

# Shop Your Grocery Store



## Objectives

At the end of the session, the Special Olympics Athletes will be able to:

- Identify healthy foods from Canada's Food Guide at the grocery store.
- Make a grocery list and plan for a successful grocery trip.

## Discussion Points

Today, we are talking about making healthy food choices at the grocery store. On training or event days, you may need different foods. Speak to a Registered Dietitian for help making a plan specific to you and your needs.

Healthy eating starts with making healthy food choices at the grocery store. Shopping for a variety of foods from Canada's Food Guide can help you fuel your body and improve your health.

**Activity Suggestion:** If you have a Sobeys, Safeway, IGA, Foodland or Thrifty Foods in your area, feel free to reach out to the store manager and set up a grocery store tour. You can use the below information as an interactive activity guide for your group. Make sure to thank the staff for their support!

## Shop Canada's Food Guide

Fill your grocery cart with foods from Canada's Food Guide, such as vegetables and fruit, whole grain foods and protein foods.

## Ask athletes: What sections of Canada's Food Guide are we filling our cart with when shopping in...?

### Q: The Produce Section

### A: Vegetables and Fruit

- Eat the rainbow! Vegetables and fruit of different colors provide different vitamins, minerals and antioxidants that are important for good health. They also provide fiber which is important for good digestion.
- In this section of the grocery store, choose fruits and vegetables that you like, or try ones that may feel and look different than what you are used to.
- Buy fresh and frozen whenever possible.



**Activity:** Go through the colours of the rainbow and have athletes name one fruit and one vegetable for each colour. Teach athletes about the health benefits of each color.

**Red:** Good for your heart and blood health, helps keep your joints healthy.

**Orange:** Good for your eyes and heart health.

**Yellow:** Good for your skin, keeps your immune system healthy (helps fight off germs).

**Green:** Good for your bones.

**Blue and purple:** Good for your brain, helps improve memory.

**White:** Good for your immune system (helps fight off germs), can reduce the risk of cancer.

## Q: The Bakery Section

### A: Whole Grain Foods

- Whole grain foods give us energy to grow, move and think at our best.
- They also provide fibre for good digestion, and lots of vitamins and minerals to help protect us from disease.
- In this section of the grocery store, choose whole grain breads, pitas and tortillas more often.
- Read the ingredients list and choose foods that have the words 'whole grain' followed by the name of the grain as one of the first ingredients. Examples include 'whole wheat flour' or 'whole grain oats'.

**Activity:** Ask athletes to name one whole grain food they eat at home.

## Q: The Seafood Section

### A: Protein Foods

- Fish and seafood give us protein needed to build and repair muscle and keep us feeling full and energized.
- Fatty fish — such as salmon, mackerel, arctic char, sardines, herring and trout — provide omega-3 fats which help keep our heart healthy.
- In this section of the grocery store, choose fresh or frozen fish and seafood that is not breaded, battered or deep fried.

**Activity:** Think SMASH-T. Ask athletes to guess the name of each fish that stands for each letter (salmon, mackerel, arctic char, sardines, herring, trout).

## Q: The Meat Section

### A: Protein Foods

- Meats, chicken and turkey give us protein needed to build and repair muscle and keep us feeling full and energized.
- In this section of the grocery store, choose lean cuts of meat, chicken and turkey most often.
  - Choose skinless chicken and turkey. Remove the skin before cooking to reduce the amount of fat.
  - Buy lean cuts of meat. Look for the words round, loin or flank on the packaging.
  - Choose fresh or frozen meats without seasonings, breading or sauces.

**Activity:** Show the difference in salt between a package of plain meat and processed meats. Compare the nutrition facts for sodium on a package of chicken vs. a package of bacon.

## Q: The Dairy Section

### A: Protein Foods

- Dairy like milk, yogurt and cheese are protein foods. In addition to protein, they provide calcium and vitamin D important for strong bones and teeth.
- In this section of the grocery store, choose lower fat and/or unsweetened milk, yogurts and cheeses most often.
- Try eggs or unsweetened soy or pea beverages as another source of protein.

