

# UNDERSTANDING THE EATWELL PLATE



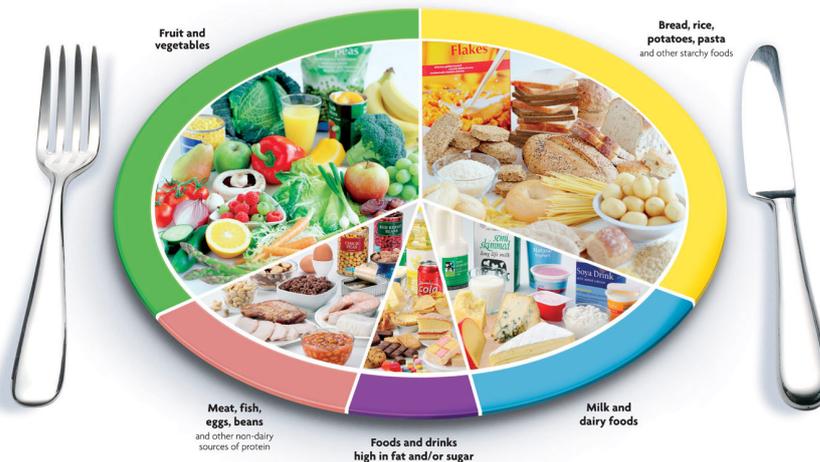
## The eatwell plate

Use the eatwell plate to help you get the balance right. It shows how much of what you eat should come from each food group.



### WHAT IS IT?

The eatwell plate was designed by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) as a visual guide to show you how much of each food group you should be eating in order to have a balanced diet.



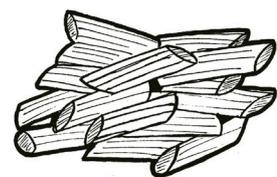
### WHAT FOOD GROUPS MAKE UP THE EATWELL PLATE?

As a general rule, an average meal should be made up of one-third carbohydrates and one-third fruit and vegetables, with the remaining one-third split between dairy, protein and a little bit of fat.

#### Carbohydrates

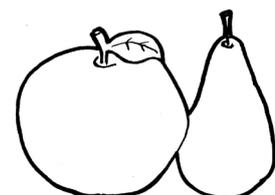
*Bread, pasta, grains, cereals, rice, couscous, potatoes*

Carbohydrates are starchy foods and should make up one-third of your plate as they help to fill you up. Try to eat wholegrain varieties where possible because once broken down, they are released into the bloodstream more slowly, giving you energy for longer.



#### Fruit and vegetables

Fruit and veg should make up a third of your daily food intake and if you're having your 5 a day (see *Getting your 5 a day*), that should be easily achievable. Try to eat a variety and mix up the colours – darkly-coloured fruit and veg contain more antioxidants, which are great for your health. Fruit and vegetables have different nutritional benefits so you should eat as much variety as possible.



Produce that is in season where you are will taste a million times better than stuff that has been flown in from another part of the world, so vary your choices accordingly throughout the year.

### Dairy foods

*Butter, yoghurt, cream, cheese, milk*

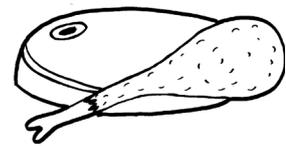
The calcium you get from dairy foods is really important for strong bones and healthy teeth, but as these foods are generally quite high in fat they should only be enjoyed in small quantities.



### Protein (non-dairy)

*Meat, fish, eggs, beans, lentils, pulses nuts or other vegetable protein*

Protein is a vital part of your diet because it is essential for growth and repair of body tissue. You only need a small amount to get all the benefits, and you should try to eat high-quality protein. Aim for a diet packed with beans, pulses and lentils, and good-quality meat and fish rather than meat or fish that has been deep-fried or battered in breadcrumbs!



### Foods and drinks high in fat and/or sugar

*Cakes, crisps, chocolate, sweets, fizzy drinks*

It probably won't come as a shock to hear that the things in this food group should only be enjoyed occasionally. A diet packed with these foods will lead to weight gain and put you at higher risk of diabetes, cancer and heart disease. Foods in this group also create an instant 'sugar high' or energy rush. If the body becomes accustomed to this feeling it can become dependent on it, and then you risk becoming trapped in a cycle of highs and lows where you're constantly craving sugary foods.

