

# Sample Afterschool Snack Program Preschool Menus for Ages 3-5

**School Year 2025-26 (July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026)**

This document provides guidance and sample preschool snack menus for ages 3-5 in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). These sample menus are based on the ASP preschool meal pattern requirements, including the updates required by the USDA final rule, [Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#), effective July 1, 2025.

For information on the preschool meal patterns, visit the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. For information on the crediting requirements, visit the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage and [Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.



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## Overview of Preschool Snack Meal Pattern Requirements

Preschool snack menus must meet the meal pattern and crediting requirements below.

- Reimbursable snacks must include any two of the five meal components: ½ cup of unflavored low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk; ½ ounce equivalent (oz eq) of meats/meat alternates (MMA); ½ cup of vegetables; ½ cup of fruits; and ½ oz eq of grains. Each meal component must provide at least the minimum serving in the preschool meal pattern.
- Snack menus may include additional foods or larger servings beyond the minimum requirements. Menu planners should offer nutrient-dense foods that are appropriate to the nutritional needs of each age group.
- Only one of the two meal components at snack may be a creditable beverage such as milk or juice.
- Pasteurized 100 percent juice credits as either the vegetables component or fruits component at only one preschool meal or snack per day. The juice limit includes all fruit and vegetable juices, frozen pops made from 100 percent juice, and pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies. The USDA's [CACFP best practices](#) recommend serving whole fruits (fresh, frozen, canned, and dried) more often than juice. For crediting guidance, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Crediting Juices in the School Nutrition Programs](#) and [Crediting Smoothies in the School Nutrition Programs](#).
- The USDA's [CACFP best practices](#) recommends serving a vegetable or fruit for at least one of the two required snack components.
- At least one serving of grains per day must be whole grain-rich (WGR), between all meals and snacks served to preschoolers. The USDA's [CACFP best practices](#) recommend at least two servings of WGR grains per day.
- Grain-based desserts do not credit in the preschool meal patterns. Examples include cookies, piecrusts in sweet pies, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, sweet rolls, pastries, toaster pastries, cake, and brownies. Sweet crackers (such as graham crackers and animal crackers) are allowed but the CSDE recommends limiting them to no more than twice per week between all preschool meals and snacks. For more information, visit the USDA's webpage, [Grain-based Desserts in the CACFP](#).
- Cooked and ready-to-eat (RTE) breakfast cereals cannot exceed 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce. For crediting guidance, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the School Nutrition Programs](#).

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- To credit as the required oz eq, the serving of a commercial grain product or standardized recipe must provide either: 1) the required serving weight (groups A-E) or volume (groups H-I) in the USDA's Exhibit A chart (refer to the CSDE's resources, [Grain Ounce Equivalents Chart for the School Nutrition Programs](#) and [How to Use the Grain Ounce Equivalents Chart for the School Nutrition Programs](#)); or 2) the minimum creditable grains per serving (refer to the CSDE's resources, [Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for the Meal Patterns for School Nutrition Programs](#) and [When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs](#)). For more information, visit "Serving Requirements" in the "Grains" section of the CSDE's Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage.
- Yogurt and soy yogurt cannot exceed 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces (no more than 2 grams of added sugars per ounce). To increase nutrient variety, yogurt should not be served when milk is the only other meal component at snack. For crediting guidance, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Yogurt in the School Nutrition Programs](#).
- SFAs must make plain potable water available to all students during the snack service. Water does not credit in the ASP meal pattern and cannot be offered in place of the required meal components. For more information, visit the CSDE's [Water Availability for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.
- Noncreditable foods cannot be served in place of the required meal components. Examples of noncreditable foods include potato chips, pudding, ice cream, gelatin, cream cheese, bacon, condiments (e.g., syrup, jam, ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, and butter), and water. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Noncreditable Foods in the Meal Patterns for the School Nutrition Programs](#).
- **Additional requirements for Healthy Food Certification (HFC) schools:** All foods served in ASP menus must comply with the [Connecticut Nutrition Standards \(CNS\)](#). SFAs must use the CSDE's [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) webpage to identify allowable commercial foods. Foods made from scratch require a standardized recipe with the nutrition information per serving and the applicable completed CSDE [CNS Worksheet](#) to document that the serving with its accompaniments (e.g., butter, syrup, and condiments) complies with the CNS.
- Children younger than 4 are at the highest risk of choking. Consider children's age and developmental readiness when deciding what foods to offer in CACFP menus. Modify menus as appropriate and use preparation techniques to reduce the risk of choking. For additional guidance, visit the "Choking Prevention" section of the CSDE's [Food Safety for Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage

Detailed guidance on the ASP preschool meal pattern is available in the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs](#). For additional resources,

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refer to the CSDE's [Meal Pattern and Crediting Resources for the School Nutrition Programs](#) and visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. For information on crediting foods in preschool menus, refer to the CSDE's [Crediting Summary Charts for the Meal Patterns for the School Nutrition Programs](#) and visit the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

### Required Crediting Documentation

School food authorities (SFAs) must be able to document that snack menus provide the required meal components and quantities. Menu planners must use the USDA's [Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs](#) (FBG) to determine how foods credit and the amount that provides the required meal pattern serving.

