



Nutrition

Importance for Football

As a developing footballer, it is important that you eat properly in order to get the most out of your training, perform to your full potential during games and recover properly.

Food is fuel. What you eat and drink *before, during* and *after* training and games will influence your performance and recovery.

By eating and drinking the right foods and fluids you will be able to perform to *your full potential* and both yours and the *teams* performance will *improve*.

Football isn't just a 90 minute sport, the food choices you make every day contributes to your development. Start making the right choices and make nutrition a part of your [lifestyle](#) and [not a chore!](#)

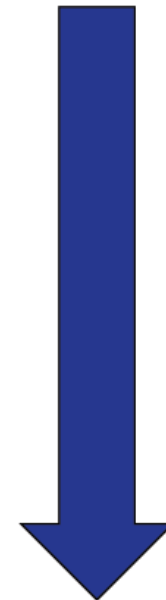




Long Term Nutritional Model

Importance for development

Age Groups	Nutrition Development model
U7/U9s	Eat to develop
U10/U11s	Learn to eat
U12/U14s	Eat to grow
U15/U16s	Eat to grow
U17/U18s	Eat to train



Each age group represents a different stage in regards to a player's nutritional strategy. These are in line with how each age group is progressing physically. As a developing player your nutritional [lifestyle](#) is important if you are going to progress!



General Guidelines

"A Healthy and Balanced Diet"



A healthy and balanced diet means just that.

- Try to eat a variety of foods – including 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day
- It is important to drink plenty of fluid throughout the day (~2 litres of water / squash / cordial per day)
- Make sure your meals look colourful! (add plenty of vegetables and salad)



You should eat plenty of carbohydrates and protein and avoid fatty foods.

- **Carbohydrate** is your body's main fuel source and is found in *pasta, bread, potatoes and rice*
- **Protein** is important to help you recover by repairing your muscles and is found in meat and dairy products such as *chicken, fish, milk, yoghurt and also nuts*
- Generally avoid fatty food. Some **good fats**, however, are essential for health – these are found in *peanut butter, nuts, seeds and olive oil*.





General Advice

Make Good Choices!



Breakfast:

- Try and go for wholegrain cereals and bread. Avoid sugary cereals and concentrated fruit juices



Lunch:

- Concentrate on mainly carbohydrate and protein based foods with plenty of vegetables or salad





General Advice

Make Good Choices!



Dinner:

- Concentrate on mainly protein with a portion of wholegrain carbohydrates and add plenty of colour!



Snacks:

- Focus on fruit and low fat and low sugar foods and avoid sweets and cakes





Training

What to Eat Before and After Training?

It's important that you eat before training to fuel to activities that you will be doing

- Try to eat at least an hour before training
- Have a small meal or snack
- Make sure you have plenty of fluid and take a drink to training with you (**Water or Sugar Free Squash**)
- If you've eaten properly then there is **NO NEED** to drink a carbohydrate sports drink during training

G	Fruit Smoothie
O	Flap Jack
O	Low fat Yoghurt
D	Sandwich (on wholemeal bread) Tortilla Wrap

A	Sports Drinks
V	Fizzy Drinks
O	Jelly Sweets/ Chocolate
I	Big Meals
D	

After training you need to refuel and repair you muscles

- Make sure you eat some form of carbohydrate and protein
- A snack straight after training and then a meal when you get home would be ideal

G	Fruit / Fruit Smoothie
O	Low Fat Milkshake/Chocolate Milk
O	Protein Shake / Bar
D	Flapjack

A	Cakes / Biscuits / Sweets
V	Fizzy Drinks
O	Crisps
I	FAST FOOD (McDonald's etc)
D	



Matches

What to Eat Before a Match?

Nutritional match preparation starts *the day before a game*

- Eat plenty of carbohydrate foods the day before a game
- Concentrate on wholegrain foods that release energy slowly (brown bread, wholegrain pasta / rice)

G	Wholegrain Pasta/ Rice
O	Baked Potato's
O	Grilled Chicken / Baked Fish/ Tuna
D	Baked Beans

A	Mashed Potato
V	Chips
O	Greasy Burgers
I	
D	Red Meat

Your pre-match meal is all about topping up your energy stores

- If you play in the morning, make sure you have a high carbohydrate breakfast and plenty of fluid
- If you play in the afternoon, make sure you get some protein at breakfast and a high carbohydrate meal 2-3 hours before the game
- If you play an **Away** game try and have breakfast before you leave the house and bring a carbohydrate snack to have during the coach/car journey. Try and consume snacks within ~1.5 hours of kick off while drinking plenty of fluid

G	Porridge / Muesli
O	Scrambled / Poached eggs
O	Grilled Chicken with wholemeal pasta
D	and a low-fat, tomato-based sauce

A	Sugary Cereals
V	Sports Drinks / Jelly Sweets /
O	Chocolate
I	Roast Dinners
D	FAST FOOD (McDonald's etc)



Matches

What to Eat After a Match?



During the game

- It's important that you drink plenty of fluid – water, squash or cordial is fine
- Carbohydrate Sports Drinks are **OK** for half-time and during the 2nd half

After a game you need to repair your muscles and replenish energy stores

- It is important to consume high carbohydrate and protein based foods within the first hour following a game
- This is especially important for commencing training sessions after matches to be able to perform to the best of your ability
- It is understandable you may not like eating straight after a game which is why it is important you take on board some carbohydrates & protein in a form of liquid (*Chocolate Milk is a perfect recovery drink*)

G	Carbohydrate Sports Drink/ Banana/
O	Chocolate Milk (300-500ml)
O	Pasta / Baked Potato / Rice
D	Protein Shake / Bar
	Chicken / Tuna Sandwich / Pasta
	Eggs / Baked Beans

A	Chips
V	Burgers
O	Pies / Pastries
I	Fizzy Drinks
D	Fast Food



Match Day Nutrition

Breakfast – 2.5 hours Before Kick Off (8:00am)

(Make sure to stay hydrated from when you wake up until Kick Off, Fruit Juices, Water, Squash)

Porridge with semi skimmed milk + Banana & Greek

Yoghurt

OR

Scrambled egg or Poached eggs with Baked Beans on 2 pieces of wholemeal toast

It is important to have a meal containing high carbohydrates and include a source of protein before a match.

IMPORTANT – You need to be awake 3 hours before Kick Off Time

Pre Match Top Up – 1 hour Before Kick Off (9:30am)

Banana/ Cereal Bar/ Yoghurt



- MATCH 10:30am Kick Off



Post Match +30 minutes After a Match

Immediately post match - *Chocolate/Strawberry/Semi-Skimmed Milk 300ml*

Your First Meal Post Match +1-2 Hours Post Match

Baked jacket potato with tuna/beans with cheese and a side of salad

OR

Chicken breast (Skinless) with white/brown rice and vegetables

After a match it is vital to replenish energy and improve recovery by having a high carbohydrate, high protein meal within the first 1-2 hours after a match