



Tips for Teaching with Canada's food guide



Hamilton
Public Health Services

www.canada.ca/FoodGuide



The 2019 [food guide](#) takes a fresh approach to healthy eating. It highlights a way of eating to promote health and overall nutritional well-being. This guide focuses more on “how and what to eat” rather than “how much to eat” and emphasizes that “healthy eating is more than the foods you eat”.

What's new:

- The new guide is [digital](#) with extensive [supporting information](#). Resources include:
 - food guide Snapshot (PDF, poster, handouts, etc.)
 - Healthy Eating Recommendations (for consumers)
 - Canada's Dietary Guidelines (for educators)
 - Evidence Behind the Food Guide (for educators)
 - Recipes from Heart & Stroke Foundation of Canada
 - Videos
 - History of the food guide
 - Tips and advice
- **Food guide snapshot** (pictured above) instead of the multi-page rainbow document
 - The food guide snapshot is available in English, [French](#) and 29 [other languages](#) including 9 indigenous languages.
 - To order copies of the food guide snapshot use [order form](#) on the Health Canada Publications website.
 - Print a PDF copy of the snapshot [here](#)
- **Shift from a focus on food groups:** Instead of food groups and number of servings and serving sizes, Canadians are encouraged to **eat a variety of fruits and vegetables, whole grain foods, protein foods, and drink mostly water**. The food guide uses the image of a plate filled with a variety of different foods to show that Canadians of all ages should eat more vegetables and fruit as well as protein foods and whole grain foods.

➤ **New terminology:**

- **Vegetables and fruits** - fresh, frozen or canned are all healthy choices. Note that juice is a sugary drink and is not a substitute for whole vegetables or fruits
- **Protein foods** – from plants and animals including eggs, nuts and seeds, fish and shellfish, lean meats and poultry, beans, peas and lentils, lower fat dairy products (milk, cheese, yogurt), and unsweetened fortified soy beverages and other soy products (tofu, edamame). White milk and unsweetened fortified plant-based beverages continue to be a part of a healthy eating pattern especially for children and youth.
- **Whole grain foods** include cereal grains such as whole grain wheat (bulgur, farro, freekeh, wheat berries), rice, oats, barley, corn, wild rice, and rye, as well as pseudo cereals such as quinoa and buckwheat. [Whole grains](#) can be eaten on their own or as ingredients in recipes or other food products.
- **Healthy beverages** – include water and unsweetened low-fat milk, fortified plant-based beverages. Sugary drinks including juice, pop, flavoured milks and soy beverages, energy drinks, hot chocolate, sweet coffees and iced tea, and salty vegetable juices should be avoided or limited.

- **Evidence:** This food guide reflects the latest evidence on food and health. Industry-commissioned reports were excluded to reduce the potential of conflict of interest. Health Canada has committed to review the evidence regularly to ensure the suite of resources remains evidence based and current.

Resources for educators:

- Pages 299-302 of the 2019 Elementary HPE curriculum – summary table of learning focus by grade
- Summary of key messages and tips for educators based on the [Healthy Eating Recommendations](#) of the food guide (following pages 3-7)
- Cross-curricular links:
 - **Environmental** - online food guide also includes information about how farming, agriculture and food waste intersect with sustainability and the environment <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/tips-for-healthy-eating/healthy-eating-and-the-environment/>
 - **Social Studies** – there are 250 different ethnic origins in Canada, celebrate cultural food practices, holidays, traditions
 - **Language** – media awareness about food marketing (<http://mediasmarts.ca/>)
 - [Ophea healthy eating lessons](#) have been updated.
 - **Coming Soon** [BrightBites.ca](#) – Educator Tab with easy teaching ideas (and more)

Subscribe to receive updates, recipes and other ideas on using the food guide
<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/canada-food-guide/subscribe.html>

