



THE FOUNDATION

Section One – Macronutrients & Micronutrients

Section Two – Performance Fuel & Food Timing

Section Three – Know What You're Eating

Additional resources are available at
purebalanceathletic.com



Macronutrients & Micronutrients

KNOWING WHAT YOUR BODY NEEDS

SECTION 1 · FOUNDATIONS COURSE

Macronutrients & Micronutrients

Before you can fuel well, you need to understand what your body actually runs on. This section breaks down every nutrient your body needs — what each one does, where it comes from, and why getting it right makes the difference between average and elite performance.

THE THREE SYSTEMS THAT GOVERN YOUR BODY

**Calories****Determines weight**

Total energy in vs. out — the foundation everything else is built on

**Macronutrients****Determines body composition**

Protein, carbs, and fats — the structural and fuel system for everything your body builds and burns

**Micronutrients****Determines performance**

Vitamins and minerals — the switches that make every cellular system actually run

WHAT YOU'LL WALK AWAY KNOWING

**What protein, carbs, and fats actually do**

Not just that you need them — but why each one is irreplaceable for athletic performance.

**Which vitamins and minerals matter most**

The key micronutrients every athlete needs and exactly which foods deliver them.

**How digestion speed affects your training**

Why the timing of different macros changes how your body responds during and after workouts.

**How to build a performance plate**

Identify high-quality sources of every macro and micro — and put them together in a meal that fuels results.

"You don't need to count every gram. You need to understand what you're putting in your body — and why it matters for what you're asking your body to do."

Your food is either building your foundation — or tearing down what you've built.

THE FOUNDATIONAL ATHLETE

Calories, Micros & Macros

Understanding what nutrients your body needs from the food you eat

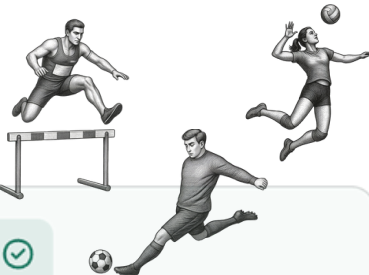


CALORIES

Calories

Determines weight

Total energy in vs. energy out.
Governs whether you gain, lose, or maintain weight over time.

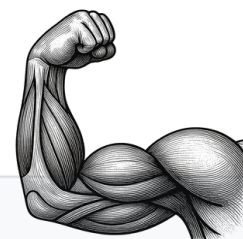


MICRONUTRIENTS

Micros

Determines performance

Vitamins and minerals that enable every cellular process — energy production, nerve signaling, immune function, recovery.



MACRONUTRIENTS

Macros

Determines body composition

Protein, carbohydrates, and fats — the structural and fuel system for everything your body builds and burns.

Each system plays a different role in how your body performs, recovers, and grows.

You can't optimize what you don't understand — here's how they work together, and what happens when one breaks down.

Calories The foundation

If total energy is wrong, nothing above it works correctly. Too little and you lose muscle. Too much and you gain fat. Everything starts here.

Micros The performance layer

Vitamins and minerals are the switches that make every system run. You can eat the right calories and macros and still underperform if micros are off.

Macros The structure

Once calories are right, the ratio of protein, carbs, and fats determines whether your body builds muscle, stores fat, or burns lean tissue.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN ONE BREAKS DOWN

Calories are off

Too little or too much

- Chronic fatigue and low energy output
- Muscle breakdown even with enough protein
- Hormonal disruption — cortisol spikes, low testosterone
- Stalled performance regardless of training

Micros are off

Deficiencies in vitamins or minerals

- Increased injury risk — tendons, ligaments, stress fractures
- Frequent illness — immune system breaks down under load
- Slow recovery even when sleep and protein are adequate
- Poor oxygen delivery — iron and B12 deficiencies especially

Macros are off

Wrong ratio for your goals

- Poor body composition despite eating enough
- Slow muscle repair and recovery between sessions
- Energy crashes mid-practice from poor carb timing
- Brain fog and poor decision-making during competition

Micronutrients

Understanding what nutrients your body needs from the food you eat



VITAMINS & MINERALS

Vitamins

- Vitamin A
- Vitamin B1 (Thiamine)
- Vitamin B2 (Riboflavin)
- Vitamin B3 (Niacin)
- Vitamin B5
- Vitamin B6
- Vitamin B7 (Biotin)
- Vitamin B9 (Folate)
- Vitamin B12
- Vitamin C
- Vitamin D
- Vitamin E
- Vitamin K

Minerals

- Calcium
- Magnesium
- Potassium
- Iron
- Iodine
- Copper
- Chromium
- Phosphorus
- Sodium
- Chloride
- Zinc
- Selenium
- Manganese
- Molybdenum

WHY MICROS MATTER FOR ATHLETES

Performance is a micronutrient game

You can eat the right macros and still underperform if you're deficient in key vitamins and minerals. Iron affects oxygen delivery. Magnesium affects muscle function. Vitamin D affects hormone production. Micros make the whole system run.

HOW TO GET THEM

Eat the whole food — not supplements first

Whole foods deliver vitamins and minerals in the ratios your body was designed to absorb. Organic vegetables, quality meats, whole grains, fruit, and raw dairy cover most of your micronutrient needs. Supplements fill gaps — they don't replace real food.



ELITE ATHLETE STRATEGY

Build every meal around color and variety. Aim for at least 3 different colors of produce daily — each pigment represents a different class of phytonutrients your body uses for recovery, immunity, and performance. A plate of grilled chicken, sweet potato, spinach salad with avocado, and a handful of berries covers Vitamins A, B6, C, K, folate, potassium, magnesium, and antioxidants in one meal — no supplement required. Whole food micronutrients absorb better, work synergistically, and come without the risks of isolated supplementation.

Micronutrient-Rich Foods

The top fruits and vegetables every athlete should be eating — and why each one earns its place on your plate

KEY NUTRIENTS: **Vit C** **Vit A** **B Vitamins** **Vit K** **Folate** **Potassium** **Magnesium** **Manganese**
Antioxidants **Vit D**

TOP WHOLE FOOD MICRONUTRIENT SOURCES

 **Pineapple** **Vit C** **Manganese** **B6**
1 cup chunks (~165g)

Bromelain enzyme reduces inflammation and supports post-training recovery. One of the highest manganese sources — critical for bone formation and carb metabolism.

VIT C		78 mg
MANGANESE		1.5 mg
FOLATE		30 mcg

 **Sweet Potato** **Vit A** **Vit C** **B6**
1 medium (~130g), baked

One of the most micronutrient-dense carb sources available. Beta-carotene converts to Vitamin A for immune function, vision, and skin repair post-training.

VIT A		960 mcg
POTASSIUM		542 mg
VIT C		22 mg

 **Avocado** **Vit K** **Folate** **B5** **B6**
½ whole fruit (~100g)

Healthy fats enhance absorption of fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E, K from other foods eaten alongside it. A rare whole-food source of nearly every B vitamin.

FOLATE		60 mcg
VIT K		17 mcg
POTASSIUM		485 mg

 **Mixed Berries** **Antioxidants** **Vit C** **Vit K**
1 cup (~150g)

Anthocyanins reduce oxidative stress from hard training. Blueberries show reduced muscle soreness and faster recovery in athlete studies. Lowest sugar of any fruit.

ANTIOXIDANTS		Very high
VIT C		14 mg
VIT K		19 mcg

 **Spinach** **Vit K** **Vit A** **Folate**
2 cups raw (~60g)

Nitrates in spinach improve oxygen efficiency during exercise. Iron + Vitamin C pairing supports red blood cell production and oxygen delivery to working muscles.

VIT K		290 mcg
VIT A		281 mcg
FOLATE		116 mcg

 **Broccoli** **Vit C** **Vit K** **Folate**
1 cup chopped (~91g)

Sulforaphane activates the body's own antioxidant pathways. Gram for gram, broccoli delivers more Vitamin C than an orange — critical for collagen and joint repair.

VIT C		81 mg
VIT K		93 mcg
FOLATE		57 mcg

 **Mango** **Vit C** **Vit A** **B6**
1 cup sliced (~165g)

Fast-digesting natural sugars replenish glycogen post-training. Vitamin B6 supports protein metabolism — helping the body actually use the protein you eat.

VIT C		60 mg
VIT A		89 mcg
VIT B6		0.2 mg

 **Beets** **Folate** **Potassium** **Manganese**
1 cup cooked (~136g)

Dietary nitrates from beets are clinically proven to improve endurance and lower the oxygen cost of exercise. One of the only foods shown to directly enhance VO2 capacity.

FOLATE		136 mcg
POTASSIUM		442 mg
MANGANESE		0.6 mg

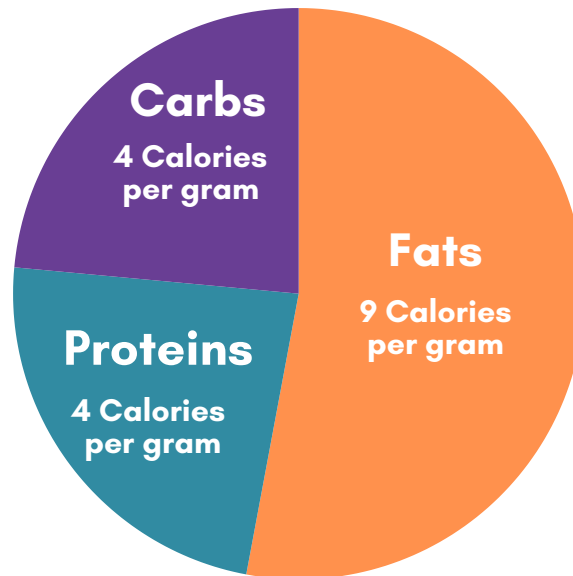
 **Kiwi** **Vit C** **Vit K** **Folate**
2 medium (~148g)

Two kiwis deliver more Vitamin C than an orange. Research shows kiwi improves sleep quality — a critical but overlooked component of athletic recovery.

VIT C		137 mg
VIT K		72 mcg
FOLATE		44 mcg

Macronutrients

Food sources - where do I get my macronutrients from?



Macronutrients

CALORIC DENSITY — CALORIES PER GRAM

Protein

4 cal/g

Used for building and repair — not typically burned as fuel unless you're in a deficit.

Carbs

4 cal/g

Your body's preferred fuel — especially during training. Burn fast, replenish fast.

Fats

9 cal/g

More than twice the density of protein or carbs — a little goes a long way. Use it as an advantage.

FOOD SOURCES

Protein

- Chicken
- Eggs
- Fish
- Beef
- Pork
- Dairy
- Black beans
- Pinto beans

...and more

Carbs

- Bread (sourdough)
- Rice
- Quinoa
- Pasta
- Sweet potatoes
- White potatoes
- Fruits
- Vegetables

...and more

Fats

- Olive oil
- Avocado oil
- Coconut oil
- Avocado
- Nuts & seeds
- Grass-fed butter
- Nut butters
- Animal fats

...and more

Macronutrients

What does my body do with the macronutrients?

FATS → BRAIN

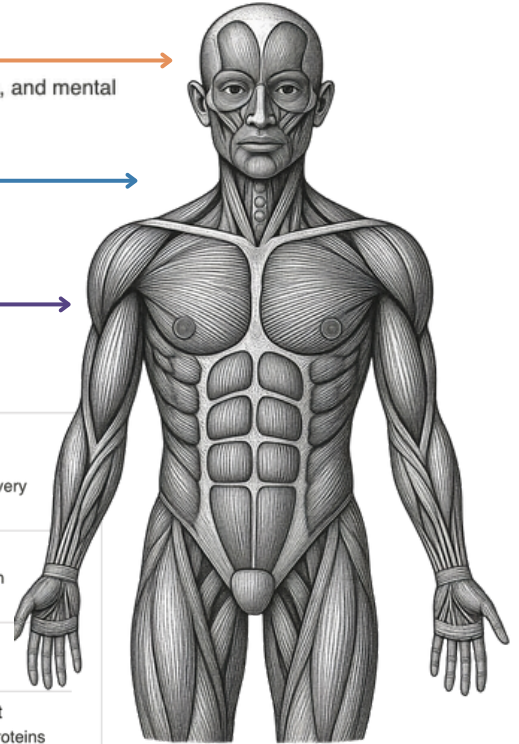
- Memory recall, decision making, and mental processing speed

PROTEIN → STRUCTURE

- Building blocks for every muscle, bone, and tissue in your body

CARBS → FUEL

- Primary energy source — especially during high-intensity exercise



PROTEIN

01 · MACRO

Protein

Build & repair

Broken down into amino acids — 9 essential types your body can't make. From meat, eggs, dairy, and legumes.



Build muscle mass

Amino acids are the raw material for every muscle fiber



Repair after workouts

Torn muscle fibers rebuild stronger with adequate protein



Growth — bone, hair, skin

Collagen and keratin are both proteins



Immune support + oxygen transport

Antibodies and hemoglobin are both proteins

CARBS

02 · MACRO

Carbs

Fuel & fiber

As resistant starches, carbs feed gut bacteria, regulate blood sugar, and sustain energy for hours.



Quick, accessible energy

Glucose is your body's fastest fuel — especially for the brain



Blood sugar regulation

Resistant starches slow absorption and prevent spikes



Fuels brain + red blood cells

These tissues rely almost exclusively on glucose



Essential micronutrients

Whole-food carbs carry vitamins and minerals your body needs

FATS

03 · MACRO

Fats

Stable energy

Calorically dense — a little goes a long way. Choose clean, stable fat sources and use that density to your advantage as an athlete.



Primary energy source at rest

When you're not training, fat is your body's default fuel



Absorb fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E, K

Without dietary fat, these vitamins can't be absorbed at all



Protect and support cell membranes

Every cell in your body is wrapped in a lipid bilayer



Brain development and function

60% of the brain is fat — omega-3s are critical



Regulate and support the immune system

Fat-derived compounds control inflammation signals

PROTEIN

HIGHEST QUALITY · COMPLETE PROTEIN



Meat

High quality proteins are the building blocks for muscles & overall health

- **Grass-fed, grass-finished beef**
Best quality — prioritize this above all others
- **Organic, air-chilled chicken**
If quality is uncertain, skip chicken for beef
- **Wild-caught fish**
Omega-3s + complete amino acid profile
- **Heritage raised pork**
Pasture-raised, non-factory farmed

Avoid low quality meat. If the quality isn't the best, skip chicken and default to a beef option.

WHOLE FAT ONLY · SKIP LOW-FAT



Dairy & Eggs

Always choose organic whole fat — low fat options are filled with chemical additives

- **Organic pasture-raised eggs**
Most nutrient-dense protein source available
- **Raw cheese**
Enzymes and probiotics intact — extra bonus
- **Organic grass-fed cheese**
Higher CLA and omega-3 content
- **Organic whole fat Greek yogurt**
Protein + probiotics — full fat only
- **Organic whole milk**
Raw dairy is an extra bonus when available

Your body needs good fats. Low fat & fat free dairy replace fat with chemical additives for flavor — avoid them.

PLANT-BASED · ORGANIC ONLY



Legumes

Soak & rinse before cooking to remove chemical residue — avoid soy products

- **Organic Beans**
Black, pinto, kidney, garbanzo
- **Organic Quinoa**
Complete protein — all essential amino acids
- **Organic Chickpeas**
Protein + fiber + resistant starch

Always buy organic to minimize chemical exposure. Soak and rinse before cooking. Avoid all soy products.