Commercial processed foods not listed in the FBG require a Child Nutrition (CN) label or product formulation statement (PFS) to document crediting information. For information on crediting documentation, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Using Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labels in the School Nutrition Programs](#), [Using Product Formulation Statements in the School Nutrition Programs](#), and [Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the School Nutrition Programs](#)).

Foods made from scratch must have a standardized recipe that documents the crediting information per serving. For more information, visit the ["Standardized Recipes"](#) section of the CSDE's Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Programs webpage.

Additional guidance is available on the CSDE's [Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. Training on the requirements for CN labels and PFS forms is available in Module 8: Meal Pattern Documentation for Crediting Commercial Processed Products, of the CSDE's training program, [What's in a Meal: Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs](#).

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## Sample Preschool Snack Menus

This document contains ten sample preschool snack menus. The servings in each snack menu provide at least the minimum requirements of the [Afterschool Snack Program \(ASP\) Preschool Meal Pattern](#) and are indicated in parentheses after each menu item.

Servings may be adjusted as appropriate for ages 1-2.

The CSDE's sample menus are intended for informational purposes only and do not guarantee the SFA's compliance with the ASP preschool meal pattern. Crediting information for local menus will vary depending on the types of foods purchased by the SFA, and the standardized recipes and preparation techniques used by food service staff. SFAs are responsible for ensuring that afterschool snack menus meet the ASP meal pattern and maintaining appropriate crediting documentation on file (refer to "[Required Crediting Documentation](#)" in this document).

# Sample Afterschool Snack Program Preschool Menus for Ages 3-5

## Week 1

Day	Milk ½ cup	MMA ½ oz	Vegetables ½ cup	Fruits ½ cup	Grains ½ oz eq	Additional foods
1				Orange slices (½ cup)	Enriched corn muffin (1 ounce)	
2		Yogurt and fruit parfait: Low-fat vanilla yogurt with ≤ 2 grams of added sugars per ounce (¼ cup)		Sliced strawberries (¼ cup)  Blueberries (¼ cup)		Whole-grain granola (1 tablespoon)
3			Cucumber slices (½ cup)		Whole- grain crackers (½ ounce) <b>WGR</b>	Low-fat dip (1 tablespoon) Water
4			Vegetable soup with ½ cup vegetables	Cantaloupe chunks (½ cup)		
5		Ham (¼ ounce) and cheese (¼ ounce) roll-up			Whole-corn tortilla (½ ounce) <b>WGR</b>	Mustard (1 teaspoon) or low-fat mayonnaise (1 teaspoon) Water

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### Week 2

Day	Milk ½ cup	MMA ½ oz	Vegetables ½ cup	Fruits ½ cup	Grains ½ oz eq	Additional foods
1		Diced turkey (½ ounce)	Tossed salad: Lettuce (½ cup) with tomatoes and cucumbers (¼ cup)			Enriched croutons (¼ ounce)  Low-fat dressing (1 tablespoon)
2			Sliced avocado (½ cup)		Whole- wheat toast (½ ounce) <b>WGR</b>	
3		Sunflower butter (1 tablespoon)		Apple slices (½ cup)		
4		Hummus pita pocket: chickpeas (⅓ cup)			Whole- wheat pita half (½ ounce) <b>WGR</b>	Shredded carrots (⅓ cup)
5			Cucumber slices (¼ cup)  Carrot sticks, thinly sliced (¼ cup)		Enriched pretzels (½ ounce)	Low-fat dip (1 tablespoon) Water

