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# Building a Balanced Smoothie

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Smoothies are a delicious, fast, and nutritious meal or snack – when made correctly. It is important to remember that meals, whether served on a plate or in a glass, should be nutritionally balanced. So, while an all-fruit smoothie may make your taste buds happy, the lack of protein and fat will leave your body unsatisfied.

Luckily making a nutritionally balanced smoothie is simple – just follow these five steps. Amounts below will make 2 servings:

## 1. Choose a Base (1/2 cup):

Low fat milk, almond milk, brewed tea, coconut water, coconut milk, rice beverage, soymilk, water, or 100% fruit juice

## 2. Choose a Fruit (fresh or frozen) (1 cup):

Apple, banana, blackberries, blueberries, cherries, grapes, kiwi, mango, melon, oranges, papaya, peach, pear, pineapple, raspberries, or strawberries

## 3. Choose a Vegetable (1/2 cup):

- **Raw:** Arugula, beet greens, celery, chard, collard greens, cucumbers, dandelion greens, kale, or spinach (greens can be raw or cooked). Raw vegetables will require a powerful blender to fully grind them up.
- **Cooked:** butternut squash, carrots, pumpkin, or sweet potato

## 4. Add in Protein, Healthy fats and/or Fiber:

### Protein:

- 1/2 cup cottage cheese or Greek yogurt
- 1/4 cup silken tofu, cooked lentils, or beans
- 1-2 tablespoons peanut butter, almond butter, or sun butter

### Healthy Fat/Fiber:

- 1/4 Avocado
- 1 Tablespoon chia seeds
- 2 Tablespoons chopped nuts
- 1 Tablespoon ground flax seeds
- 1 Tablespoon hemp seeds or hearts
- 1 Tablespoon wheat germ

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## Give it a Boost (choose 1):

- 1 Tablespoon cocoa powder
- 1 capsule fish oil, open and squeeze in to smoothie (for omega-3's)
- 2 drops flavor extracts (vanilla, almond, or mint)
- 1 tsp chopped fresh herbs (mint or basil)
- Pinch of spices (cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, or cayenne)
- 3 cubes ice

## Extra Tips:

- If you use frozen fruit, buy varieties with no added sugar.
- Notice the fat content of your liquid base and protein – try to choose low fat varieties of milk and yogurt.
- You can adjust the consistency of the smoothie by adding more liquid or using less dense fruits and vegetables.
- Be creative! This formula makes a nutritionally balanced smoothie – so throw your taste buds some (delicious) curve balls!

**Blender Tips:** All blenders are not created equal. They vary in size, strength and ease of cleaning.

- Standing Blender: large standing blenders hold 5-8 cups, vary in strength to crush ice and grind vegetables.
- Single Serving Blenders: good for making 1-2 servings. Hold 2-4 cups.
- Handheld Immersion Blender: good for making 1-2 servings. Easy to clean.

## Sample Recipes:

**Strawberry-Banana Smoothie:** 1/2 cup plain yogurt, 1/2 banana, 1/4 cup orange juice, 1/4 cup water, 1/2 cup frozen strawberries, 1/2 cup cooked butternut squash

**Orange Creamsicle:** 1/2 cup plain yogurt, 1 orange (peeled), 1/4 tsp vanilla extract, 1/4 cup orange juice, 1/2 Tbsp chia seeds, 1/4 cup water, 3 ice cubes

**Peachy Keen:** 1/2 cup milk, 1/4 cup plain yogurt, 1 cup frozen peaches and strawberries, 1/4 of an avocado, pinch powdered ginger or 1 tsp grated fresh ginger

**Peanut Butter Dream:** 1 ripe banana, 1/2 cup milk, 1 Tbsp creamy peanut butter, 1/2 Tbsp cocoa powder, 1/2 cup baby spinach leaves