ON-THE-GO · PORTION CAREFULLY



Nuts & Seeds

Protein + fats + carbs in one — calorie-dense, so portion appropriately

- **Organic Pistachios**
High protein for a nut — great snack base
- **Organic Cashews**
Magnesium-rich — supports muscle function
- **Organic Chia Seeds**
Omega-3s + fiber + complete protein
- **Organic Pumpkin Seeds**
Zinc + magnesium + plant protein
- **Organic Peanuts**
Technically a legume — high protein, affordable

Great on-the-go protein with added fats and carbs. Higher in calories — portion carefully and buy organic only.

The foundational athlete's rule on protein: Prioritize grass-fed beef, wild-caught fish, and pasture-raised eggs above everything. Always choose organic whole fat dairy — never low fat. Buy legumes and nuts organic, soak legumes before cooking, and avoid all soy. Quality protein builds your foundation. Low quality protein with added hormones, antibiotics, and chemicals tears it apart.

CARBS

COMPLEX CARBS

Take longer to convert to energy. Found in whole grains, veggies, and fruit. Steady fuel.

VS

SIMPLE CARBS

Quickly converted to energy. Sugars and processed foods. Spike and crash.

COMPLEX CARBS · SLOW-BURNING

Starches

Sustained energy — buy organic when possible

- **Bread**
Opt for sourdough products
- **Pasta**
Organic or homemade
- **Rice**
Organic white Jasmine or Basmati
- **Potatoes**
Organic sweet & white — great staple
- **Veggies**
Buy organic when possible
- **Fruits**
Buy organic when eating the flesh

INDIGESTIBLE · GUT HEALTH

Fiber

Cannot be digested or used for energy — feeds your gut microbiome

- **Beans**
Black, pinto, kidney, garbanzo
- **Legumes**
- **Nuts**
- **Seeds**

Found in beans, legumes, nuts, and seeds. Essential for gut health and slowing sugar absorption.

PREBIOTIC · GUT-BOOSTING

Resistant Starches

Cook and then chill your starches in the refrigerator — transforms them into a prebiotic that feeds beneficial gut bacteria

Chilled rice, pasta & potatoes
Cook then refrigerate overnight

Green Bananas
Higher resistant starch before ripening

Beans & Lentils
Naturally high in resistant starch

Sugars — Simple Carbs

Quickly converted to energy — avoid low quality, highly refined versions

USE SPARINGLY

- **Raw Honey** — most natural sweetener
- **Pure Maple Syrup** — high quality only
- **Raw / Cane Sugar** — unrefined only
- **Fruit Juices** — 100% fresh-pressed, no sugar added

High quality honey and pure maple syrup are the most natural forms. Fresh-pressed juice is acceptable in small amounts — still sugar without the fiber, so don't overdo it.

AVOID ENTIRELY

- **Agave Nectar** — high fructose, heavily processed
- **High-Fructose Corn Syrup**
- **Refined white sugar**
- **Store-bought juices** — added sugars, pasteurized

These spike blood glucose rapidly, overwhelm the liver, and provide zero nutritional value.

The foundational athlete's rule on carbs: Build your carb intake around organic starches, fibrous vegetables, and whole fruit. Use resistant starches for gut health. When you need a sweetener, raw honey or pure maple syrup in small amounts. Avoid refined sugars, agave, and store-bought juices — they're simple carbs dressed up as health food.

FATS

STABLE · COOK-SAFE



Saturated Fats

Solid at room temp — highly stable under heat

- Lard
- Beef Tallow
- Butter
- Coconut Oil

Best for high-heat cooking — resistant to oxidation and toxic byproduct formation.

HEART-HEALTHY · VERSATILE



Monounsaturated Fats

Liquid at room temp — stable at medium heat

- Olive Oil
- Avocado
- Nuts
- Eggs

Best for low-to-medium heat, dressings, and raw use. Anti-inflammatory.

ANTI-INFLAMMATORY · RECOVERY



Omega-3 Polyunsaturated Fats

The good PUFAs — eat these to balance out omega-6 overload from processed foods

Salmon

Highest omega-3 density

Tuna

Lean protein + EPA/DHA

Eggs

Especially pasture-raised

!! Avoid Poly & Trans Fats !!

Unstable oils that oxidize under heat — turning rancid and harmful to the body

POLYUNSATURATED FATS (SEED OILS)

- Sunflower oil
- Corn oil
- Soybean oil
- Margarine
- Soy beans (as oil)

Sensitive to light and heat — oxidize easily, producing toxic aldehydes and driving chronic inflammation.

TRANS FATS (WORST OF ALL)

- Stick Margarine
- Vegetable Shortening
- Refrigerated / Frozen doughs
- Hydrogenated Oils
- Crackers, cookies, microwave popcorn

Created industrially by forcing hydrogen into liquid vegetable oil. Found in processed and fast food. No safe amount.

The foundational athlete's rule on fat: Cook with stable saturated fats (butter, tallow, coconut oil). Eat monounsaturated fats raw or at low heat (olive oil, avocado, nuts). Get omega-3s from fatty fish and pasture-raised eggs. Avoid all polyunsaturated seed oils and anything hydrogenated — these are the fats that tear your foundation down.



Performance Fuel & Food Timing

WHEN AND HOW TO FUEL

SECTION 2 · FOUNDATIONS COURSE

Performance Fuel & Food Timing

Now that you know what your body runs on, it's time to understand what food is actually doing for you — and when to use it. This section reframes how you think about food: not as good or bad, but as high-performance fuel vs. low-performance fuel.

WHAT WE COVER IN THIS SECTION

TOPIC 01

Whole Foods vs. Processed Foods

 The Bicycle Analogy

- Why whole foods deliver nutrients differently than processed ones — even when the label looks the same
- Bioavailability, cofactors, and the food matrix — why the whole is greater than the sum of its parts
- Real ingredient label breakdowns

TOPIC 02

Performance Fuel

 The Sports Car Analogy

- What "performance fuel" means — food that builds vs. food that tears down
- Protein = the mechanic, Carbs = the gas, Fats = the oil

TOPIC 03

Game Day Food Timing

 When and How to Fuel

- The Performance Plate— 50% carbs, 25% protein, 25% color
- 4 → 2 → 1 → Game Day Schedule

WHAT YOU'LL WALK AWAY KNOWING

**Why whole food is always the better choice**

Not because it's "healthy" — because it delivers nutrients in the form your body was built to absorb and use.

**How to think about food as performance fuel**

A new framework — not good vs. bad, but high-performance vs. low-performance. Every food choice either builds or breaks down.

**How to build a Game Day Performance Plate**

The exact ratios and food sources that fuel competition — and what to avoid in the hours before you play.

**Your exact game day fuel schedule**

What to eat and drink at 4 hours, 2 hours, 1 hour, game time, and post-game — so you never go in underfueled again.

"A sports car with bad fuel, no oil, and no mechanic doesn't perform. Neither does your body. The question isn't whether food matters — it's whether you're using it to your advantage."

Your food is either building your foundation — or tearing down what you've built.

Whole Foods vs. Processed Foods

Is there really any difference in how we utilize the nutrients ?



The whole is greater than the sum of its parts. When you eat a whole food, you're not just getting a list of nutrients — you're getting them in a specific structure, ratio, and chemical form that your body has evolved to recognize and use efficiently. Adding nutrients back after processing disrupts all of that.