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### Week 3

Day	Milk ½ cup	MMA ½ oz	Vegetables ½ cup	Fruits ½ cup	Grains ½ oz eq	Additional foods
1				Mixed berries (½ cup)	Soft whole-grain pretzel (½ ounce) <b>WGR</b>	
2		Low-fat cottage cheese (⅓ cup)		Canned apricots in juice (½ cup)		
3		Tortilla wrap: Refried beans (⅓ cup)			Whole-grain tortilla (½ ounce) <b>WGR</b>	Diced tomato (⅓ cup)  Shredded cheese (1 tablespoon)
4			Carrot- pineapple- raisin salad: Shredded carrots (½ cup)			Crushed pineapple (⅓ cup)  Raisins (1 teaspoon)
5			Roasted cauliflower bites (½ cup)	Honeydew melon (½ cup)		Low-fat dip (1 tablespoon)



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### Week 4

Day	Milk ½ cup	MMA ½ oz	Vegetables ½ cup	Fruits ½ cup	Grains ½ oz eq	Additional foods
1		Part-skim Mozzarella cheese stick (½ ounce)		Red grapes (½ cup)		
2		Ants on a log: Peanut butter (1 tablespoon)	Carrot sticks, thinly sliced (¼ cup)  Celery sticks, thinly sliced (¼ cup)			Raisins (1 tablespoon)
3			Corn and black bean salad (½ cup)		Whole- grain pita chips (½ ounce) <b>WGR</b>	
4		Pasta veggie salad: Ham (½ ounce)			Enriched rotini pasta (¼ cup)	Diced vegetables: Carrots, broccoli, and tomatoes (¼ cup)
5				Sliced kiwi (½ cup)	Whole- grain cornbread (1 ounce) <b>WGR</b>	

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### Week 5

Day	Milk ½ cup	MMA ½ oz	Vegetables ½ cup	Fruits ½ cup	Grains ½ oz eq	Additional foods
1		Hummus (⅔ cup chickpeas)	Zucchini sticks, thinly sliced (¼ cup)  Pepper strips, thinly sliced (¼ cup)			
2		Peanut butter (1 tablespoon)	Carrot sticks, thinly sliced (½ cup)			
3				Diced papaya (½ cup)	Trail mix (cereal, pretzels, dried fruit): Whole-grain cereal rounds with ≤ 6 grams added sugars per dry ounce (¼ cup) <b>WGR</b> and enriched pretzels (¼ ounce)	Dried fruit (½ tablespoon)
4		Fruit and yogurt smoothie: Yogurt with ≤ 2 grams of added sugars per ounce (¼ cup)		Pureed strawberries (½ cup)		
5				Sliced green grapes (½ cup)	Enriched pretzel sticks (½ ounce)	

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### Week 6

Day	Milk ½ cup	MMA ½ oz	Vegetables ½ cup	Fruits ½ cup	Grains ½ oz eq	Additional foods
1			Jicama sticks, thinly sliced (¼ cup) Zucchini sticks, thinly sliced (¼ cup)		Enriched bread sticks (½ ounce)	Low-fat Ranch dressing (1 tablespoon)
2			Marinated broccoli florets (½ cup)	Plums (½ cup)		
3		Low-fat Greek yogurt with ≤ 2 grams of added sugars per ounce (¼ cup)		Fruit salad: oranges, bananas, sliced grapes, pineapple (½ cup)		
4	Unflavored low-fat milk (½ cup)				Whole-wheat bagel (½ ounce) <b>WGR</b>	Almond butter (1 tablespoon)
5		Tuna salad (½ ounce tuna)			Whole-grain crackers (½ ounce) <b>WGR</b>	

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### Week 7

Day	Milk ½ cup	MMA ½ oz	Vegetables ½ cup	Fruits ½ cup	Grains ½ oz eq	Additional foods
1				Watermelon chunks (½ cup)	Enriched soft pretzel (½ ounce)	
2		Low-fat cottage cheese (½ cup)			Whole- grain puffed cereal with ≤ 6 grams added sugars per dry ounce (¾ cup) <b>WGR</b>	
3	Unflavored low-fat milk (½ cup)				Enriched pumpkin cranberry muffin (1 ounce)	
4		Shredded low-fat cheese (½ ounce)	Garden salad: Lettuce (½ cup), tomatoes, cucumbers, and carrots (¼ cup)			Low-fat Italian dressing (1 tablespoon)
5		Berry-peach yogurt parfait: Low-fat yogurt with ≤ 2 grams of added sugars per ounce (¼ cup)		Seasonal berries (¼ cup)  Diced peaches (¼ cup)		Crumbled graham crackers (1 tablespoon)

