

# Child Feeding Guide

## Age 3 to 5 Years

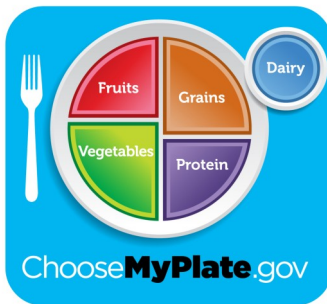
At this age, parents often become concerned about their child's eating habits. Children often:

- eat few meats
- eat slower
- are easily distracted
- eat few vegetables
- request lots of sweets
- ask for the same food over and over
- are picky



### Tips for Developing Healthy Eating Habits

- Keep a variety of healthy foods on hand to offer your child.
- Offer small portions and allow your child to stop eating when full.
- Offer 4 ounces or less of juice each day.
- Choose 1% or fat-free milk and low-fat dairy foods.
- Use water as the drink of choice between meals. Too many sweet drinks including juice may lead to poor eating.
- Offer praise, hugs, or fun activities rather than food as rewards.
- Go to [ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://ChooseMyPlate.gov) for more information.



### Family Meals

Start early with family meals to help your child develop better eating habits. Family meals will:

- Help your child be more accepting of new foods.
- Help your child develop social skills.
- Result in a lower risk for obesity.
- Help your child have better grades in school.



### Preparing for Meal Time

- Have meals and snacks at regular times.
- Keep mealtime pleasant.
- Allow your child to self feed with a spoon or fork.
- Limit distractions by turning off the TV.
- To meet all your child's needs, 5-6 small meals per day is best.
- It takes 8-10 tries before a child may accept a new food.

### Tips for Preventing Choking

Foods that are firm, smooth, slippery or round can cause problems.

- Always watch your child when eating.
- Encourage your child to sit while eating.
- Cut foods into child size pieces.



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### Feeding Guide

<u>Food</u>	<u>Portion size</u>	<u>Servings per day</u>
<b>Milk and Dairy</b>	½ - ¾ cup (4 - 6 oz)	3 - 4
<b>Meats</b>	2 - 4 tablespoons	2 - 4
<b>Fruits and Vegetables</b>	3 - 4 tablespoons	4 - 5
<b>Grains -</b>		3 - 4
<b>bread</b>	1 slice	
<b>cereals</b>	½ cup	

### Portion-Size Guide

1 cup = baseball



½ cup = ½ baseball



2 tablespoons = golf ball



### Sample Menu

#### Breakfast

½ cup cereal  
6 oz low-fat milk  
4 oz juice  
3 - 4 tablespoons fruit

#### Lunch

½ turkey sandwich  
4 tablespoons cooked  
    vegetables  
½ banana  
Water

#### Dinner

2 - 4 tablespoons cooked meat  
4 tablespoons cooked vegetables  
½ cup rice or pasta  
6 oz low-fat milk

#### Snack

4 crackers with low-fat cheese  
Water

#### Snack

½ cup low-fat yogurt  
3 - 4 tablespoons fruit

Snacks should be offered midway between meals.



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