

Three Off the Shelf

Five minutes, a pen, and three packages you already own. Nothing here is scored. You are reading what the label has been saying all along.

3

START HERE

Pull three packaged foods you buy often off your own shelf, any three. Everything asked for below is printed on them, so you can fill this in standing at the cupboard. Nothing gets added up and no line here is a grade; you are writing down what the package already says, once, on purpose.

WHERE TO LOOK ON THE PACKAGE

Serving size: near the top of the panel, in bold. Each number under it describes that one serving.

First ingredient: ingredients are listed by weight, heaviest first. The opening name is most of what is inside.

Servings per container: the line just above it. How many servings the whole package holds.

How many in all: count the names in the ingredient statement, not the allergen line below it.



WHAT THE LABEL SAYS

One column per package. Copy what is printed. These are observations, not verdicts.

FROM THE LABEL	PACKAGE ONE	PACKAGE TWO	PACKAGE THREE
What it is			
Serving size			
Servings per container			
First ingredient			
Ingredients in all			

THREE LINES TO FINISH, PICK ANY ONE OF YOUR THREE PACKAGES

Copy a phrase from the front of the package, word for word:

Now turn it over. What do the panel and the ingredient list say about that phrase?

The thing I did not know before I looked: