese alternate products, and enriched macaroni with fortified protein may be used to meet part of the meat or meat alternate requirement. Food and Nutrition Service Fact Sheets on each of these alternate foods give detailed instructions for use.
	Lean meat, poultry, or fish	1½ oz	2 oz	3 oz	
	Alternate Protein Products	1½ oz	2 oz	3 oz	
	Cheese	1½ oz	2 oz	3 oz	
	Large egg(s)	¾	1	1 1/2	
	Cooked dry beans or peas	3/8 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	
	Peanut Butter or other nut or seed butters	3 Tbsp	4 Tbsp	6 Tbsp	
	Yogurt, plain or flavored, sweetened or unsweetened	6 oz (3/4 cup)	8 oz (1 cup)	12 oz (1½ cup)	
	Peanuts, soy nuts, tree nuts, or seeds, as listed in program guidance, meet no more than 50% of the requirement and must be combined in the meal with at least 50% of other meat or meat alternates. (1 oz of nuts/seeds = 1 oz of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish.)	3/4 oz = 50%	1 oz = 50%	1 1/2 oz = 50%	
VEGETABLE OR FRUIT	2 or more servings of vegetables or fruits or both to total:	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	3/4 cup	• No more than one-half of the total requirement may be met with full-strength fruit or vegetable juice. • Cooked dry beans or peas may be used as a meat alternate or as a vegetable, but not as both in the same meal.
GRAINS/ BREADS	Servings of grains/breads	8 per week*	8 per week*	10 per week*	• Enriched macaroni with fortified protein may be used as a meat alternate or a grain, but not as both in the same meal. NOTE: Refer to <i>FCS Instruction 783-1</i> for information on the minimum weight of a serving. *One week = 5 days
	Must be enriched or whole-grain. A serving is a slice of bread or an equivalent serving of biscuits, rolls, etc., or 1/2 cup of cooked rice, macaroni, noodles, other pasta products or cereal grains, or a combination of any of the above	minimum of 1 serving per day	minimum of 1 serving per day	minimum of 1 serving per day	
MILK (as a beverage)	A variety of fluid milk should be offered.	1/2 pint (8 fl oz)	1/2 pint (8 fl oz)	1/2 pint (8 fl oz)	