WHY PROCESSED FOODS FALL SHORT

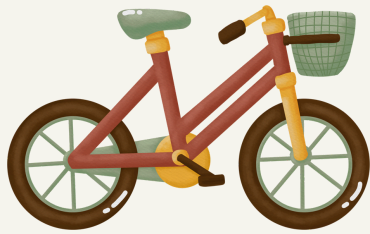
01 Bioavailability differs	• The synthetic form of a nutrient is often absorbed less efficiently than its natural form • Natural folate from leafy greens behaves differently in the body than synthetic folic acid added to bread • Your body recognizes and processes natural forms more efficiently
02 Cofactors are missing	• Many nutrients require companion nutrients to be properly absorbed or used • Vitamin D needs magnesium and K2 to function — iron from whole food comes packaged with vitamin C • Stripped and re-added nutrients lose these natural partnerships entirely
03 The food matrix matters	• Fiber, fats, proteins, and phytonutrients slow digestion and modulate how nutrients release • A fortified cereal dumps isolated nutrients into your gut all at once — without any buffering structure • The physical structure of whole food is part of how your body was designed to receive nutrients
04 Synergy is lost	• Nutrients interact with each other in complex ways that science is still mapping • Beta-carotene in a carrot behaves differently than beta-carotene in a supplement • The other compounds present alongside a nutrient fundamentally change how it behaves
05 Quantities & ratios get distorted	• Fortification adds nutrients in amounts and ratios that don't reflect what nature provides • Too much of one nutrient relative to another can create imbalances — not just gaps • Your body expects nutrients in the proportions whole food delivers them

Whole Foods vs Processed Foods

The Bicycle Analogy

Whole food

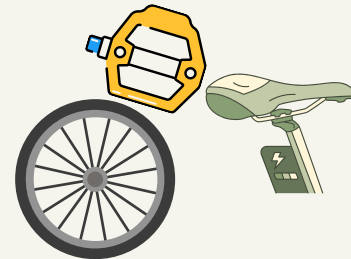
Fully assembled — ready to ride



- Frame — macronutrients (protein, carbs, fats)
- Wheels — fiber and resistant starch
- Chain — cofactors and enzymes
- Brakes — phytonutrients and antioxidants
- Gears — minerals and vitamins in ratio

Processed food

Parts re-bolted — but missing the rest



- Isolated vitamins — re-added after stripping
- Fiber — removed during processing
- Cofactors — not re-added
- Phytonutrients — gone with the whole food
- Natural ratios — distorted or lost

WHOLE FOOD

The fully assembled bike

Every nutrient, cofactor, and phytonutrient is a part that works together with all the others. Nothing is isolated. Nothing is out of ratio. The system functions as designed.

FORTIFIED PROCESSED FOOD

Wheels and seat bolted onto nothing

It looks like something. The label says it has nutrients. But the structure that makes those nutrients function together is gone — and you can't bolt it back on after the fact.

A potato → Lay's Classic Chips

START Whole potato

Fiber, vitamins, minerals — intact

STEP 1 Peel & slice

Skin — primary fiber source — removed

STEP 2 Fry in seed oil

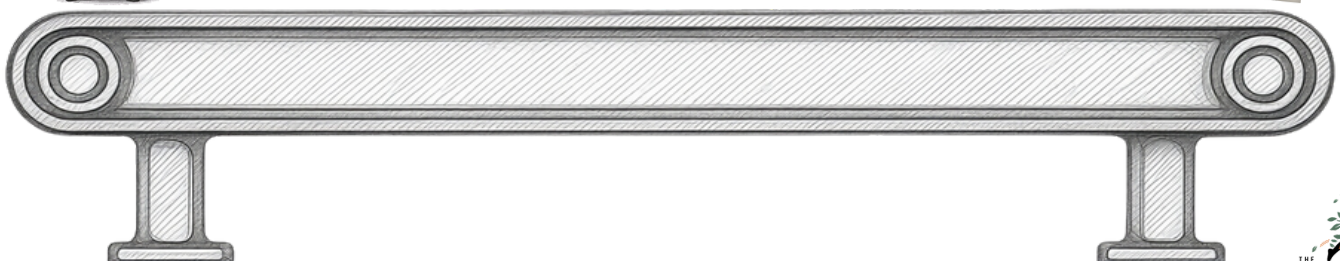
Canola / soybean oil oxidizes under heat

STEP 3 Salt & flavor

Additives added for shelf life + taste

RESULT Lay's chip

Oxidized oil, no fiber, empty calories



Calories *or* Quality?

Same calories — completely different effect on your performance and recovery

Two foods can have the **same calorie count** and give your body completely different things. One fuels performance. One just fills a number. Learning to tell the difference is one of the most important skills an elite athlete can develop.



One Oreo Cookie

26 Ingredients

70

CALORIES

3g

FAT

11g

CARBS

<1g

PROTEIN

WHAT'S INSIDE

Enriched flour Palm oil Soybean oil

Artificial flavors Artificial dyes

High fructose corn syrup

BIOENGINEERED ingredient + 19 more

VS

Hard Boiled Egg

1 Ingredient

78

CALORIES

5.3g

FAT

0.6g

CARBS

6.3g

PROTEIN

WHAT'S INSIDE

Complete protein (all 9 essential amino acids)

Choline for brain function Vitamins A, D, E, B12

Selenium Healthy fats for hormone support

Lutein & Zeaxanthin

How many of **each** could you eat before feeling full?

Volume, satiety, and what your body actually does with those calories — that's the real difference.

WHAT EACH ONE ACTUALLY DOES FOR YOUR BODY

THE OREO — EMPTY CALORIES

Spikes blood sugar fast, then crashes it. **Zero protein** means nothing to rebuild muscle. Inflammatory oils and artificial dyes add zero performance value. You'd need 8–10 to feel full — and you'd feel worse after.



THE EGG — PERFORMANCE FUEL

6.3g of complete protein starts muscle repair immediately. Stable energy with no crash. Choline supports focus and reaction time. One egg keeps you satisfied. Five eggs = the same calories as roughly 5 Oreos, with exponentially more nutritional value.

THE ELITE ATHLETE PRINCIPLE

Calories are not all created equal. Two foods with identical calorie counts can have completely opposite effects on your energy, recovery, focus, and body composition. Elite athletes don't just count calories — they make calories count. Every food decision is either investing in your performance or working against it.

Quality of Your Macronutrients

Same macros, same sport — completely different performance outcomes depending on where those macros come from



Fried chicken sandwich, bun & pickles

43 ingredients
(includes chemicals)

420
CAL

18g
FAT

41g
CARBS

29g
PROTEIN

NOTABLE INGREDIENTS

MSG DATEM Anti-foam agent Enriched bleached flour
Refined peanut oil (with anti-foam) Multiple preservatives
Silicon dioxide Soybean oil + 35 more

WHAT THIS DOES TO YOUR BODY

Inflammatory seed oils impair recovery and increase soreness. Enriched flour spikes blood sugar. MSG and preservatives add zero performance value. The 29g of protein is real — but arrives packaged in compounds that actively work against your goals.



3-piece chicken tenders

30 ingredients
(includes chemicals)

310
CAL

14g
FAT

16g
CARBS

29g
PROTEIN

NOTABLE INGREDIENTS

Yeast extract Maltodextrin Potassium chloride
Garlic powder Sugar syrup Smoke flavor
Monosodium glutamate Nonfat milk + 22 more

THE PROBLEM

Yeast extract and maltodextrin are processed additives. Soybean oil is pro-inflammatory. At 30 ingredients, this is not food — it's a manufactured food-like product designed to taste like chicken. Your body recognizes the difference.

You can hit your protein and carb targets every day on fast food and still **underperform, under-recover, and increase your injury risk**. Macros matter — but so does where they come from. The same 29g of protein from a Chick-fil-A sandwich and from a grass-fed chicken breast do not behave the same way inside your body.

6 oz chicken breast, 1 cup rice & 1 cup broccoli

3 ingredients
(5 with salt & pepper)

468
CAL

5.6g
FAT

47g
CARBS

52g
PROTEIN

WHAT'S INSIDE

Complete protein (all amino acids)
Complex carbs for sustained fuel Vitamin C (broccoli)
Calcium & magnesium B vitamins for energy metabolism
Zero inflammatory additives

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

52g of complete, bioavailable protein rebuilds muscle efficiently. Complex carbs from rice provide sustained energy without a crash. Broccoli delivers Vitamin C to accelerate collagen synthesis for tendon repair. Zero inflammatory compounds.



The whole food meal delivers **52g of protein vs. 29g** in the fast food options — nearly double — plus anti-inflammatory micronutrients, zero additives, and sustained energy. It costs less per serving than fast food and takes 20 minutes to prep.

THE ELITE ATHLETE PRINCIPLE

The quality of your macronutrients determines how well your body can actually use them. Processed proteins, refined carbohydrates, and inflammatory fats arrive packaged with compounds that slow recovery, drive inflammation, and disrupt hormones. Whole food macros arrive with the co-factors your body needs to make those macros work. Same targets — completely different outcomes.

Performance Fuel

Why the quality of your food matters

Eat foods in their whole form as much as possible.

The quality and source of your food matters more than most people realize.
Food is your fuel and the building blocks for everything your body will be capable of doing.

01 · MACRO

Protein

BUILDING
BLOCKS

- **Grass-fed, grass-finished beef**
Complete protein — anti-inflammatory fats, highest quality
- **Air-chilled organic chicken**
If quality is uncertain, default to beef instead
- **Heritage raised pork**
Pasture-raised, non-factory farmed
- **Wild-caught fish**
Omega-3s + complete amino acid profile
- **Pasture-raised, grain-free eggs**
Most nutrient-dense protein source available
- **Organic or raw whole dairy**
Always whole fat — low fat adds chemical additives for flavor

02 · MACRO

Carbs

FUEL & FIBER

- **Organic vegetables**
Complex carbs — fiber, vitamins, minerals intact
- **Organic fruit**
Buy organic when eating the flesh — fiber slows sugar absorption
- **Local raw honey**
Most natural sweetener — enzymes and minerals intact
- **Organic sourdough bread**
Fermented — easier to digest, lower glycemic impact
- **Organic grains & pastas**
Slow-burning complex carbs — sustained energy, no spike

03 · MACRO

Fats

STABLE & CLEAN

- **Organic coconut oil**
Highly stable at high heat — no oxidation, no toxic byproducts
- **Extra virgin olive oil — single source, Italy**
Best cold or low heat — anti-inflammatory monounsaturated fat
- **Organic avocado oil**
Cold use or low heat only — avoid high heat
- **Grass-fed butter or ghee**
Stable cooking fat — CLA, omega-3s, no seed oils

Macronutrients

Fueling A Sports Car Analogy



PROTEIN

The Mechanic

Think of protein as the pit crew for your sports car. Their job is preventive maintenance, performance upgrades, and repairs after every race. Without them the car deteriorates fast — no matter how good the fuel is.



CARBS

The Gas

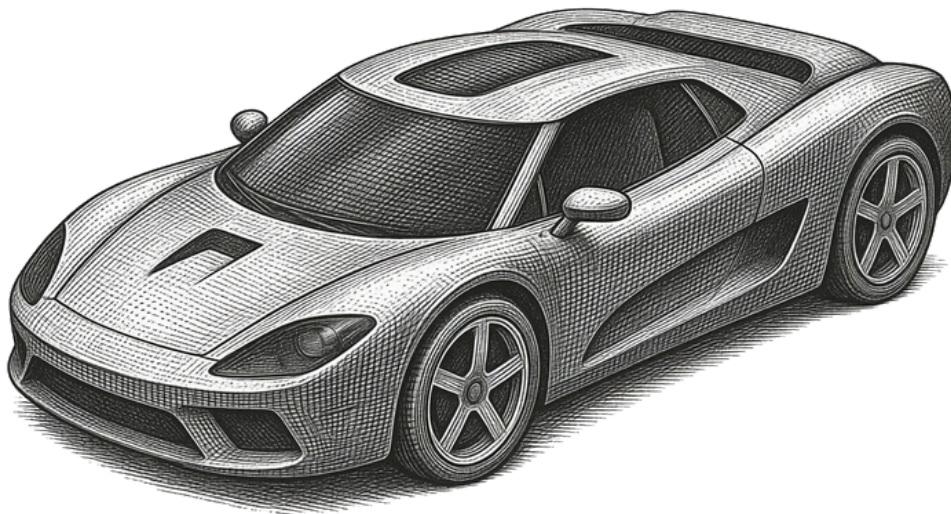
Carbs are the fuel in the tank. The more you drive — and the harder you push — the more you need. For a sports car to perform at its peak, it requires premium fuel. Quality matters.



FATS

The Oil

Fats are the engine oil. You don't fill the oil tank as often as the gas tank — it's more dense and goes further. But skip it and the engine seizes. Essential for smooth, efficient performance.



PROTEIN RULE

Never skip the mechanic. Eat protein at every meal — your muscles are being broken down and rebuilt constantly.

CARBS RULE

Use premium fuel only. Organic whole-food carbs. The harder you train, the more you need.

FATS RULE

A little goes a long way. Choose clean, stable fats — butter, tallow, coconut oil, olive oil. No seed oils.

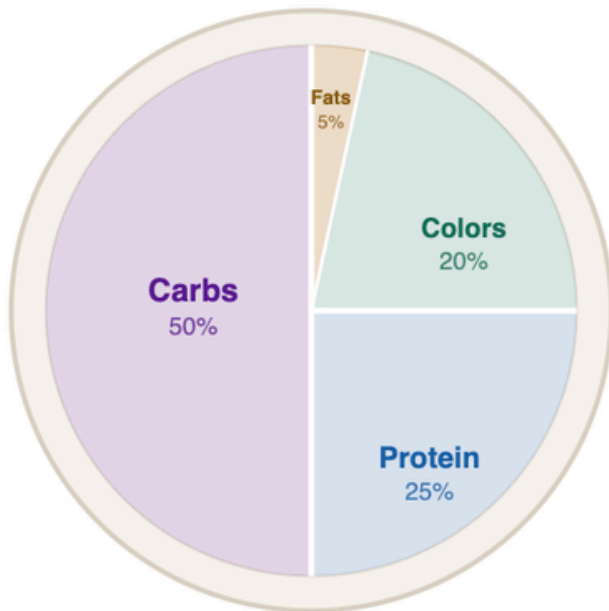
A sports car with bad fuel, no oil, and no mechanic doesn't perform.
Neither does your body.

Game Day Performance Plate

Build every pre-game and post-game meal around this framework

THE PERFORMANCE PLATE BREAKDOWN

FILL YOUR PLATE WITH...



Carbohydrates — your primary fuel

50%

Game day is not the day to go low-carb. Carbs load muscle glycogen — the fuel your muscles burn during high-intensity play. Choose whole-food complex carbs that digest steadily.

Protein — structure and repair

25%

Keeps you satiated without slowing digestion. Post-game this becomes your #1 priority — the repair window opens the moment competition ends.

Colors — micronutrients and recovery

25%

Fruits and vegetables deliver vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants that reduce inflammation and support immune function. *Fats are naturally present in protein sources and used in cooking — not plated separately.*

PERFORMANCE FUEL FOOD OPTIONS

Proteins

25%

- Chicken (grilled)
- Grass-fed beef
- Eggs
- Wild-caught fish
- Whole fat dairy
- Black beans
- Pinto beans

...and more

Carbs

50%

- Sourdough bread
- Organic white rice
- Organic pasta
- Sweet potatoes
- White potatoes
- Quinoa
- Oats

...and more

Colors

25%

- Broccoli
- Leafy greens
- Bell peppers
- Berries
- Carrots
- Bananas
- Apples

...and more

Fats

in food

- Olive oil (to cook)
- Coconut oil (to cook)
- Grass-fed butter
- Avocado
- Nuts & seeds
- Olives
- Nut butters

Use to cook or found in food

Performance fuel isn't about eating "clean" — it's about eating strategically. The foods on your plate before competition determine your energy, focus, and recovery. Think of every meal as loading your tank with the right fuel — not just filling up.