**Activity:** Ask athletes how they like to include dairy foods and alternatives to dairy to meals and snacks.

## Q: The Grocery Aisles

### A: Vegetables and Fruit, Whole Grain Foods, Protein Foods

- In this section of the grocery store, we can find foods that fit in all parts of Canada's Food Guide.
- Choose canned fruit and fruit purees with little or no added sugar.
- Choose canned vegetables with little or no added salt.
- Look for whole wheat, multigrain or higher fiber pastas, noodles and crackers.
- Look for plain whole grains like rice, bulgur, pot barley or quinoa.
- Look for plain popcorn.
- Choose unsweetened whole oats and oatmeal. Pick lower sugar cereals.
- Pick dried or low sodium canned beans, peas and lentils.
- Choose canned fish with little or no added salt.
- Pick plain or roasted nuts, seeds and their butters.



**Activity:** Have different foods available as visuals. Ask athletes to place them in the right section of Canada's Food Guide — either vegetables and fruit, whole grains foods or protein foods.

## Q: The Frozen Foods Section

### A: Vegetables and Fruit

- Many foods can be found in the frozen foods section of the grocery store. Spend more time in the frozen fruits and vegetables section.
- Frozen fruits and vegetables are convenient and can help us enjoy a variety of produce all year long! They are just as healthy as fresh vegetables and fruit.
- Look for frozen vegetables and fruit without added sugars, seasonings, breading or rich sauces.

### Activity: Grocery Store Bingo

**Option A – In-person:** Bring athletes to your local grocery store and provide them with a Grocery Store Bingo Sheet. Divide athletes into smaller groups and have them do a scavenger hunt to discover new foods in each section of the grocery store. Regroup and encourage discussion about why these foods are important for health and how they fit in the Canada's Food Guide plate.



**Option B – Virtual:** Using the Grocery Store Bingo Sheet, have athletes find foods in their kitchen cupboards, fridge and freezer. Talk about why these foods are important for health and how they fit in the Canada's Food Guide plate.

## Planning for a Successful Grocery Trip

Just like it's important to plan for competition or game day, planning for your grocery trip will also lead to success.

- **Know what you have.** Before heading to the grocery store, look in your cupboards, fridge and freezer. Make a list of foods you already have, and what you may need to buy.
- **Plan ahead.** Plan tasty and nutritious meals and snacks for the week using Canada's Food Guide. Use Lesson Plan 11: Meal Planning 101 to learn more!
- **Make a grocery list.** Use your meal plan to list what foods you need for the week. Keep the list in your kitchen and add items to it as you run out.
- **Think of the layout of your grocery store.** Divide your grocery list according to the layout of your grocery store (i.e.: produce, bakery, seafood department, meat department, etc.). This will help you plan for a quicker and more efficient grocery trip.
- **Think of Canada's Food Guide.** Aim to fill your grocery cart with foods from Canada's Food Guide, such as a variety of vegetables and fruit, whole grains and protein foods.
- **Go shopping on a full stomach.** Shopping hungry can lead to impulse purchases.
- **Save time.** Take advantage of online grocery shopping and curbside pickup where available.

## Key Takeaways

### Reminders for Special Olympics Athletes:

- Grocery shopping for a variety of foods from Canada's Food Guide can fuel your body and improve your health.
- Fill your grocery cart with a variety of vegetables and fruit, whole grain foods and protein foods.
- Just like you plan for competition or game day, make a grocery list and plan for a successful grocery trip.

### Handouts & Links (Optional):

Link – [Healthy Shopping Tips – Unlock Food](#)

Link – [Your Grocery Store Checklist – Unlock Food](#)

Handout – [MyPlate Grocery Store Bingo – Activity Sheet](#)

To learn more about Athlete Nutrition, visit [Online Athlete Nutrition Guide](#)