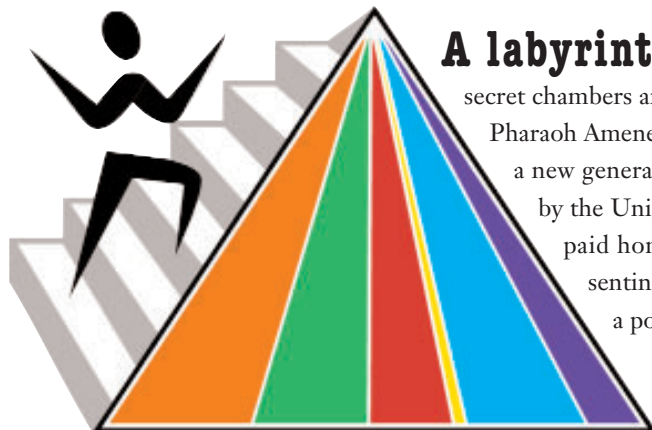


? Pyramid Puzzled?



A labyrinth of twisty passages,

secret chambers and hidden trapdoors filled the pyramid of Pharaoh Amenemhet III at Hawara. Perhaps unwittingly, a new generation of pyramid architects commissioned by the United States Department of Agriculture has paid homage to their ancient predecessors, presenting us with a symbol of authority—but also a powerful enigma.

A wordless tepee of upright colored rays, the new USDA Food Guide Pyramid sets itself up to help us all customize our own healthy diets in times of mass nutritional confusion.

Much ballyhooed as the long-awaited replacement for a crumbling, outdated USDA Food Pyramid, it is christened MyPyramid and is the symbol of an all-new “interactive food guidance system.” To discover the power within this new structure, we are invited to step in at www.mypyramid.gov.

Unfortunately, the online experience has left many visitors with the same sense of being lost in a maze that an early Egyptian tomb raider might have felt. “A puzzling mess,” said one frustrated user. “More like Rubik’s Cube than a communication breakthrough,” suggested another. “A lost opportunity,” said Harvard’s esteemed professor of epidemiology and nutrition, Dr. Walter Willett.

Still, many health professionals believe that the new pyramid is built on a better nutritional foundation than its immediate predecessor. The important take-home messages in the new pyramid are:

▲ **Moderation.** Many American **portions** are now typically 200 to 300 percent larger than recommended, and dietitians are virtually unanimous in believing that most people need to relearn what makes for reasonable servings of commonly eaten foods.

▲ **Balance.** Fear of all fat is out. Love of all carbohydrates is dead. In their place is the notion of **choosing wisely** and well from all food groups to achieve the recommended intake of key nutrients within a framework of calorie guidelines.

▲ **Exercise.** For many Americans who have slipped into sedentary ways, the new pyramid emphasizes the concept that calories eaten are **calories that have to be burned.**

Love it or hate it, MyPyramid is likely to be with us for years.

This User’s Guide is for anyone wanting to explore and understand the contents of its inner sanctums.

Juggling the Pieces of a Healthy Diet—A User’s Guide

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Pyramid How-To

- ▼ In **chart 1**, use your age and activity level to determine your daily calorie allotment.
- ▼ In **chart 2**, look under your calorie level to find the recommendations for each food group.
- ▼ Use the pages that follow to see what the cup or ounce equivalents look like.

1 APPROX. DAILY CALORIES

	SEDENTARY	MOD. ACTIVE	ACTIVE
FEMALES			
19-30	2,000	2,200	2,400
31-50	1,800	2,000	2,200
51+	1,600	1,800	2,200
MALES			
19-30	2,400	2,800	3,000
31-50	2,200	2,600	3,000
51+	2,000	2,400	2,800

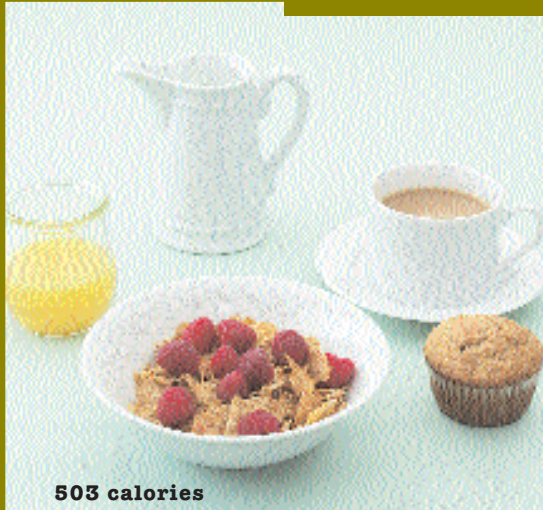
SEDENTARY = less than 30 minutes a day of moderate physical activity in addition to daily activities.
MODERATELY ACTIVE = 30 to 60 minutes a day.
ACTIVE = 60 or more minutes a day.

