

# Menu Planning for Shorter or Longer Weeks in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program

The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) meal patterns for grades K-12 are based on a five-day week. When a school week **regularly** operates on a shorter or longer cycle, menu planners must increase or decrease the weekly requirements by 20 percent for each day that deviates from the standard five-day week. For the vegetables component, adjustments are made only to the “additional vegetables” category. Due to the smaller size of the weekly vegetable subgroup requirements, the 20 percent adjustment is not practical for the five vegetable subgroups.

The charts in this document summarize these requirements. All amounts are rounded to the nearest ½ ounce equivalent (oz eq) and ¼ cup. Meal patterns for five-day weeks and seven-day week are available on the CSDE’s [Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

**Note:** The NSLP and SBP preschool meal patterns (ages 1-5) do not have weekly requirements. For guidance on the preschool meal patterns, refer to the CSDE’s [Guide to Meeting the Preschool Meal Patterns for the School Nutrition Programs](#) and visit the CSDE’s [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Schools with occasional decreases in the school week due to holidays, snow days, or other reasons are not required to adjust the weekly requirements. However, school menus must be consistent with the intent of the meal patterns. For example, menu planners must ensure that school menus do not consistently fail to offer certain vegetable subgroups.

## Daily Requirements and Dietary Specifications

The daily meal pattern requirements and weekly dietary specifications are unaffected by a longer or shorter week. Since the dietary specifications are daily averages, either fewer or more days are averaged together to meet the specified targets for calories, saturated fat, and sodium.

The dietary specifications are the USDA’s nutrition standards for NSLP and SBP meals. They include weekly calorie ranges and limits for saturated fat and sodium. For more information, refer to the CSDE’s [Guide to the Dietary Specifications for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Meal Patterns for Grades K-12](#) and visit the “[Dietary Specifications](#)” section of the CSDE’s Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs webpage. Training on the dietary specifications is available in [Module 6: Dietary Specifications](#) of the CSDE’s training program, *What’s in a Meal: Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs*.

# Menu Planning for Shorter or Longer Weeks in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program

## Weekly Requirements for Lunch

The charts below apply to NSLP meal patterns.

### Three-day school week for lunch

Meal components	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Fruits (cups)	1½	1½	3
Vegetables (cups)	2¼	2¼	3
Dark green	½	½	½
Red/orange	½	½	1
Beans, peas, and lentils	½	½	½
Starchy	½	½	½
Other	¼	¼	½
Additional vegetables to reach total	0	0	0
Grains (oz eq)	5-5½	5-6	6-7
Meats/meat alternates (oz eq)	5-6	5½-6	6-7
Fluid milk (cups)	3	3	3

## Menu Planning for Shorter or Longer Weeks in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program

### Four-day school week for lunch

Meal components	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Fruits (cups)	2	2	4
Vegetables (cups)	3	3	4
Dark green	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Red/orange	$\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{3}{4}$	$1\frac{1}{4}$
Beans, peas, and lentils	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Starchy	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Other	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{3}{4}$
Additional vegetables to reach total	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
Grains (oz eq)	6 $\frac{1}{2}$ -7	6 $\frac{1}{2}$ -8	8-9 $\frac{1}{2}$
Meats/meat alternates (oz eq)	6 $\frac{1}{2}$ -8	7-8	8-9 $\frac{1}{2}$
Fluid milk (cups)	4	4	4

## Menu Planning for Shorter or Longer Weeks in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program

### Six-day school week for lunch

Meal components	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Fruits (cups)	3	3	6
Vegetables (cups)	4½	4½	6
Dark green	½	½	½
Red/orange	¾	¾	1¼
Beans, peas, and lentils	½	½	½
Starchy	½	½	½
Other	½	½	¾
Additional vegetables to reach total	1¾	1¾	2½
Grains (oz eq)	9½-11	9½-12	12-14½
Meats/meat alternates (oz eq)	9½-12	11-12	12-14½
Fluid milk (cups)	6	6	6

## Menu Planning for Shorter or Longer Weeks in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program

### Seven-day school week for lunch

Meal components	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Fruits (cups)	3½	3½	7
Vegetables (cups)	5¼	5¼	7
Dark green	½	½	½
Red/orange	¾	¾	1¼
Beans, peas, and lentils	½	½	½
Starchy	½	½	½
Other	½	½	¾
Additional vegetables to reach total	2½	2½	3½
Grains (oz eq)	11-12½	11-14	14-17
Meats/meat alternates (oz eq)	11-14	12½-14	14-17
Fluid milk (cups)	7	7	7

# Menu Planning for Shorter or Longer Weeks in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program

## Weekly Requirements for Breakfast

The charts below apply to SBP meal patterns. The SBP meal patterns require a combined grains and MMA component. The weekly requirements for the grains/MMA component below apply to the total oz eq of grains and MMA in the weekly breakfast menu.

