



# Unwrapped

Nutrition. Naturally.

# Seasonal Delights

A Tasty List of Seasonal Fruits and Veggies

Wondering what's in season? Take the guess work out of purchasing seasonal fruit by referring to this handy reference sheet before heading to the store or farmer's market!

Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall
December - February	March - May	June - August	September - November
Avocados	Asparagus	Apricots	Apples
Broccoli	Avocados	Beans	Broccoli
Brussel Sprouts	Beans	Beets	Brussel Sprouts
Cabbage	Beets	Berries	Cabbage
Cauliflower	Berries	Carrots	Chinese Cabbage
Grapefruit	Broccoli	Cherries	Cauliflower
Greens	Cabbage	Corn	Celery
Wild Mushrooms	Cucumbers	Cucumbers	Cranberries
Mandarin Oranges	Head Lettuce	Dates	Cucumbers
Sweet Oranges	Mangoes	Figs	Dates
Pears	Okra	Grapes	Grapes
Spinach	Sweet Oranges	Mangoes	Greens
Sweet Potatoes	Papayas	Melons	Head Lettuce
	Peas	Okra	Leaf Lettuce
	Sweet Peppers	Peaches	Mushrooms
	Rhubarb	Raspberries	Okra
	Spinach	Sweet Peppers	Mandarin Oranges
	Summer Squash	Plums	Pears
	Turnips	Strawberries	Sweet Peppers
		Summer Squash	Pomegranates
		Tomatoes	Spinach
		Watermelon	Winter Squash
			Sweet Potatoes



# Getting Your Fill

## Counting Up Fruits & Vegetables

A bunch of grapes, a head of lettuce, a broccoli floret, a handful of dried cranberries... nature provides fruits and vegetables in a variety of portion sizes. When tallying up your intake, think in terms of cups of fruits and vegetables. One cup is equal to the common measuring cup found in most kitchens — but there are a couple exceptions. This resource will help you determine what counts as one cup of fruit or vegetable.

### Vegetables

Tasty as snacks or lunch and dinner dishes, vegetables can be eaten raw, cooked or as juice. For the most part, one cup of raw or cooked vegetables, as well as one cup of 100 percent vegetable juice is equivalent to one cup of vegetables. The exception is that you'll need to eat two cups of raw leafy greens like collards, spinach, and romaine lettuce to equal one cup of vegetables.

### Fruits

One cup of fresh fruit and one cup of 100 percent fruit juice count as one cup of fruits. Dried fruits like raisins and prunes are a bit different. You only need eat  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of dried fruit to equal one cup from the fruit group.

## What is a Cup?

### One Cup of Fruit Equals:

1 cup 100% Fruit Juice

1 cup fresh/frozen/canned fruit

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup dried fruit

### One Cup of Vegetable Equals:

1 cup 100% Vegetable Juice

1 cup cooked/raw veggies

2 cups raw leafy greens



# Picking Your Produce

## Simple Tips to Streamline Shopping

It all looks so tasty and nutritious displayed in never-ending bins in the produce aisle or at the farmer's market. But how many times have you purchased the perfect looking produce only to be disappointed when you arrive home to discover it's overripe or bruised? Improve your produce shopping and storage skills with these simple tips.

**Red Bell Pepper:** Look for one with smooth, wrinkle-free skin and a rich green stem. Avoid peppers with blemishes. At home store the pepper in the vegetable drawer in your refrigerator for no more than seven days.

**Sweet Potato:** Search for firm potatoes without cracks, bruises, or abrasions. Skip any that are displayed in the refrigerated section of the produce aisle as refrigeration changes the flavor of the vegetable. Sweet potatoes are best stored in a cool, dry location for up to ten days.

**Eggplant:** Shop for small and immature eggplants as full-size eggplants may taste bitter. Then search for one at ideal ripeness. Gently press your thumb against the plant and release. If the flesh springs back the ripeness is ideal. It's overripe and mushy if it remains indented. Eggplants are highly perishable and should only be stored in a cool, dry location for up to two days from the time of purchase.

**Mango:** Pick a mango that emits a full, fruity aroma from the stem end of the fruit. This is an indication of ripeness. A ready-to-eat mango is also soft to the touch and can withstand gentle pressure when you press down on the skin. Store a ripe mango in the refrigerator for no more than a few days.

**Cantaloupe:** Finding a ripe cantaloupe is the key. Tap your hand on the melon and choose one with a hollow sound. A ripe melon will also emit a sweet, fruity smell from the end opposite the stem. An overripe melon will have a robust, full fruit odor. Once ripened or cut open, cantaloupe should be stored in a covered container in the refrigerator for no more than a few days.