Tips for teaching with Canada's food guide – healthy eating recommendations

Canada's Food Guide Healthy Eating Recommendations	Key Messages	Additional Resources
<p>Healthy eating is more than the foods you eat</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy eating is about more than just the type and amount of food we eat. It is also about where, when, why, and how we eat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Guide Tips https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/tips-for-healthy-eating/school/ • Healthy Eating Educator Resources https://www.hamilton.ca/educational-programming-teachers/healthy-schools/healthy-eating-nutrition
<p>Be mindful of your eating habits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take time to eat • Notice when you are hungry and when you are full 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach children to be aware of their hunger and fullness cues. Trust them to decide what and how much to eat from the foods that are provided. • Teach children to recognize the many reasons why we eat including for good health, growth and development. • Encourage children and youth to practice mindful eating by using their senses, explore a variety of foods: taste, feel, look, smell, sound, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bright Bites - Paint Your Plate, lesson plans https://brightbites.ca/paint-plate-lesson-plans-grade/
<p>Cook more often</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan what you eat • Involve others in planning and preparing meals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food and cooking skills are part of food literacy and are important life skills. Food skills can be taught, learned and shared in a variety of settings. • Offer opportunities to learn hands-on skills and build confidence with food preparation at every age. For ideas on how to get students involved, contact us. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bright Bites, Cook It Up https://brightbites.ca/badge/cooking-class/ • Hamilton Edible Education Guide

<p><u>Enjoy your food</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture and food traditions can be part of healthy eating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food should be enjoyed. Pleasure and satisfaction are an important part of healthy eating. • Children learn best through neutral exposure to foods. Avoid the terms good/bad or healthy/unhealthy. By letting food be just food, children can develop a positive relationship with all foods. • In all cultures, food is an important part of social interactions and celebrations. Eating together can help to reinforce positive eating habits. Children learn from behaviour modelled by parents and caregivers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BrightBites, Reason to Celebrate https://brightbites.ca/badge/reason-to-celebrate/ • Tips for enjoying eating at school https://brightbites.ca/tips-for-enjoying-eating-at-school/
<p><u>Eat meals with others</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food nourishes, but it's also social. Being able to eat together and enjoy meals with others is a key part of healthy eating. • Structured meal and snack times are important elements of eating. • Encourage students to sit down and enjoy food with others while avoiding distraction of screens and electronics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BrightBites, Pack it Up (school lunch) https://brightbites.ca/badge/pack-it-up/
<p><u>Make it a habit to eat a variety of healthy foods each day</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variety helps ensure we get the range of nutrients needed to support health. • It is normal for some children to have a limited variety of familiar foods. Children learn to like a variety of foods and every child develops these skills at different rates. • Avoid pressuring children to eat foods they are not comfortable with. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bright Bites- Zesty Lessons https://brightbites.ca/badge/zesty-lessons/ • BrightBites – eating well made simple https://brightbites.ca/eating-well/

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refrain from using language that implies judgment of food or food choices. Rather than classifying food as 'good' and 'bad' foods or 'healthy' and 'unhealthy' foods help children learn to recognize how their bodies respond to different foods. • Give children opportunities to see, smell, touch, cook, grow and try (if they are ready) a variety of foods, through classroom activities and snack programs. 	
<p>Be aware of food marketing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food marketing influences adults and children alike. It's persuasive and can influence our food decisions. • Teach media literacy to help children understand how advertising influences our beliefs and desires for foods. • Media literacy is also important to help children and youth understand media and cultural influence on our beliefs about our bodies and our health. Bodies come in a variety of shapes, sizes, colours, etc. contrary to what may be portrayed in the media. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media Smarts http://mediasmarts.ca/
<p>Use food labels</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food labels provide information about what ingredients are in a food product and can be used to compare one product to another as well as identify whether a food has a little or a lot of certain nutrients. • Food labels can be used to teach math and language but educators are discouraged from using them to classify foods as 'healthy' or 'unhealthy'. All foods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government of Canada- Nutrition Labeling https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/food-nutrition/food-labelling/nutrition-labelling.html

	can fit in a healthy eating pattern.	
Limit highly processed foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This goal encourages people to eat more whole and minimally processed food rather than relying on highly processed foods which add unneeded sodium, sugar and fat to our diets. Educators are recommended to increase exposure to and/or teach about minimally processed and whole foods, as well as increase opportunities to build food skills rather than focusing on avoiding highly processed foods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bright Bites, Cook It Up https://brightbites.ca/badge/cooking-class/ Bright Bites - Paint Your Plate, lesson plans https://brightbites.ca/paint-plate-lesson-plans-grade/
Make water your drink of choice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making healthy drink choices is important. Healthy drink options other than water include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> white milk (unsweetened lower fat milk) unsweetened fortified plant-based beverages such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> soy beverage almond beverage Milk and other dairy products continue to be an important part of the diets for children and youth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sip Smart Ontario https://brightbites.ca/badge/sipsmart/ Water Does Wonders http://waterdoeswonders.ca/

For more information: <https://www.hamilton.ca/educational-programming-teachers/healthy-schools/healthy-eating-nutrition>

Contact a Public Health Dietitian or Public Health Nurse by email: healthyschools@hamilton.ca