2 RECOMMENDED DAILY INTAKES BY PYRAMID GROUP FOR A RANGE OF CALORIE LEVELS

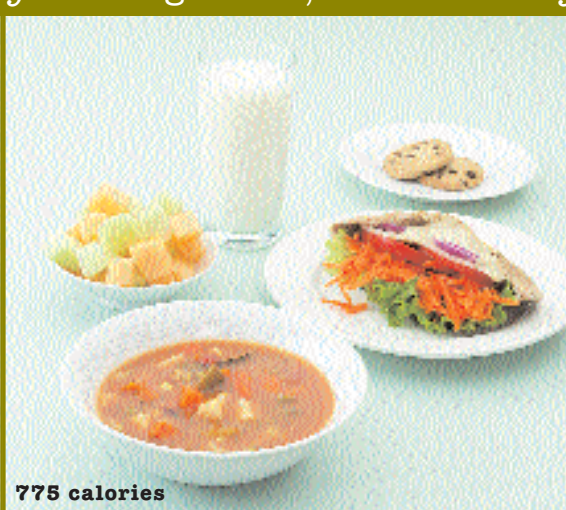
CALORIE LEVEL	1,600	1,800	2,000	2,200	2,400	2,600	2,800	3,000
GRAINS	5 oz.-eq.	6 oz.-eq.	6 oz.-eq.	7 oz.-eq.	8 oz.-eq.	9 oz.-eq.	10 oz.-eq.	10 oz.-eq.
VEGETABLES	2 cups	2½ cups	2½ cups	3 cups	3 cups	3½ cups	3½ cups	4 cups
FRUITS	1½ cups	1½ cups	2 cups	2 cups	2 cups	2 cups	2½ cups	2½ cups
MILK	3 cups	3 cups	3 cups	3 cups	3 cups	3 cups	3 cups	3 cups
MEAT & BEANS	5 oz.-eq.	5 oz.-eq.	5½ oz.-eq.	6 oz.-eq.	6½ oz.-eq.	6½ oz.-eq.	7 oz.-eq.	7 oz.-eq.
OILS	5 tsp.	5 tsp.	6 tsp.	6 tsp.	7 tsp.	8 tsp.	8 tsp.	10 tsp.
DISCRETIONARY CALORIES	132	195	267	290	362	410	426	512

These suggested food amounts are calculated to meet USDA recommended nutrient intakes. The contributions from each group are based on the "nutrient-dense" form of the food, without added fats or sugars (for example, lean meats, fat-free dairy products, grains with no added sugars).
DISCRETIONARY CALORIES are those remaining in the calorie total when all the food group portions and nutrients are consumed.

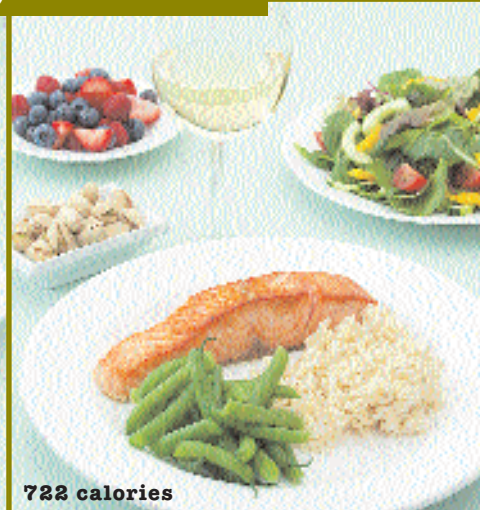
One Real Day's Eating on a 2,000-Calorie Pyramid Plan



503 calories



775 calories



722 calories

▲ breakfast

	CALORIES
4 oz. orange juice	60
1 cup whole-grain cereal	110
1 cup skim milk	90
¼ cup raspberries	15

▲ mid-morning snack

2 oz. whole-wheat blueberry muffin	218
coffee with 1 Tbsp. whole milk	10

▲ lunch

	CALORIES
1 cup tomato-based vegetable soup	110
½ whole-wheat pita pocket with 4 Tbsp. hummus	160
1 oz. low-fat Cheddar cheese	110
raw vegetable garnishes	90
25	
1 cup skim milk	90
1 cup mixed melon	64
2 small cookies	126

▲ dinner

	CALORIES
5 oz. dry white wine	100
1 oz. pistachios (24 nuts)	161
3 oz. salmon sautéed in olive oil	162
½ cup green beans	25
½ cup brown rice	110
2 cups mixed salad with 2 Tbsp. Italian dressing	35
84	
¾ cup mixed berries	45



For a 2,000-calorie plan, consume

6

ounces per day



approximately

80-100

calories each.


All items shown are examples of 1-ounce equivalents.

Grains

MyPyramid says:

“Make half your grains whole.”