**Pineapple:** These tasty fruits stop ripening at the time they are picked. Shop for pineapple that emits a sweet fruity smell from the stem end of the fruit. Watch for soft spots and avoid fruits that are discolored or dark in color as they may be past their prime. Store your pineapple at room temperature for up to two days upon purchase.

**Squash:** Shop for the small to mid-size squash as the larger version will likely have tough skin and taste dry. The skin is delicate so choose squash free from soft spots and abrasions. Store the squash in a plastic bag in the vegetable crisper for up to one week.



# Unwrap Produce

## Discover Good Nutrition

Look no further than under the peel of any fruit or vegetable for a host of vitamins, minerals, and other natural substances that promote good health. Low in calories these tasty snacks pack plenty of sound nutrition that will keep your energy levels soaring and may protect you from chronic diseases like high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease.

### Fiber

Known best for keeping our digestive tract working smoothly, dietary fiber is plentiful in many fruits and vegetables. Navy beans, kidney beans, chick peas, and artichokes are just a few that provide at least 20 percent of the fiber that most healthy American adults require daily.

### Vitamin C

Ask most folks to name a food high in vitamin C and the most frequent (and correct) response is some type of citrus fruit like oranges and grapefruit. Yet Vitamin C can be found in plenty of other fruits and vegetables including strawberries, sweet potatoes, cantaloupe, broccoli, and tomato juice. Choosing fruits and vegetables rich in vitamin C helps keep teeth and gums healthy and promotes wound healing.

### Potassium

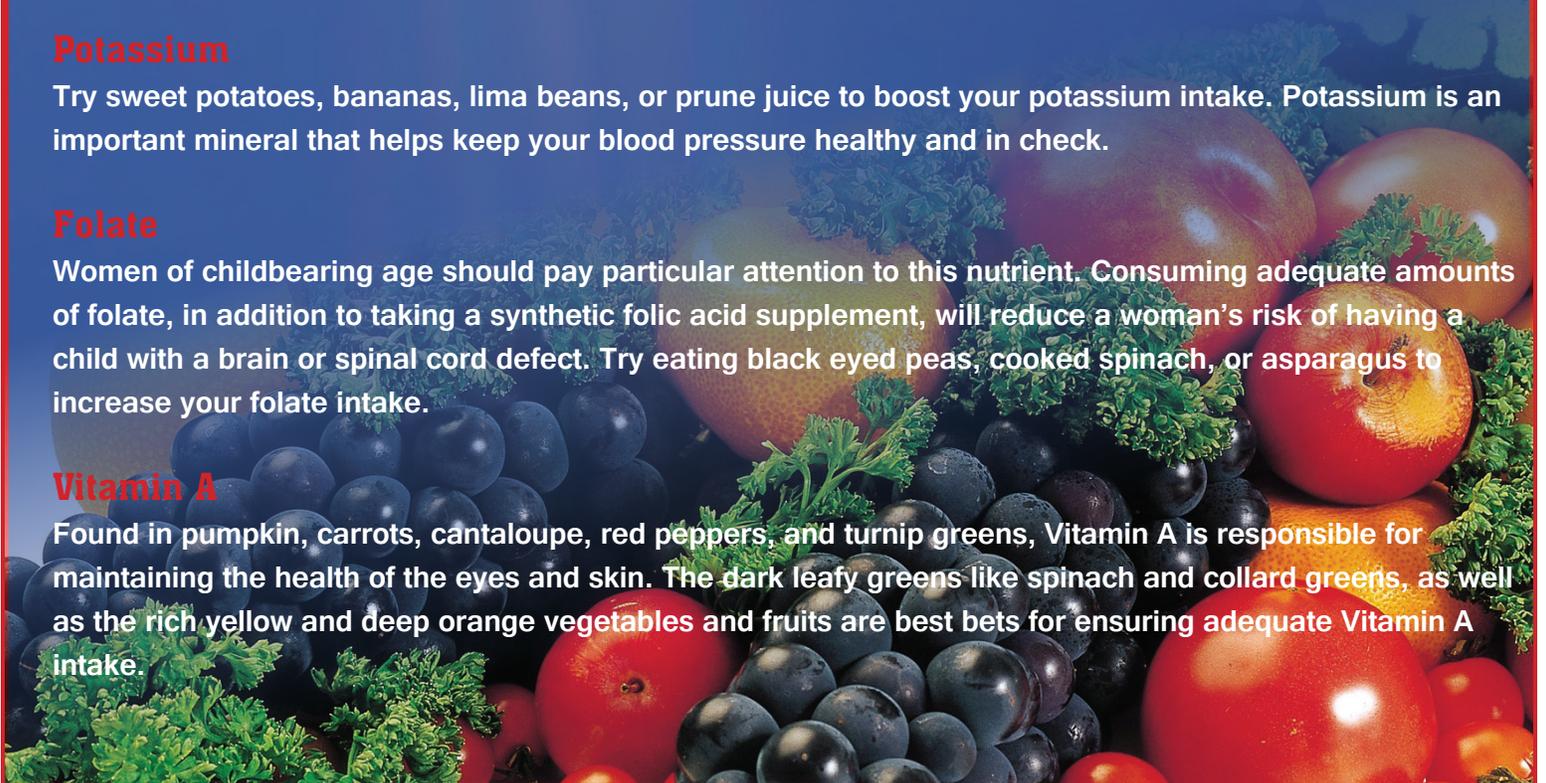
Try sweet potatoes, bananas, lima beans, or prune juice to boost your potassium intake. Potassium is an important mineral that helps keep your blood pressure healthy and in check.