### Three-day school week for breakfast

Meal components	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Fruits (cups)	3	3	3
Grains/MMA (oz eq)	4-6	5-6	5½-6
Fluid milk (cups)	3	3	3

### Four-day school week for breakfast

Meal components	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Fruits (cups)	4	4	4
Grains/MMA (oz eq)	5½-8	6½-8	7-8
Fluid milk (cups)	4	4	4

### Six-day school week for breakfast

Meal components	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Fruits (cups)	6	6	6
Grains/MMA (oz eq)	8½-12	9½-12	11-12
Fluid milk (cups)	6	6	6

## Menu Planning for Shorter or Longer Weeks in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program

### Seven-day school week for breakfast

Meal components	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
Fruits (cups)	7	7	7
Grains/MMA (oz eq)	10-14	11-14	12½-14
Fluid milk (cups)	7	7	7

# Menu Planning for Shorter or Longer Weeks in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program

## Resources

[Dietary Specifications](https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-patterns-school-nutrition-programs/dietary-specifications) (CSDE's Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Program webpage):

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

[Guide to the Dietary Specifications for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Meal Patterns for Grades K-12](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/mpg/guide_dietary_specifications_nslp_sbp_k12.pdf) (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/mpg/guide\\_dietary\\_specifications\\_nslp\\_sbp\\_k12.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/mpg/guide_dietary_specifications_nslp_sbp_k12.pdf)

[Guide to the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Meal Patterns for Grades K-12](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/mpg/guide_meal_patterns_nslp_sbp_k12.pdf) (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/mpg/guide\\_meal\\_patterns\\_nslp\\_sbp\\_k12.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/mpg/guide_meal_patterns_nslp_sbp_k12.pdf)

[Meal Pattern and Crediting Resources for the School Nutrition Programs](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/meal_pattern/resources_school_meal_patterns_snp.pdf) (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 Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-patterns-school-nutrition-programs) (CSDE webpage):

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

[Menu Planning Guidance for School Meals for Grades K-12](https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/menu-planning-guidance-for-school-meals) (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/menu-planning-guidance-for-school-meals>

For more information, visit the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) [Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-patterns-school-nutrition-programs) webpage or contact the [school nutrition prog](https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/mpg/guide_meal_patterns_nslp_sbp_k12.pdf)[Guide to the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Meal Patterns for Grades K-12](https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/mpg/guide_meal_patterns_nslp_sbp_k12.pdf) (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/mpg/guide\\_meal\\_patterns\\_nslp\\_sbp\\_k12.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/mpg/guide_meal_patterns_nslp_sbp_k12.pdf)

[rams 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/nslp/mealpattern/weekly\\_adjustments\\_nslp\\_sbp.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/mealpattern/weekly_adjustments_nslp_sbp.pdf).



**CONNECTICUT**  
Education



## Menu Planning for Shorter or Longer Weeks in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

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)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

The Connecticut State Department of Education is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. The Connecticut Department of Education does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race; color; religious creed; age; sex; pregnancy; sexual orientation; workplace hazards to reproductive systems, gender identity or expression; marital status; national origin; ancestry; retaliation for previously opposed discrimination or coercion, intellectual disability; genetic information; learning disability; physical disability (including, but not limited to, blindness); mental disability (past/present history thereof); military or veteran status; status as a victim of domestic violence; or criminal record in state employment, unless there is a bona fide occupational qualification excluding persons in any of the aforementioned protected classes. Inquiries regarding the Connecticut State Department of Education's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to: Attorney Louis Todisco, Connecticut State Department of Education, by mail 450 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford, CT 06103-1841; or by telephone 860-713-6594; or by email [louis.todisco@ct.gov](mailto:louis.todisco@ct.gov).