

Portions & Single Servings

Supports: Building Block 6 — Portions & the Balanced Plate

Why It Matters

Knowing roughly how much of something makes a serving can help you feel satisfied without a lot of fuss or math. The good news is you carry a handy set of measuring tools with you everywhere: your own hands. Pairing a few simple visual cues with some grab-and-go options makes balanced eating easier on busy days. This is about ease and awareness, not strict counting or rigid rules.

What to Know

Let your hands be the guide

Hand cues travel with you and adjust to your body size, which makes them a friendly stand-in for measuring cups. Use them as a loose reference, not a rule to obey.

- A palm is a handy gauge for a protein portion like chicken, fish, or tofu.
- A cupped hand works for grains, starches, or fruit.
- A fist is an easy picture for a serving of vegetables — and piling on more of those is welcome.
- A thumb is a simple cue for fats like oils, nut butter, or cheese.

Let single-serve options do the work

Individually portioned foods take the guesswork out of a serving and are perfect for lunches, road trips, or a quick snack. Many nutritious choices come pre-packaged at the grocery store, so a balanced bite is ready when you are.

- Fresh and portable: whole fruits, pre-cut carrots and celery, unsweetened applesauce cups, or fruit cups packed in water or juice rather than heavy syrup.
- Protein-friendly: Greek or plain yogurt, cheese sticks, cottage cheese, hummus, tuna, or nut butter packets.
- Crunchy snacks: about a one-ounce pack of nuts, sunflower seeds, trail mix, pre-popped popcorn, or whole-grain crackers.
- Bars: many granola bars offer fiber and protein — a quick peek at the ingredient list helps you find one you like.

No counting needed. You do not have to weigh or tally anything. A quick glance at your hand and a few pre-portioned staples on hand are plenty to keep servings easy.

Try This

Think about how portions tend to go for you and where a simple cue or a grab-and-go option might help this week.

- ? Which hand cue feels most useful for the foods you eat most often?
- ? Where in your week — lunches, travel, afternoon slumps — would single-serve options make life easier?
- ? What are two or three ready-to-go items you would like to keep stocked?