

Serving Size Visuals

It is not only important to watch the quality of foods you are eating, it is important to watch how much you are eating too. It is possible to over-eat even healthy food choices, which can lead to excess calories, weight gain and other health issues. However, measuring serving sizes doesn't need to be a complicated task.

Use these everyday objects as visuals to guide how much food you are putting on your plate and as an easy way to keep your serving sizes (and waistline!) in check.

Serving Size	Visual
1 cup of fruits (1 medium fruit) or vegetables or whole grains	Baseball, tennis ball, yo-yo, 1 fist, or ice cream scoop
½ cup	2 golf balls, 7 cotton balls, ½ baseball, light bulb, or a billiard ball
3 ounces of beef, poultry or fish	A dollar bill, a deck of cards, checkbook, an iPod, mini pack of tissues, audio cassette tape, box of 8 crayons, 2-3 CDs (for sliced meat), or outstretched palm
1 ounce of meat	½ cup cooked beans, 1 egg, 2 tablespoons of peanut butter, base of tea cup
1 pancake	CD/DVD
1 baked potato	Computer mouse or 1 medium fist
1 piece of bread	1 cassette tape or index card
1 piece of cornbread or a roll	1 bar of soap
2 tablespoons of peanut butter	Ping pong ball
1 teaspoon of olive oil	Standard postage stamp
1 teaspoon of margarine	1 dice or finger tip
1 ounce of cheese	3 dice
1 ½ ounce of hard cheese	4 dice, 3 dominos, 9 volt battery, or index and middle finger
1 ounce of nuts	1 handful or 1 golf ball
1 ounce of chips or pretzels	2 handfuls

Smart Sack-Lunching

Use the sizes of plastic lunch bags to your advantage. By portioning food out prior to eating (versus eating directly out of the container), you can keep from over-eating or binging. The different sizes are great for different purposes; here are some ideas:

Snack-Size: for just that, snacks! The size of these bags holds the right amount of food for one snack. Here are some healthy snacks that fit in perfectly:

- A small handful of unsalted pretzels
- ½ cup grapes
- ½ cup baby carrots
- ¼ cup dried fruit and nut mix
- 4 celery sticks with 2 tablespoons of peanut butter
- ½ cup whole grain cereal or granola

Sandwich-Size: These are the perfect size to hold your favorite healthy sandwiches, but avoid using this bag to pack snacks, as they are larger than one portion size. Here are some healthy sandwiches to pack in your next lunch:

- 1 teaspoon low fat mayo, ½ cup sliced tomato, ¼ avocado, 2 slices low sodium lean turkey breast on two slices of pumpernickel bread
- 1 tablespoon brown mustard, ¼ cup sliced bell peppers, ¼ cup fresh spinach, 1 slice reduced fat, low sodium Swiss cheese, and 2 slices low sodium roasted chicken breast
- 2 tablespoons almond butter, 1 sliced banana, two slices of whole grain bread
- Two slices of whole grain bread, ½ sliced avocado, 2 slices of tomato, 1 teaspoon low-fat mayo

Quart-Size: These bags are great for storing leftovers or for portioning out meals in advance. One bag holds the equivalent of:

- 4 servings of lean meat or fish
- 4 servings of fruits or vegetables
- 8 servings of pasta, rice or other whole grains
- 4 servings of whole grain bread
- 4 servings of soup

Gallon-Size: Use these for storage and portioning needs; they are especially great for storing frozen food and leftovers. Here are some foods that freeze well in gallon bags:

- Fruit
- Vegetables
- Lean ground meat
- Vegetable or fruit purees and soups
- Beans