

› Food categories

Foods and drinks have been classified into the following three categories according to their nutritional value. To promote healthy eating, schools should provide foods and drinks according to these categories:

- Everyday (green) foods
- Select Carefully (amber) foods
- Occasionally (red) foods.

There are also some foods and drinks that have been identified as not suitable to be supplied through school food services.

From 2007, high sugar content soft drinks should not be supplied through school food services. This includes energy drinks and flavoured mineral waters with high sugar content.

Confectionery is of minimal nutritional value and high in kilojoules. For this reason the sale of confectionery through school food services will be phased out from 2007–2009.

From 2009, no confectionery should be supplied through school food services.



The three food categories

Everyday

Foods and drinks in the Everyday category are most suitable for school food services.

Schools should:

- ✓ encourage and promote these foods
- ✓ provide a wide range of these foods every day
- ✓ include as the main choices on the canteen menu
- ✓ promote these foods as tasty, fresh and good value choices
- ✓ present these foods in attractive and interesting ways
- ✓ include as the main choices at school events and activities involving food.



Select Carefully

Foods and drinks in the Select Carefully category contain some valuable nutrients, but may also include unhealthy ingredients.

Schools should:

- ✓ not let these foods and drinks dominate the canteen menu
- ✓ serve in smaller sizes
- ✓ limit selling times.



Occasionally

Foods and drinks in the Occasionally category are not recommended for school food services.

These foods and drinks:

- ✓ should not be on the regular canteen menu
- ✓ should be supplied on no more than two occasions per term
- ✓ should not be regularly available in other areas of the school such as vending machines.



› Everyday category (green foods)

Foods and drinks from the Everyday category are consistent with the *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia* and are most suitable for school food services. Providing a wide range of these healthy foods is important for variety. Foods and drinks in this category should be promoted as tasty, fresh and good value choices. These foods should be included as part of the canteen menu wherever possible.

Foods and drinks in the Everyday category are based on the basic food groups and include:

- breads and cereals, rice, pasta, noodles
- vegetables
- fruits
- dairy foods – reduced or low-fat milk, yoghurt and cheese
- lean meat and poultry, fish, eggs, nuts* and legumes (dried beans and lentils)
- water.

These foods and drinks are the best choices because they:

- are often high in nutrients and fibre
- are low in saturated fat and/or added sugars and/or salt
- help to avoid an excess kilojoule intake.

Within this category even healthier choices can be made. Wholegrain breads and cereal products are higher in fibre, for example grainy bread, high-fibre breakfast cereals, air-popped popcorn.

Refer to the food guide tables on pages 16–24 for more information on foods and drinks in this category.

Water is also an important part of the Everyday category.



Checklist for EVERYDAY foods

- ✓ Include most often as the main choices on the canteen menu.
- ✓ Make available every day the canteen is open.
- ✓ Strongly encourage and promote these foods and drinks.
- ✓ Include as the main choices at school events and activities involving food and drink.

*Food allergies are the most common triggers for anaphylaxis (severe allergic reaction) in children. Eight foods cause 90 per cent of food allergies: peanuts, cow's milk, egg, wheat, soybean, tree nuts (for example, cashew), fish and shellfish. Schools should be aware of the risk of hidden allergens. Check your school's policy regarding students with severe allergies.

› Select Carefully category (amber foods)

Not all foods and drinks sit in the Everyday or Occasionally categories. In between are a range of foods and drinks that contain some valuable nutrients but may also have some unhealthy ingredients. These foods are included in the Select Carefully category.

Examples of foods and drinks in this category include:

- full-fat dairy foods – milk, yoghurt and cheese
- processed meats
- commercially prepared hot foods
- margarines, oils, spreads, sauces and gravies
- snack food bars (for example, breakfast bars, cereal bars, fruit bars)
- cakes, muffins, sweet biscuits, slices
- savoury snack foods and biscuits
- low or reduced-fat ice-creams, milk-based ice confections and dairy desserts
- ice blocks and ice slushees based on 100 per cent fruit juice
- drinks – 100 per cent fruit juices, some moderate-kilojoule sports waters
- artificially sweetened drinks
- some breakfast cereals (with added sugar and/or saturated fat and low fibre).

Foods and drinks on canteen-registered product buyer guides generally fall into the Select Carefully category. These foods should be selected carefully because they:

- are moderate in added fat and/or sugar and/or salt
- contribute to excess kilojoules if consumed in large serve sizes.
- provide some nutritional value.

Refer to the food guide tables on pages 16–24 for more information on foods and drinks in the Select Carefully category.

Note: Some of the food types listed above may fit into either the Select Carefully category or the Occasionally category. Read the labels and assess against the nutrient criteria for Occasionally foods. (Refer to page 13).