EATINGWELL ADDS:

 Grains are the primary source of carbohydrates needed to fuel the body. Whole grains supply phytochemicals, important vitamins, minerals and fiber.

Eat more: Whole-wheat bread, brown rice, whole-wheat pasta, whole-grain cereals, old-fashioned oatmeal. Opt for choices with the least added fats and sugars.

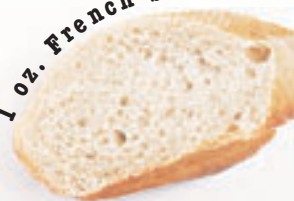
Eat less: White bread, white rice, white pasta, cereals with lots of added sugars or fats. Refined grains act like sugar in the body and supply few additional nutrients.

Seek out whole grains, which contain the fiber and nutrients of the bran and germ. Whole grains slow digestion, giving longer satisfaction after a meal.

5-inch corn tortilla



1 oz. French bread



1/2 whole-wheat English muffin



1 slice whole-wheat bread



Playing cards shown are for size reference.



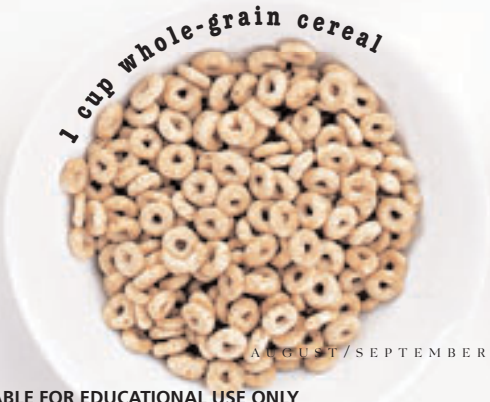
1/2 cup pasta



1/2 cup oatmeal



1 cup whole-grain cereal



1/2 cup brown rice



1 cup bran flakes



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Vegetables

MyPyramid says:

“Vary your veggies.”

EATINGWELL ADDS:

▲ Diets that include plenty of vegetables are consistently found to help prevent cancer, heart disease, stroke, elevated blood pressure and high cholesterol levels. They are the cornerstone of healthy weight maintenance, key to lowering the risk of type 2 diabetes.

Eat more: Colorful vegetables of every variety, such as tomatoes, peppers, carrots, broccoli, cauliflower, winter squash, beans and beets. Also include dark green leafy vegetables, such as spinach, kale, bok choy and leaf lettuces.

Eat less: Deep-fried vegetables, such as French fries and onion rings.

For a 2,000-calorie plan, consume

5

1/2 cups per day

▲
approximately

25-40

calories each.

All items shown are examples of 1/2-cup equivalents.

With vegetables, more is better. They offer the unbeatable combination of high volume and high nutrition with low calorie impact.

1/2 cup mixed vegetables



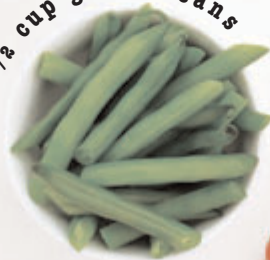
1 cup mesclun greens



1/2 cup carrots



1/2 cup green beans



1/2 cup tomatoes



1/2 cup broccoli



1 cup raw spinach



1/2 cup peppers



1/2 baked sweet potato





For a 2,000-calorie plan, consume

2
cups per day
▲
approximately
60-80
calories each.

All items shown are examples of 1-cup equivalents.

Eat plentiful amounts of fruits, remembering that juices often have the fiber benefits removed and dried fruits are calorie-dense.

Fruits

MyPyramid says:
“Focus on fruits.”

EATINGWELL ADDS:

▲ Fruits contribute excellent vitamins and fiber with little to no fat. In addition, they are packed with phytochemicals, including antioxidants, which work against a host of health conditions, from heart disease and stroke to certain types of cancer.

Eat more: Brightly colored fruits of all types in their fresh and natural form: cherries, cranberries, mangoes, bananas, apples, strawberries, plums, pineapple, grapes, all citrus fruits.

Eat less: Processed foods labeled as fruits, such as fruit drinks and fruit snacks. They are often laden with empty (nonnutritive) calories from high-fructose corn syrup and sugar.

4 oz. orange juice



1 cup strawberries



1/2 grapefruit

1 orange



2 tablespoons raisins

1 kiwi



1 cup mixed berries



1/2 cup applesauce



1 apple



1 cup melon





Milk

MyPyramid says:

“Get your calcium-rich foods.”

EATINGWELL ADDS:

▲ Calcium, along with other nutrients (like vitamin D, magnesium and phosphorus) is required for strong bones. Calling this group “Milk” may be misleading, because some nondairy foods can also fill this role.

Eat more: Low-fat or fat-free calcium-rich foods fortified with vitamin D. (Dark green leafy vegetables and calcium-fortified juices also help add calcium, but lack the protein benefits of dairy and soy and may not contain vitamin D.)