NOT PERFORMANCE FUEL

Fried foods

Fast food

Seed oils

Sugary drinks

Gatorade / Powerade

Candy or sweets

Chips / packaged snacks

Heavy sauces

Large amounts of dairy pre-game

Anything new on game day

Game Day Performance Plate

Build every pre-game and post-game meal around this framework

BUILD YOUR PLATE — EXAMPLES

Pre-Game Plate 4 hrs before

- Carb** Organic white rice or sourdough toast
- Protein** Grilled chicken or grass-fed beef
- Color** Roasted broccoli + sliced banana
- Fat** Olive oil used in cooking



Post-Game Recovery Plate within 45 min

- Carb** Sweet potato or pasta
- Protein** Grass-fed beef or eggs — protein first
- Color** Mixed berries + leafy green salad
- Fat** Avocado or grass-fed butter

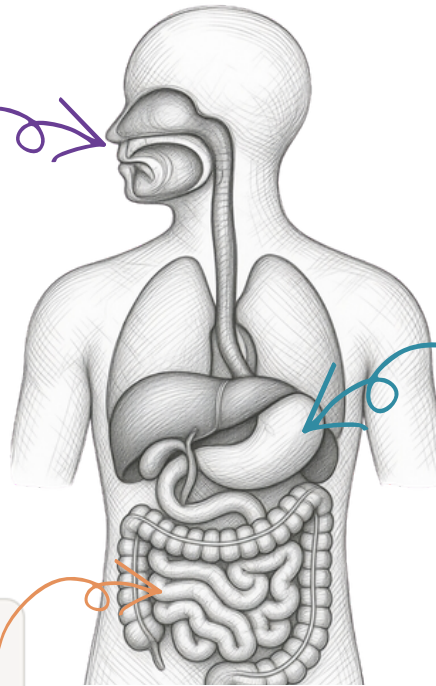


ELITE
ATHLETE
STRATEGY

The Performance Plate isn't a diet — it's a system. Eat the same way before every game so your body knows exactly what to expect. Consistency in your pre-game routine removes variables, reduces GI issues, and gives your body a reliable fuel signal before competition. Never try a new food on game day. Practice your plate at training first.

Food Timing

Timing your meals. Why digestion speed matters.



CARBS — MOUTH

Salivary amylase begins breakdown
Digestion starts the moment food enters
your mouth — the fastest macro

PROTEIN — STOMACH

Stomach acid + pepsin break it down
Then proteases in the small intestine
convert it to amino acids for absorption

FATS — SMALL INTESTINE

Bile from gallbladder emulsifies fat
Absorbed as fatty acids in the jejunum —
the slowest macro by far

Carbs	15–60 minutes	Breakdown begins in the mouth via salivary amylase, continues in the small intestine. Simple sugars (glucose, fructose) absorb in the upper small intestine — fast, within 15–60 minutes. Whole-food carbs absorb slower than refined ones.
Protein	1–3 hours	Stomach acid + pepsin start digestion, then proteases in the small intestine break proteins into amino acids absorbed through the intestinal wall. Whole food sources (meat) digest slower than whey — which is why whole food protein is more sustained.
Fats	3–5+ hours	Bile from the gallbladder emulsifies fats in the small intestine. Absorbed as fatty acids and glycerol in the jejunum (middle section). The slowest macro — which is exactly why fats keep you full and provide sustained, long-burning energy.

CARBS BEFORE TRAINING

Fast digestion = fast fuel. Eat carbs
30–90 min before a workout to top
off muscle glycogen.

PROTEIN AFTER TRAINING

Amino acids need 1–3 hours to
reach muscles. Eat protein quickly
after training to start the repair
window.

FATS FOR SUSTAINED ENERGY

Slow digestion = long burn. Fats at
meals keep you full for hours —
ideal for rest days and low-intensity
activity.

Game Day Food Timing

How to maximize your fuel for performance

4
HOURS
BEFORE

● HYDRATION

13–20 oz of water

● FUEL

Performance Plate meal

50% carbs · 25% protein · 25% color

2
HOURS
BEFORE

● HYDRATION

Finish your 13–20 oz
Started at the 4-hour mark

● FUEL

Performance snack

Carb + protein combo

1
HOUR
BEFORE

● HYDRATION

7–10 oz of water

● FUEL

Light, easy-to-digest carbs

Nothing heavy — test in practice first

GO
GAME
TIME

● HYDRATION

Sip electrolyte water
Throughout competition

● FUEL

Honey stick or quick-fuel fruit

20 min before · no food 30 min prior

3
POST
GAME

● HYDRATION

Rehydrate — $\frac{1}{2}$ your body weight in oz. for
the day

Ex. 140 lb athlete = 70 oz minimum

● FUEL

Performance Plate meal

Prioritize protein + carbs to start recovery

What you put in determines what you get out.
Fuel your performance — before, during, and after.

THE FOUNDATIONAL ATHLETE



Know What You're Eating

HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT FUEL

SECTION 3 · FOUNDATIONS COURSE

Know What You're Eating

You've learned what your body needs and when to fuel it. Now it's time to learn how to choose the right fuel — and spot what's working against you.

WHAT WE COVER IN THIS SECTION

TOPIC 01

The Three Evils

- Seed oils— why they damage your cells
- Added sugar— how it hides in your food
- Chemical additives— dyes, preservatives, and fillers
- How to identify all three on any label

TOPIC 02

Nutrition Labels

- How to read a nutrition facts panel
- The ingredient list vs. the nutrition panel
- What the 5-ingredient rule means
- Red flags to spot in under 10 seconds

TOPIC 03

Performance Swaps

- Better brand alternatives you can find anywhere
- Homemade swaps for common snacks
- Not good vs. bad— just higher vs. lower performance fuel
- Building a go-to approved snack list

WHAT YOU'LL WALK AWAY WITH

**The ability to read any label in seconds**

You'll know what to look for and what to put back on the shelf — without overthinking it.

**A clear framework — not a list of rules**

The Three Evils give you a simple filter that applies to every food, every meal, every time.

**Real swaps you can use immediately**

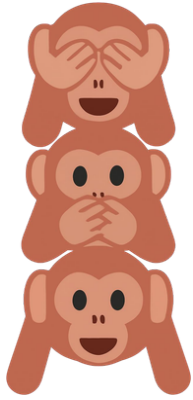
Better versions of the foods you already eat — no drastic overhaul required.

**A performance mindset around food**

Not good food vs. bad food — but high-performance fuel vs. low-performance fuel.

"You don't have to be perfect. You just have to know what you're working with — and make the best choice available to you in that moment."

Your food is either building your foundation — or tearing down what you've built.



The Three Evils

What's hindering in your processed foods

01 — INFLAMMATORY

Seed Oils

Canola, soybean, sunflower, corn, and cottonseed oils are loaded with omega-6 PUFAs. The modern diet delivers omega-6 at 15–25x the ratio of omega-3s — an imbalance the body cannot compensate for.

What they do to you:

- Oxidize under heat — producing toxic aldehydes and free radicals
- Drive chronic systemic inflammation
- Disrupt cell membrane integrity
- Impair mitochondria → reduced energy & endurance
- Blunt post-workout recovery & testosterone

Swap for:

Butter · Ghee · Tallow · Coconut oil
· Olive oil · Avocado oil

02 — METABOLIC

Added Sugar & Sweeteners

High-fructose corn syrup, dextrose, sucralose, aspartame, and agave are engineered to override fullness signals. Artificial sweeteners alter gut bacteria and insulin response — often backfiring even without calories.