### Folate

Women of childbearing age should pay particular attention to this nutrient. Consuming adequate amounts of folate, in addition to taking a synthetic folic acid supplement, will reduce a woman's risk of having a child with a brain or spinal cord defect. Try eating black eyed peas, cooked spinach, or asparagus to increase your folate intake.

### Vitamin A

Found in pumpkin, carrots, cantaloupe, red peppers, and turnip greens, Vitamin A is responsible for maintaining the health of the eyes and skin. The dark leafy greens like spinach and collard greens, as well as the rich yellow and deep orange vegetables and fruits are best bets for ensuring adequate Vitamin A intake.





# Surfing for Info

The internet can be a wonderful resource to assist you in developing a personal eating plan. But be careful, it is important to visit reputable sites to ensure you are getting the best and latest information available. The resources below are not provided as an endorsement, but rather to assist you as you begin surfing!

## [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov)

**Description:** This site is maintained by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and allows you to customize your nutrition plan based on factors including sex and age. One of the most comprehensive sites available, mypyramid.gov sticks to the facts about proper nutrition and is a great starting point to get a handle on serving sizes, daily calorie recommendations and healthy weight management.

## [www.fruitsandvegetablesmatter.gov](http://www.fruitsandvegetablesmatter.gov)

**Description:** Maintained by several public health agencies, this site is packed with shopping, storage and preparation tips for fruits and vegetables. It also includes a database of recipes.

## [www.nutrition.gov](http://www.nutrition.gov)

**Description:** Focused on the latest nutrition developments, nutrition.gov is provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Affiliated with mypyramid.gov, this site focuses on everything from cooking safely in your microwave to tips about lowering your cholesterol. This site also offers links to a wide-array of government developed websites related to nutrition.

# Fitting In A Few More

## Tips to Increase Your Intake

### Breakfast

- Enjoy banana slices on cereal.
- Mix blueberries or raspberries into yogurt.
- Sprinkle raisins on your oatmeal.
- Include a glass of 100% fruit juice with your breakfast fare.
- Toss diced green and red peppers into scrambled eggs.
- Top waffles with strawberries or peaches.

### Lunch

- Let a simple fruit salad complement your sandwich.
- Add veggies like onion, tomato, peppers, and lettuce to sandwiches.
- A salad isn't a salad until you top it with plenty of veggies like broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, or even raisins and chick peas.
- Kids love snack pack size desserts. Offer single serving applesauce, peaches, pears, or mandarin oranges. Choose fruit packed in water or unsweetened fruit juice.
- Single serving containers of baby carrots can be tossed into an insulated lunch bag.

### Dinner

- Make a habit of serving two vegetable options at dinner.
- Toss chopped broccoli, cauliflower and carrots into casseroles to boost the veggie content and enhance the flavor.
- Add extra veggies to stir fry recipes.
- Keep frozen veggies on hand to toss into the microwave for a quick steaming. They can move from freezer to microwave to table in less than five minutes.

### Snacks

- Quench your afternoon thirst with 100% tomato juice or a glass of cold 100% orange juice.
- Stash raisins, apples, bananas, and oranges in key places like a centerpiece bowl or in a desk drawer at work to make them accessible when hunger strikes.
- Raw vegetables and dip make a great appetizer for adults and kids.