Eat less: Whole milk and full-fat yogurt and cheeses. (Butter, cream cheese, cream and other products made from dairy fat are considered Discretionary Calories, not Milk.)

For a 2,000-calorie plan, consume

3

cups per day



approximately

90-120

calories each.

All items shown are examples of 1-cup equivalents.



1 cup low-fat milk

1/2 cup low-fat cottage cheese



1 cup low-fat yogurt



1/3 cup shredded cheese



1 1/2 oz. reduced-fat cheese



8 oz. fortified soymilk



1/2 cup tofu*



Protein-rich vitamin-D-fortified calcium foods, along with weight-bearing exercise, will help prevent the onset of osteoporosis.

*To find tofu with added calcium, look for calcium sulfate in the ingredient list.



For a 2,000-calorie plan, consume

5 1/2

ounces per day

▲
approximately

165-225

calories per 3-ounce serving.

Most items shown are examples of 3-ounce servings.

Meat & Beans

(includes Poultry, Fish & Nuts)

MyPyramid says:

“Go lean with protein.”

EATINGWELL ADDS:

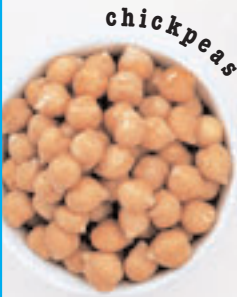
▲ The controversial name of this group, Meat & Beans, seems to slight the importance of poultry, fish and nuts. All are protein-rich foods that provide essential amino acids, vitamins and minerals needed for growth and cellular repair. Protein also provides satiety between meals. (Due to their caloric density, nuts are advisably eaten in smaller amounts.)

Eat more: Fish (especially omega-3-rich species like salmon), lean meats, poultry, beans and lentils.

Eat less: Fatty meats, deep-fried choices, restaurant-size portions.



*Eggs and nuts shown are 1-ounce servings.



1 1/2 cups cooked beans



1 tablespoon peanut butter*





For a 2,000-calorie plan, consume

6

teaspoons per day



approximately

40

calories per teaspoon.

Items shown are examples of 1-teaspoon equivalents.

liquid oils



mayonnaise

1 Tbsp. salad dressing

Oils

MyPyramid says:

“Know your fats.”

EATINGWELL ADDS:

▲ Vegetable oils in MyPyramid have been promoted to their own group, but solid fats are entirely within the tiny calorie allotment of Discretionary Calories.

Choose wisely: Monounsaturated vegetable oils (olive oil, canola oil, peanut oil, walnut oil) and polyunsaturated vegetable oils (corn oil, soybean oil, safflower oil) are considered healthy.

Avoid: Trans fats or partially hydrogenated vegetable oils found in many commercial baked goods and deep-fried restaurant foods. (Aim for zero trans fats in your diet.) Unless they are trans-fat-free, steer clear of most margarines and shortenings. Use solid fats (*see right*) sparingly.

1
tablespoon
hollandaise
sauce
43 calories

2
tablespoons
whipped
cream
52

2
tablespoons
half & half
40

1 tablespoon
butter
35

1 tablespoon
cream cheese
25

1 tablespoon
sour cream
31

Solid Fats

▲ Because they are saturated, solid fats are considered Discretionary Calories. Some plant fats are also included in the solid-fat category: palm oil, palm kernel oil, coconut oil and cocoa butter.

Discretionary Calories

▲ MyPyramid says: Discretionary Calorie allowances for adults are between 132 and 512 calories per day, depending upon age, gender and activity level. You can use your Discretionary Calorie allowance to:

- ▶ Eat more foods from any food group.
- ▶ Eat higher-calorie forms of foods—those that contain solid fats or added sugars.
- ▶ Add fats or sweeteners to foods.
- ▶ Eat or drink items that are mostly fats, sweeteners or alcohol.

ons
alf



1 oz.
pepperoni
141



2-inch
brownie
243



1 glazed donut 242



2
medium
cookies
160



1 oz. chips
152



1 oz. dark
chocolate
150

2 oz.
candy bar
265

20 oz.
energy
drink 151



20 oz.
soda 260



10
small
hard
candies
120



1 juice
pouch 90

20 oz.
juice
drink 25



5 oz. red wine
100



12 oz. beer
145



3 cheese
sticks 13

1 granola
bar 178

EATINGWELL ADDS:

▲ It doesn't take much to use up your Discretionary Calories each day. To increase your allowance, increase your daily total minutes of exercise—both to burn calories and to keep up strength and lean muscle mass. Beyond that, pick lower-calorie choices in other categories.

What about sodium? Aim for a sodium limit of 2,300 mg per day, approximately 1 teaspoon total of salt. Most whole foods are naturally low in sodium, but large amounts are often added to prepared and processed foods.



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