

KICK START WITH BREAKFAST

THE BALANCE OF BREAKFAST

The first meal of the day is for many, the best meal of the day. Savoury or sweet, there are so many ways to start the day well. A balanced breakfast can set us up for the day ahead, providing and maintaining energy levels, improving concentration, staving off hunger till lunch and nourishing our body and minds.

But what is a balanced breakfast, and how can we best feed our potential?

Building a healthy balanced breakfast is as easy as 1-2-3 -

1. Wholegrains

Wholegrain complex, starchy carbohydrates are full of fibre, which helps to provide slow release energy throughout the morning, as well as keeping you fuller for longer, quite literally keeping you going till lunch! The inclusion of fibre within the diet also has proven benefits for gut health, heart health disease prevention and maintaining healthy cholesterol levels.

Examples – wholegrain toast or bread options, oats, and whole-wheat sugar-and-salt-free cereals such as bran, Weetabix, mueslis and shredded wheat make ideal breakfast centrepieces upon which to build a healthy first meal. Potatoes are also incredibly versatile, especially if you have a little more time for a lazy weekend breakfast – why not try our Mushroom and Potato Hash with Poached egg next Saturday morning?

2. Protein

Protein is the “building block” of the body, mostly used for cell and muscle function, growth and repair. Including a protein source at breakfast helps to keep you full all morning, maintaining a steady appetite, staving off those mid-morning hunger pangs and unsolicited trips back and forth to the biscuit tin. In turn, a protein-and-fibre packed breakfast can lead us to make healthier dietary choices for the rest of the day, too.

Examples - Eggs are hailed as the reigning breakfast champion, and with good reason - a great source of protein, but also full of vitamins and minerals such as Vitamin D, great for muscle and bone health, as well as helping us to absorb calcium, as well as B Vitamins and iodine.

Smoked mackerel mixed with a spoonful of yoghurt makes a gorgeous mackerel pate to top some toasted sourdough, as well as providing a hefty hit of heart-and-brain healthy Omega 3's.

For those with a sweet tooth, natural or Greek yoghurt makes a great addition to some Weetabix, while milk is an ideal breakfast-smoothie-base. For vegans, baked beans provide a great morning protein-hit. Seitan crumbles and tofu scramble are also an easy, nutritious and delicious start.

3. Portion of fruit or veg

While we are told to aim for 5 -7 a day, consider this a minimum – research shows that the more fruit and veg we eat, the better for our health, so aim to include a variety of different fruit and veg throughout the day every day. The list of health benefits is endless – from vitamins to minerals, fruit and veg can boost flavour, meal size and even hydration levels.

Examples - At breakfast, the sky is the limit. Berries on top of porridge or yoghurt, cereals or wholewheat pancakes, or in smoothies with bananas, oats and a milk option.

Running a handful of spinach, cherry tomatoes and mushrooms through your beans is an easy way to boost health benefits as well as breakfast volume for big-eaters.

Spinach can sneakily hide in smoothies, while cherry tomatoes on top of scrambled egg with some rocket and feta, and finished with rocket and a lemon wedge is a super-simple way to make your breakfast go from mundane to Michelin (almost!)

Why not check out our balanced breakfast recipes, a Mushroom and Potato Hash with Poached Egg, or super-easy Mexican Beans on Wholegrain Toast, and start your day as you mean to go on!

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