Checklist for SELECT CAREFULLY foods

- ✓ Do not let these foods and drinks dominate the menu.
- ✓ Avoid large serve sizes.
- ✓ Reduce the number of these foods on the canteen menu.
- ✓ Offer these foods only on certain days of the week or limit selling time.
- ✓ Select healthier choices within this category.
- ✓ Select choices of these foods that contain fruits and/or vegetables or serve with fruits and/or vegetables.
- ✓ Do not promote vigorously at the expense of foods and drinks from the Everyday category.

To help avoid large serve sizes:

- consider appropriate serve sizes for primary and secondary students – have 'mini' options and half-serves for lower primary-aged students
- limit juice and flavoured milk serves (refer to the food guide tables on pages 16–24)
- take serve sizes into consideration when packing, preparing and serving foods

Note: many food companies are now starting to offer child-appropriate serve sizes.



Special dietary requirements

Some students require special diets for medical reasons. The school principal, child's teacher or parents should provide advice of any special dietary needs to canteen staff.

Medical conditions that have special dietary requirements include:

- diabetes • coeliac disease • anaphylaxis.

Anaphylactic (severe) food allergy

Contact with certain foods can be fatal for people with allergies to these foods. The most common triggers of anaphylaxis are: peanuts, cow's milk, egg, wheat, soy, tree nuts (for example, cashews), fish and shellfish. The Department of Education & Training has guidelines for schools to support students with anaphylaxis.

For more information, go to: www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/wellbeing/support/anaphyl.htm.

Absolute and strict avoidance of nuts and nut products is extremely important for anyone with an anaphylactic nut allergy.

Canteen staff need to be well aware of students with such allergies and familiar with the school's management strategies for these students.

For detailed information on special dietary requirements refer to 'Go for your life' Healthy Canteen Kit – Canteen Manual, page 9.

› Occasionally category (red foods)

Foods and drinks in this category are not consistent with the *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia* and are not suitable for school food services.

Foods and drinks in this category are based on the 'extra foods' as defined in the *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating* and include:

- sugar-sweetened drinks – sports drinks, cordial, fruit-flavoured drinks
- deep-fried foods
- pastry-based or crumbed hot foods
- savoury snack foods – crisps, chips, biscuits and other similar products
- ice-creams, ice confections and dairy desserts, for example chocolate-coated and premium ice-creams, icy-poles
- cakes, muffins, sweet biscuits, slices, bars, donuts, danishes, croissants
- cream, butter, copha and chocolate spreads.

These foods and drinks are the least suitable as, generally, they:

- are very low in nutritional value
- are high in saturated fat and/or added sugar and/or added salt
- provide excess kilojoules.



Foods and drinks which fit into the Occasionally (red foods) category should be supplied on no more than two occasions per term.

There are many foods and drinks that may fall into either the Occasionally category or the Select Carefully category. Read the labels and assess against the nutrient criteria for an Occasionally food. The food guide tables on pages 16–24 provide more information on the types of foods that fall into the Occasionally category.

From 2007, high sugar content soft drinks should not be supplied through school food services. This includes energy drinks and flavoured mineral waters with high sugar content.

Confectionery is of minimal nutritional value and high in kilojoules. For this reason the sale of confectionery through school food services will be phased out from 2007–2009.

From 2009, no confectionery should be supplied through school food services.

How to identify foods and drinks in the Occasionally category

The following tables list a set of nutrient criteria* for certain types of foods and drinks that may fall under the Occasionally category.

These nutrient criteria tables are a useful tool to determine if a particular food fits into either the Select Carefully category or Occasionally category.

There are nutrient criteria for two types of food groupings:

- hot food items
- snack foods and drinks.

These food types are the most likely to fit into the Occasionally category. Food types such as fruit and vegetables do not require assessing against nutrient criteria as these foods are usually in the Everyday category.

The nutrient criteria have been developed specific to each food category's characteristics.

Note that:

- total fat and sugar have not been included within the nutrient criteria. A total kilojoule (energy) criteria limit has been set, which indirectly limits the amount of fat and sugar that can be included in a food
- hot foods are assessed per 100 grams to allow for the wide variation in serve sizes within this group
- snack foods and drinks are assessed per serve as this grouping is generally pre-packaged into individual serves
- in the snack foods and drinks category large serve sizes and excess energy intake have been addressed by limiting the kilojoule content per serve.

**Based on the Fresh Tastes @ School, NSW Healthy School Canteen Strategy Occasional Food Criteria.*



Nutrient criteria for Occasionally foods

If the food item you are considering has **more** than the number specified in the energy, saturated fat or sodium column, or **less** than the number in the fibre column, it is an Occasionally food.

