



# Building a Balanced Plate

*A simple, flexible way to eat well most of the time*

You do not need a complicated plan to eat well. The UK Eatwell model shows the balance of foods that supports energy, health and performance. Use it as an everyday guide rather than a set of strict rules. Aim to get it right most of the time, and leave room for the foods you enjoy.

## The five food groups, and how much

| Food group            | Roughly how much                 | On your plate                                                                    |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Fruit and vegetables  | About a third (aim for 5+ a day) | Fresh, frozen, tinned or dried. Go for a range of colours.                       |
| Starchy carbohydrates | Just over a third                | Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta. Choose wholegrain and keep potato skins on.        |
| Protein               | Some at every meal               | Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, lean meat. Aim for 2 portions of fish a week, 1 oily. |
| Dairy or alternatives | Some each day                    | Lower-fat, lower-sugar options. A good source of calcium.                        |
| Oils and spreads      | Small amounts                    | Unsaturated oils such as olive, rapeseed and sunflower.                          |

## Build a better plate

- Fill about half your plate with vegetables and some fruit.
- Make starchy foods wholegrain where you can, for more fibre and fullness.
- Include a protein source at every meal to support muscle and keep you satisfied.
- Choose unsaturated oils, and keep fried and sugary foods occasional.
- Drink 6 to 8 glasses of fluid a day. Limit fruit juice and smoothies to a combined 150 ml.

## Quality counts, not just calories

Three cups of raw broccoli and two doughnuts have a similar number of calories, but they do very different things for your hunger and health. Nutrient-dense foods with fibre and protein keep you fuller for longer, which makes eating well feel easier. Protein even costs more energy to digest than carbohydrate or fat.

*Balance beats perfection. No single food makes or breaks a diet. Aim for this pattern most days, enjoy treats in smaller amounts, and let consistency do the work.*

**Where to learn more:** the NHS Eatwell Guide, the British Nutrition Foundation, and the British Dietetic Association (BDA). For personalised advice, or if you have a health condition, please speak to your GP or a registered dietitian.

*This leaflet is general nutritional guidance for education only. It is not medical advice, diagnosis or treatment, and it does not replace advice from your GP or a registered dietitian. Always check with a qualified professional before making significant changes, particularly if you have a health condition, are pregnant, or take medication.*

**Ready to take the next step?** Book a free call or start your food diary analysis at [performancenutritionlondon.co.uk](https://performancenutritionlondon.co.uk)