

Food Label Guide

1. Serving Information → 4 servings per container
Serving size 1 cup (227g)

2. Calories → **Amount per serving**
Calories 280

3. Nutrients →

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 9g	12%
Saturated Fat 4.5g	23%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 35mg	12%
Sodium 850mg	37%
Total Carbohydrate 34g	12%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 6g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 15g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 320mg	25%
Iron 1.6mg	8%
Potassium 510mg	10%

4. Quick Guide to percent Daily Value (%DV)
 • 5% or less is **low**
 • 20% or more is **high**

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Serving Info

Reflects how much of that food people *typically* eat, not how much you *need* to eat.

Calories

Calories provide a measure of how much energy you get from a serving of this food. Use in the context of *your* daily calorie needs. And don't judge a food by calories alone!

Sugar

Added sugar is any sugar added during processing. Limit to 24 g/day for women and 36 g/day for men, or less than 10% of your total daily calories..

Total Fat

The type of fat is what matters most. Emphasize unsaturated fats such as olive, canola, and peanut oils, nuts, seeds, avocado, and fatty fish.

Fiber

A "good source of fiber" is a food with 3 g or more per serving. Focus on whole food sources of fiber such as fruit, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, seeds, and legumes.

Micronutrients

Potassium & Vitamin D are emphasized because Americans do not always not consume enough of these nutrients.

Sodium

Most folks should limit sodium to 2,300 mg per day. Preparing more of your own food at home is one of the best ways to control sodium intake.

%DV

DVs are based on an estimated 2,000 calorie diet. Your percentages may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

Misleading Food Claims

All Natural or Organic

This phrase generally means that manufacturers used a natural ingredient at one point. There is a lot of leeway on this one. And organic cookies are still cookies!

Good Source of Fiber

It may have a decent dose of fiber, but does it come from a natural food source? If not, it may not have the same health benefits (and likely to have a bunch of questionable ingredients).

Low-Carb

Many foods marketed as low-carb tend to be ultra-processed, and offer little to no nutritional value. Take a closer look!

Light, No Fat or Low-fat

Do not equate this with low calorie. These modified products often have added sugar, sodium, fillers, or preservatives. Some are literally just watered down. And research shows you may eat more. If you love the "real thing," enjoy it in moderate portions!

Multigrain or Made with Whole Grains

This simply means there are different kinds of grains (none of which may be whole grain). Or there could be a minuscule amount of actual whole grain. Look for the phrase 100% whole grain and check to see that whole grain is first on the ingredient list.

Reduced, Less, or Low

What is it being compared to? Just because it's a so-called improvement, doesn't automatically make it a healthful choice. A reduced sodium soup may still have a day's worth of sodium in it!

Gluten Free

Gluten free doesn't mean healthy. It just means that the product doesn't contain wheat, rye, barley, or other grains with gluten. Many GF foods are highly processed and have had nutrients (like fiber) stripped away.

And a word about ingredient lists....

Ingredients are listed by quantity — from highest to lowest. Try looking for products that list whole foods as the first three ingredients and be skeptical of foods with long lists of ingredients.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Ignore the front-of-package claims.

Look for short ingredient lists of stuff
you recognize.

Comparison shop with similar items.

Establish your priorities -
what makes it a no-go for you?

Try not to shop when overly stressed, tired,
rushed, or distracted.