What they do to you:

- Spike blood glucose → insulin surges → insulin resistance
- Excess fructose converts to fat in the liver
- Destroy gut microbiome diversity
- Cause energy crashes mid-training
- Suppress growth hormone & promote fat storage

Watch for:

Anything ending in "-ose" · Corn syrup · Aspartame · Sucralose · Acesulfame-K

03 — SYNTHETIC

Chemical Additives & Dyes

Red 40, Yellow 5 & 6 (petroleum-derived), BHA, BHT, carrageenan, and polysorbate 80 are added for color, shelf life, and texture. The human gut was never designed to process these regularly.

What they do to you:

- Artificial dyes → hyperactivity, allergic response
- BHA/BHT disrupt hormonal signaling (endocrine disruptors)
- Emulsifiers erode the gut mucosal lining
- Impair nutrient absorption → less fuel to your muscles
- Several dyes banned in Europe still legal in the US

Rule of thumb:

If you can't pronounce it or wouldn't find it in a kitchen — put it back.

The 3 Evils Rule of Thumb: Eat real, whole, minimally processed foods. Meat from pasture-raised animals. Organic Vegetables from healthy soil. Eat whole fruits for something sweet and skip the added white sugar and sweeteners. Get your Fats from natural sources like animals.

*The food you eat is either building your foundation to perform —
or tearing it down!*



Nutrition Labels

How to read what you are actually eating

1

Serving information

Always check this first. All the numbers on the label are based on one serving — not the whole package.

2

Calories

How much fuel your body receives per serving. Always adjust for how much you actually eat — not just the stated serving size.

3

Nutrients & ingredient list

The two most important sections. This is where you find the macronutrient breakdown and determine whether the product is actually healthy.

4

% Daily Value

Based on a 2,000 calorie diet. This varies person to person — don't focus too heavily on these numbers.

RED FLAGS IN THIS LABEL

- Corn Syrup — added sugar
- Rapeseed Oil — seed oil
- Maltodextrin — ultra-processed
- Natural Flavors — unregulated additive
- Soy Lecithin — chemical additive

Nutrition Facts

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

Amount per serving

Calories 280

	% 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%

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

INGREDIENTS: Whole Grain Oats, Corn Syrup, Rapeseed Oil, Rice Puffs (Rice Flour, Salt), Dried Cranberries, Honey, Salt, Soy Lecithin, Maltodextrin, Natural Flavors
CONTAINS SOY; MAY CONTAIN TRACE AMOUNTS OF PEANUTS OR WHEAT

1 Check serving size first

Every number on the label multiplies by servings consumed. Eating half the bag? Multiply everything by the number of servings you ate.

2 Calories = fuel load

Calories tell you how much energy you're getting. More activity = more fuel needed. Match your intake to your output.

3 Nutrients + ingredients

The macro breakdown tells you what's in it. The ingredient list tells you what it's made of. The ingredient list is always more important — scan it for the 3 evils.

4 % DV is a guide, not a rule

Daily values are based on a 2,000 calorie average. Your needs vary by body size, training load, and goals — use %DV as context, not a target.

Things to look for and avoid in the ingredient list
If you see any of these, put it back.

Added sugar Corn syrup, dextrose, maltodextrin, HFCS, anything ending in -ose. Hidden in nearly every packaged food.	Trans fat & seed oils Hydrogenated oils, canola, soybean, sunflower, safflower, rapeseed, cottonseed oil. The #1 ingredient to avoid.	Non-whole-food additives Artificial colors (Red 40, Yellow 5), natural flavors, carrageenan, BHA/BHT, chemical preservatives, dyes.
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The ingredient list never lies. If you can't pronounce it or don't recognize it as food — don't eat it.

Processed Foods

Evil #1 Seed oils **Evil #2** Added sugar / sweeteners **Evil #3** Chemical additives & dyes



Lay's Classic Chips 160 cal / serving

Potatoes, Vegetable Oil (Canola, Corn, Soybean, and/or Sunflower Oil), Salt.

- **Evil #1** — 4 seed oil options, any one of which oxidizes under heat

Takis Fuego 150 cal / serving

Potato, Vegetable Oil (Canola & Palm Oil), Seasoning [Maltodextrin, Salt, Citric Acid, Hydrolyzed Corn Protein, Sugar, MSG, Modified Corn Starch, Acetic Acid, Natural and Artificial Flavors, Onion Powder, Silicon Dioxide, Carmine Lake, Red 40 Lake, Garlic Powder, Disodium Inosinate, Disodium Guanylate, Paprika Extract, Yellow 6 Lake, Mono and Diglycerides].

- **Evil #1** — canola + palm oil
- **Evil #2** — maltodextrin + sugar + MSG
- **Evil #3** — Red 40, Yellow 6, artificial flavors



Goldfish Cheddar 140 cal / serving

Enriched Wheat Flour (Flour, Niacin, Reduced Iron, Thiamine Mononitrate, Riboflavin, Folic Acid), Cheddar Cheese, Vegetable Oils (Canola, Sunflower and/or Soybean), Salt, Sugar, Autolyzed Yeast Extract, Paprika, Spices, Celery, Onion Powder, Monocalcium Phosphate. Contains bioengineered food ingredients.

- **Evil #1** — canola/sunflower/soybean oils
- **Evil #2** — sugar + autolyzed yeast extract
- **Evil #3** — GMO / bioengineered ingredients

Oreo Cookies 140 cal / 2 cookies

Sugar, Unbleached Enriched Flour (Wheat Flour, Niacin, Reduced Iron, Thiamine Mononitrate, Riboflavin, Folic Acid), Palm Oil, Soybean and/or Canola Oil, Cocoa, Corn Starch, High Fructose Corn Syrup, Corn Syrup, Baking Soda, Salt, Soy Lecithin, Chocolate, Natural and Artificial Flavor, Blue 1 Lake, Blue 2 Lake, Red 40, Red 3, Carbon Dioxide.

- **Evil #1** — palm + soybean + canola oil
- **Evil #2** — sugar is the #1 ingredient + HFCS
- **Evil #3** — Blue 1 & 2, Red 40 & 3 dyes



Gatorade 80 cal / bottle · 41% DV added sugar

Water, Sugar, Dextrose, Citric Acid, Salt, Sodium Citrate, Monopotassium Phosphate, Modified Food Starch, Natural Flavor, Glycerol Ester of Rosin, Red 40, Caramel Color.

- **Evil #2** — sugar + dextrose = 41% of daily added sugar in one bottle
- **Evil #3** — Red 40, caramel color, glycerol ester of rosin (pine resin derivative)



What these labels have in common

Seed oils in everything

Canola, soybean, sunflower, and palm oil appear in almost every product — even "simple" ones.

Sugar is hidden everywhere

It appears under multiple names — dextrose, HFCS, maltodextrin, corn syrup — often more than once per label.

Chemical dyes are standard

Red 40, Blue 1, Yellow 6 — petroleum-derived dyes — appear routinely in everyday snacks, sports drinks, and cookies.



Make The Swap

Doritos vs. Homemade Sweet Potato Chips

One is engineered in a lab. The other is made in your kitchen.



