Start with Half a Cup

Fresh Vegetables Portioning Guide for Schools

This reference assists schools with proper portioning of fresh vegetables in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) school nutrition programs. All quantities are based in the USDA's Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (FBG), available at https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/fbg.

How to Use

1. Locate the appropriate type of vegetable in the chart below.
2. Establish a visual reference for the correct portion size: Measure ten ½-cup portions by weight, placing each portion into its own serving container.
3. Use the visual reference to portion the remaining vegetable servings for the meal service.

Example for red bell pepper strips: The FBG indicates that 1.75 ounces of red bell pepper strips equal ½ cup of the vegetables component (red/orange subgroup). After preparing the peppers (coring, cleaning, and cutting into strips), weigh out ten 1.75 oz. portions. Use these initial servings as a visual reference to portion the remaining servings.

Quantity of Fresh Vegetables Equal to ½ Cup of Vegetables Component

Vegetables (fresh, raw)	Subgroup	Unit	Weight	Measure	Notes
Asparagus	Other	pound	3.5 ounces		
Avocado, diced	Other	pound	2.6 ounces		Ready-to-serve, peeled
Avocado, mashed	Other	pound	4.2 ounces		Ready-to-serve, peeled
Beans, green, whole	Other	pound	1.5 ounces		Trimmed, whole
Beans, green, cut	Other	pound	2 ounces		
Broccoli, florets	Dark green	pound	1.1 ounces		Trimmed, ready-to-use
Cabbage, green chopped	Other	pound	1.6 ounces		
Cabbage, green shredded	Other	pound	1 ounce		
Carrots, sticks	Red/orange	Pound/sticks	2.2 ounces	About 6 sticks	Sticks 4 inches x ½ inch
Carrots, shredded	Red/orange	pound	1.6 ounces		Ready-to-use
Carrots, sliced	Red/orange	pound	2.5 ounces		Ready-to-use
Carrots, baby	Red/orange	pound	2.5 ounces		Ready-to-use
Cauliflower, florets	Other	pound	1.75 ounces		Trimmed, ready-to-use
Celery	Other	pound	2.2 ounces	About 6 sticks	Sticks 4 inches x ½ inch
Cucumber, diced, unpeeled	Other	pound	2.8 ounces		
Cucumber, sliced, unpeeled	Other	pound	2.5 ounces		
Cucumber, sticks, unpeeled	Other	Pound/sticks	2.7 ounces	About 6 Sticks	Sticks 3 inches x ¾ inch
Cucumber, sticks, peeled	Other	Pound/sticks	2.6 ounces	About 6 Sticks	Sticks 3 inches x ¾ inch

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Vegetables (fresh, raw)	Subgroup	Unit	Weight	Measure	Notes
Jicama	Starchy	pound	2.4 ounces		Peeled, ready-to-use
Kale, trimmed without stem	Dark green	pound	1.3 ounces	1 cup	Credits as half volume, e.g., 1 cup = ½ cup vegetable
Jicama	Starchy	pound	2.4 ounces		Peeled, ready-to-use
Kohlrabi, chunks or sticks	Other	pound	2.6 ounces		
Lettuce, romaine	Dark green	pound	1.3 ounces	1 cup	Credits as half volume, e.g., 1 cup = ½ cup vegetable
Lettuce, romaine, chopped	Dark green	pound	1.5 ounces	1 cup	Credits as half volume, e.g., 1 cup = ½ cup vegetable
Lettuce, dark green leafy	Dark green	pound	2 ounces	1 cup	Credits as half volume, e.g., 1 cup = ½ cup vegetable
Lettuce, iceberg, chopped	Other	pound	2.3 ounces		Credits as half volume, e.g., 1 cup = ½ cup vegetable
Lettuce, iceberg, shredded	Other	pound	2.2 ounces		Credits as half volume, e.g., 1 cup = ½ cup vegetable
Peppers, bell, green/yellow, strips	Other	pound	1.75 ounces		Ready-to-use
Peppers, bell, red/orange, strips	Red/orange	pound	1.75 ounces		Ready-to-use
Peppers, cherry	Red/orange	Pound/each	2 ounces	About 6 each	Whole with stem
Peppers, mini sweet, yellow/orange/red, sliced rings	Red/orange	pound	2.3 ounces		Ready-to-use
Radishes	Other	pound	2.4 ounces		
Spinach, ready-to-use, trimmed	Dark green	pound	2.5 ounces		Credits as half volume, e.g., 1 cup = ½ cup vegetable
Squash, summer, sliced	Other	pound	2.3 ounces		
Squash, summer, sticks	Other	Pound/sticks	2.5 ounces		Sticks 3 inches x ½ inch
Tomatoes, cherry	Red/orange	Pound/each	2.6 ounces	About 6 Whole	Without stem
Tomatoes, grape	Red/orange	Pound/each	3.5 ounces		Without stem
Tomatoes, round, diced	Red/orange	pound	3.7 ounces		
Tomatoes, round, wedges	Red/orange	pound	3 ounces		½-inch wedges
Tomatoes, small/medium, slices	Red/orange	pound	3.3 ounces	About 10 Slices	⅛-inch thick slices of 2¼-inch tomato
Tomatoes, large, slices	Red/orange	pound	3.2 ounces	About 8 Slices	⅛-inch thick slices of 2½- to 2¾-inch tomato
Turnip, sticks	Other	pound	2.5 ounces		
Turnip, diced or cubed	Other	pound	2.3 ounces		

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