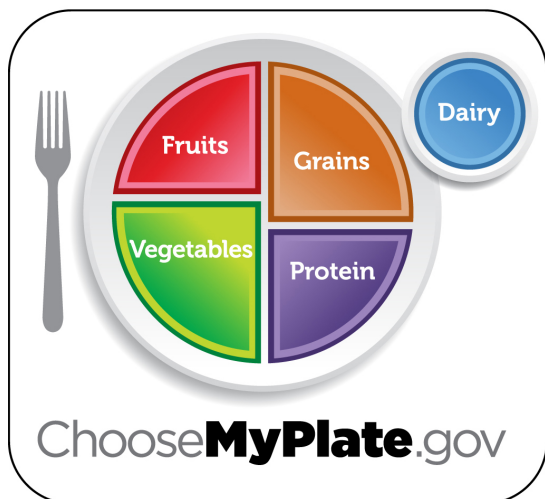


Snack Ideas for Preschoolers

Snack time is a part of every child's life. However, children often prefer cookies, soft drinks, juices, potato chips, candy, ice cream, and sandwich crackers at snack time. Although these foods are tasty, they are packed with empty calories, sugar, salt, and saturated fat. Instead pick nutrient rich foods as snack foods. Here are some tips to get started.

Aim for 2-3 food groups when snacking, limit snacking to 1-2 times per day, and consider healthy and delicious foods such as:

Food group	Snack serving size for preschoolers	Snack ideas from each food group
Fruits	$\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ cup	Apples, bananas, blueberries, grapes, kiwi, mangoes, oranges, peaches, pears, plums, strawberries, watermelon, 100% fruit juice (orange, apple, grape). Choose fresh, frozen, or dried fruits
Vegetables	$\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ cup	Artichokes, asparagus, broccoli, carrots, celery, corn, cucumbers, green beans, kale, potatoes, red peppers, spinach, squash, sweet potatoes, tomatoes. Choose fresh or frozen vegetables
Whole grains	$\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 ounce	Brown rice, brown rice cakes, oatmeal, quinoa, 100% whole-wheat bread, whole grain crackers, whole-wheat muffins, whole-wheat pita
Protein foods	1 tbsp to $\frac{1}{4}$ cup	Black beans, chickpeas, edamame, falafel, hardboiled egg, hummus, kidney beans, lentils, nuts, nut butters, soy beans, tofu
Dairy	4 to 6 ounces	Fat-free or 1% milk, low-fat yogurt, low-fat cottage cheese, reduced fat natural cheese



Choose snacks from the five main food groups presented on MyPlate

- ❖ Make half of the plate fruits and vegetables
- ❖ Choose foods with 3 or more grams of fiber per serving
- ❖ Avoid sugary drinks, serve water, 1% or fat-free milk with every snack
- ❖ Avoid oversized portions and serve snacks in smaller bowls and plates

Healthy snack ideas for preschoolers

- ❖ Serve 4 oz low-fat vanilla or plain yogurt in a small bowl, add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup strawberries or other fresh fruit, and top with 1 tbsp of granola
- ❖ Sandwich 1 oz low-fat frozen yogurt between two graham crackers and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sliced banana
- ❖ Make a rainbow with fresh vegetables such as carrots, broccoli, celery sticks, sliced red bell pepper and serve with 1 tsp of salad dressing or hummus for dipping
- ❖ Slice $\frac{1}{2}$ apple into wedges and add 1 tsp of peanut or almond butter on top. Sprinkle a pinch of cinnamon over the apple
- ❖ Make fruit and cheese kabobs with 1 oz reduced fat natural cheese cubes and your child's favorite fruit



Some foods, such as peanut/almond butter, chunks of meat, popcorn, carrot and celery sticks, whole grapes, and cherry tomatoes, are easy for the preschooler to choke on when swallowing them

- ❖ Always sit while eating
- ❖ Cut food into smaller pieces, approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ inch
- ❖ Spread only a thin layer of peanut/almond butter on bread or apple
- ❖ Slice grapes and cherry tomatoes in half



For more information on healthy snack ideas please visit these websites:

www.eatright.org/kids

www.kidshealth.org

www.choosemyplate.gov/preschoolers.html