Hot food items (assessed per 100 g)

FOOD	ENERGY (KJ) PER 100 G	SATURATED FAT (G) PER 100 G	SODIUM (MG) PER 100 G
Savoury pastries, pasta, oven-baked potato products	>1000 kJ	>5 g	>400 mg
Crumbed and coated foods, frankfurts, sausages	>1000 kJ	>5 g	>700 mg

Based on the Fresh Tastes @ School, NSW Healthy School Canteen Strategy Occasional Food Criteria.

Note: All types of deep-fried foods fit into the Occasionally category and are not recommended for supply in schools as they are too high in kilojoules and fat.

Snack foods and drinks (assessed per serve)

FOOD OR DRINK	ENERGY (KJ) PER SERVE	SATURATED FAT (G) PER SERVE	SODIUM (MG) PER SERVE	FIBRE (G) PER SERVE
Sweetened drinks and ices*	>300 kJ		>100 mg	
Snack food bars and sweet biscuits	>600 kJ	>3 g		<1.0 g
Savoury snack foods and biscuits	>600 kJ	>3 g	>200 mg	
Ice-creams, milk-based ice confections, dairy desserts	>600 kJ	>3 g		
Cakes, muffins, sweet pastries	>900 kJ	>3 g		<1.5 g

Based on the Fresh Tastes @ School, NSW Healthy School Canteen Strategy Occasional Food Criteria.

*The sweetened drinks and ices category applies to cordials, fruit-flavoured drinks, sports drinks, sports waters, ice blocks and ice confections.

Example 1

Following is an example of an assessment of a hot food using the nutrient criteria for Occasionally foods.

- This food product is a hot food, so refer to the nutrient criteria for hot foods (see page 13, Crumbed and coated foods, frankfurts and sausages).
- Refer to the per 100 G column on the food label for assessing hot foods.
- Compare the nutrients on the food product label with the corresponding nutrient values in the nutrient criteria table on the previous page.

CRUMBED CHICKEN FILLET BURGER	PER 120 G SERVE	PER 100 G
Energy	1176 kJ	980 kJ
Protein	17.4 g	14.5 g
Fat – total – saturated	15.8 g 4.1 g	13.2 g 3.4 g
Carbohydrates – total – sugars	18.3 g 0.2 g	15.3 g 0.2 g
Sodium	734 mg	612 mg

Energy: 980 kJ per 100 g is less than (<) 1000 kJ

Fat, saturated: 3.4 g sat. fat per 100 g is less than (<) 5 g

Sodium: 612 mg sodium per 100 g is less than (<) 700 mg

The result is as follows:

- **Energy:** 980 kJ per 100 g is less than (<) 1000 kJ.
- **Fat, saturated:** 3.4 g sat. fat per 100 g is less than (<) 5 g.
- **Sodium:** 612 mg sodium per 100 g is less than (<) 700 mg.

These values are all less than the nutrient criteria; therefore this food is **not** an Occasionally food and can be included in the Select Carefully category.



Example 2

Following is an example of an assessment of a snack food using the nutrient criteria for Occasionally foods.

- This food product is a snack food so refer to the nutrient criteria (page 13) for snack foods (Savoury snack foods and biscuits).
- Refer to the per serve column on the food label for assessing snack foods and drinks.
- Check if the specified serve size on the label is your canteen's actual serve size. Assess the serve size as served in your canteen, for example the serve listed on the food label may be sixteen biscuits, whereas your canteen may bag up twenty biscuits.
- Compare the nutrients on the food product label with the corresponding nutrient values in the nutrient criteria table on page 13.

BAKED SAVOURY BISCUIT	PER SERVE (16 BISCUITS, 35 G)	PER 100 G	
Energy	770 kJ	2195 kJ	Energy: 770 kJ per serve is greater than (>) 600 kJ
Protein	5.2 g	14.8 g	
Fat – total – saturated	8.8 g 3.9 g	25.1 g 11.1 g	Fat, saturated: 3.9 g sat. fat per serve is greater than (>) 3 g
Carbohydrates – total – sugars	20.4 g 1.1 g	58.1 g 3.2 g	
Fibre	1.4 g	4.0 g	
Sodium	238 mg	678 mg	Sodium: 238 mg sodium per serve is greater than (>) 200 mg.

The result is as follows:

- **Energy:** 770 kJ per serve is greater than (>) 600 kJ
- **Fat, saturated:** 3.9 g sat. fat per serve is greater than (>) 3 g
- **Sodium:** 238 mg sodium per serve is greater than (>) 200 mg.

This snack food product at this serving size is not within the nutrient criteria and therefore falls in the Occasionally category. Do not include these biscuits on the menu and look for a healthier choice.