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### Week 8

Day	Milk ½ cup	MMA ½ oz	Vegetables ½ cup	Fruits ½ cup	Grains ½ oz eq	Additional foods
1		Pita bread triangles: Low-fat cheese (½ ounce)			Whole-wheat pita bread (½ ounce) <b>WGR</b>	Vegetable salsa (⅛ cup)
2			Lentil salad (½ cup)	Pineapple chunks (½ cup)		
3			Marinated diced cucumber-tomato salad (½ cup)		Whole-grain roll (½ ounce) <b>WGR</b>	
4				Strawberry shortcake: Sliced strawberries (½ cup)	Enriched biscuit (½ ounce)	Whipped cream (2 tablespoons)
5		Chicken salad (1 ounce cooked chicken)			Whole-grain crackers (½ ounce) <b>WGR</b>	

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### Week 9

Day	Milk ½ cup	MMA ½ oz	Vegetables ½ cup	Fruits ½ cup	Grains ½ oz eq	Additional foods
1				Pineapple slices (½ cup)	Whole- grain bagel (½ ounce) <b>WGR</b>	Light cream cheese (½ tablespoon)
2			Marinated chickpea salad (½ cup)		Enriched pretzels (½ ounce)	
3				Sliced kiwi (½ cup)	Whole- grain puffed cereal with ≤ 6 grams added sugars per dry ounce (¾ cup) <b>WGR</b>	
4		Almond butter (1 tablespoon)		Frozen banana (½ cup)		
5		Herbed cottage cheese (⅓ cup)	Celery sticks, thinly sliced, and cucumber slices (½ cup)			

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### Week 10

Day	Milk ½ cup	MMA ½ oz	Vegetables ½ cup	Fruits ½ cup	Grains ½ oz eq	Additional foods
1		Hard-boiled egg (½ large)			Whole- grain roll (½ ounce) <b>WGR</b>	
2			Sliced cherry tomatoes (½ cup)	Diced pears (½ cup)		
3			Refried beans (⅔ cup)  Salsa (⅓ cup)		Whole-corn tortilla chips (½ ounce) <b>WGR</b>	
4	Unflavored low-fat milk (½ cup)		Broccoli florets (¼ cup)  Red pepper strips, thinly sliced (¼ cup)			Low-fat Ranch dip (1 tablespoon)
5		Peanut butter (1 tablespoon)			Whole- wheat bagel (½ ounce) <b>WGR</b>	

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## Resources

Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) Preschool Meal Pattern (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/asp/meal\\_pattern\\_asp\\_preschool.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/asp/meal_pattern_asp_preschool.pdf)

Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-documentation-for-the-child-nutrition-programs>

Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-foods-in-school-nutrition-programs>

Crediting Summary Charts for the Meal Patterns for the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/crediting/crediting\\_summary\\_charts\\_snp.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/crediting/crediting_summary_charts_snp.pdf)

Cycle Menus for Child Care: Preschoolers (Institute of Child Nutrition):

<https://theicn.org/resources/1575/cycle-menus-for-child-care-preschoolers/118740/cycle-menus-for-child-care-preschoolers.pdf>

Guide to Meeting the Preschool Meal Patterns for the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/preschool/guide\\_preschool\\_meal\\_patterns\\_snp.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/preschool/guide_preschool_meal_patterns_snp.pdf)

Meal Pattern and Crediting Resources for the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/meal\\_pattern/resources\\_school\\_meal\\_patterns\\_snp.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/meal_pattern/resources_school_meal_patterns_snp.pdf)

Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-patterns-preschoolers-in-school-nutrition-programs>

Menu Planning Basics: A Guide for CACFP Operators in Child Care (Institute of Child Nutrition):

<https://theicn.org/icn-resources-a-z/menu-planning-basics-cacfp>

Menu Planning for Preschoolers (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-patterns-preschoolers-in-school-nutrition-programs#menuplanningpreschoolers>

Menu Planning Guide for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/preschool/guide\\_preschool\\_meal\\_patterns\\_snp.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/preschool/guide_preschool_meal_patterns_snp.pdf)



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Recipes for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE's Menu Planning for Child Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/menu-planning/recipes-for-child-nutrition-programs>

Serving Snacks in the CACFP (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/serving-snacks-cacfp>

Snack Inspiration (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction):

[https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/community-nutrition/pdf/snack\\_inspiration.pdf](https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/community-nutrition/pdf/snack_inspiration.pdf)

What's in a Meal Module 8: Meal Pattern Documentation for Crediting Commercial Processed Products (CSDE's Training Program, What's in a Meal: Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-pattern-training-materials>

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For more information visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage or contact the [school nutrition programs staff](#) at the Connecticut State Department of Education, Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841. This document is available at [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/asp/forms/sample\\_menu\\_asp\\_ages\\_3-5.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/asp/forms/sample_menu_asp_ages_3-5.pdf).

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1. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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