THE POPULAR CHOICE

Doritos

One of the most engineered snacks on the market

WHAT'S ACTUALLY IN IT

Corn (GMO)

Bioengineered base crop — Evil #4

GMO

Vegetable Oils (corn/soybean)

Seed oils — Evil #1

Avoid

Maltodextrin

Ultra-processed sugar — spikes glucose faster than table sugar

Avoid

Monosodium Glutamate (MSG)

Engineered flavor enhancer — overrides fullness

Avoid

Red 40 / Yellow 5 & 6

Petroleum-derived dyes — Evil #3

Avoid

Disodium Phosphate / Inosinate

Synthetic flavor amplifiers

Avoid

Natural & Artificial Flavors

Unregulated chemical additives — Evil #3

Avoid

THE 3 EVILS PRESENT

● SEED OILS ● ADDED SUGAR

● CHEMICAL ADDITIVES

WHY IT'S DAMAGING

- ⊗ **Scientifically engineered to be addictive**
MSG, maltodextrin, and layered synthetic flavors are calibrated to hit the "bliss point" — making it nearly impossible to stop eating
- ⊗ **GMO corn + seed oils = double hit**
Glyphosate-sprayed GMO corn combined with inflammatory soybean oil attacks both your gut microbiome and your omega balance
- ⊗ **Dyes banned in Europe**
Yellow 5 & 6 and Red 40 are restricted or require warning labels in the EU — still freely used in US snacks

THE FOUNDATIONAL CHOICE

Homemade Sweet Potato Chips

Three ingredients. Real nutrition. Real crunch.

WHAT'S ACTUALLY IN IT

Organic Sweet Potato

Vitamin A, potassium, fiber, complex carbs

Real

Organic Coconut Oil

Stable saturated fat — no oxidation, no seed oils

Clean

Sea Salt

Natural electrolyte — that's the whole list

Clean

THE 3 EVILS PRESENT

None. Zero seed oils, zero added sugar, zero chemical additives.

WHY COCONUT OIL MATTERS HERE

- ✓ **Stable at high heat**
Coconut oil's high smoke point and saturated fat structure means it doesn't oxidize or produce toxic aldehydes when frying — seed oils do
- ✓ **MCTs support energy & recovery**
Medium-chain triglycerides in coconut oil are rapidly converted to energy — useful for athletes before or after training
- ✓ **Sweet potato = complex carb fuel**
Slow-digesting carbs + fiber + beta-carotene make this a real energy source, not an empty calorie bomb

RECIPE

HOMEMADE SWEET POTATO CHIPS

INGREDIENTS

- 2 medium organic sweet potatoes, scrubbed
- 2–3 cups organic coconut oil (for frying)
- Sea salt to taste
- Optional: smoked paprika or garlic powder

INSTRUCTIONS

- Slice sweet potatoes paper-thin (1/16") — use a mandoline if you have one
- Pat slices completely dry with a clean towel — moisture = soggy chips
- Heat coconut oil in a heavy pan to 325–350°F
- Fry in small batches 2–3 min, flipping once, until edges curl and golden
- Drain on a wire rack, season immediately with sea salt
- Let cool fully — they crisp up as they cool

Pro tip: Don't overcrowd the pan — it drops the oil temp and makes chips greasy instead of crispy. Small batches only.

The foundational athlete's choice: Doritos are one of the most chemically engineered snacks ever made — GMO corn, seed oils, petroleum dyes, MSG, and synthetic flavor amplifiers all in one bag. Homemade sweet potato chips fried in coconut oil give you complex carbs, real vitamins, and a fat that actually performs under heat. Same satisfying crunch. One builds your foundation — the other was designed to demolish it one chip at a time.



Make The Swap

Goldfish Crackers vs. Homemade Cheddar Crackers

Same snack idea. One builds your foundation, one chips away at it.



THE POPULAR CHOICE

Goldfish Crackers

A kid's staple hiding a long ingredient list

WHAT'S ACTUALLY IN IT

Enriched Wheat Flour

Refined, stripped of nutrients, re-fortified

Refined

Cheddar Cheese

One of the few real ingredients

Fine

Vegetable Oils (canola/soybean)

Seed oils — Evil #1

Avoid

Sugar

Added to a savory cracker — Evil #2

Avoid

Autolyzed Yeast Extract

Hidden MSG-like flavor enhancer

Avoid

Annatto Extract (color)

Synthetic colorant — Evil #3

Avoid

Nonfat Milk / Whey

Processed dairy derivatives

Processed

THE 3 EVILS PRESENT

● SEED OILS

● ADDED SUGAR

● CHEMICAL ADDITIVES

WHY IT'S A TREAT, NOT A SNACK

- ⊗ **No real protein or fat balance**
Mostly refined carbs — no macronutrient foundation to sustain energy or trigger satiety
- ⊗ **Seed oils drive inflammation**
Canola and soybean oil increase omega-6 load, slowing recovery and blunting performance
- ⊗ **Engineered to overconsume**
Autolyzed yeast extract and added sugar are designed to override fullness signals — you can't eat just one serving

THE FOUNDATIONAL CHOICE

Homemade Cheddar Crackers

All organic. Five ingredients. Real food.

WHAT'S ACTUALLY IN IT

Organic Whole Wheat Flour

Whole grain — fiber, minerals intact

Whole

Organic Sharp Cheddar

Real fat + protein — the macro foundation

Real

Organic Grass-Fed Butter

Healthy fat — no seed oils

Clean

Sea Salt

Natural electrolyte, no additives

Clean

Cold Water

That's it. Nothing else.

Clean

THE 3 EVILS PRESENT

None. Zero seed oils, zero added sugar, zero chemical additives.

WHY IT QUALIFIES AS A SNACK

- ✓ **Fat + protein + carb balance**
Cheese and butter provide real fat and protein alongside the carb — all three macros in one snack
- ✓ **Grass-fed butter over seed oils**
Organic butter delivers CLA and omega-3s — anti-inflammatory, not pro-inflammatory like canola
- ✓ **You know every ingredient**
Five words on the ingredient list. No chemistry degree required.

SIMPLE RECIPE

HOMEMADE ORGANIC CHEDDAR CRACKERS

- 1 cup organic whole wheat flour
- 1½ cups shredded organic sharp cheddar
- 4 tbsp cold organic grass-fed butter
- ½ tsp sea salt
- 2–3 tbsp cold water to bind

Mix, roll thin, cut, bake 350°F for 15–18 min until golden

The foundational athlete's choice: Homemade cheddar crackers hit all three macronutrients, use grass-fed butter instead of inflammatory seed oils, and contain zero added sugar or chemical additives. Goldfish feel like a snack — but with seed oils, added sugar, and flavor enhancers engineered to keep you eating, they function like a treat. If you can make it with five ingredients you recognize, it belongs in your foundation.



Make The Swap

Gatorade vs. Water + Lemon + Sea Salt

Same goal. Very different ingredients.



THE POPULAR CHOICE

Gatorade

Marketed as a sports drink — but read the label

WHAT'S ACTUALLY IN IT

Water

The one good ingredient

Fine

Sugar / Dextrose

34g per 20oz — Evil #2

Avoid

Citric Acid

Synthetic acidifier — gut irritant

Caution

Natural Flavor

Unregulated chemical additive

Avoid

Red 40 / Blue 1

Petroleum-derived dyes — Evil #3

Avoid

Sodium / Potassium

Low amounts, synthetic form

Minimal

THE 3 EVILS PRESENT

● ADDED SUGAR

● ARTIFICIAL DYES

● CHEMICAL ADDITIVES

PERFORMANCE IMPACT



Sugar spike then crash

34g of sugar causes an insulin surge mid-activity, followed by an energy crash



Gut disruption

Dyes and synthetic additives irritate the gut lining — compromising nutrient absorption when you need it most

THE FOUNDATIONAL CHOICE

Water + Lemon + Sea Salt

Real electrolytes. Zero evils.

WHAT'S ACTUALLY IN IT

Filtered Water

Pure hydration base

Clean

Fresh Lemon Juice

Potassium, vitamin C, citrate

Natural

Sea Salt / Himalayan Salt

Sodium, magnesium, 80+ trace minerals

Natural

ELECTROLYTES DELIVERED

Sodium

Sea salt — regulates fluid balance

Potassium

Lemon juice — muscle contraction

Magnesium

Sea salt trace minerals — recovery

Chloride

Sea salt — nerve signaling

THE 3 EVILS PRESENT

None. Zero added sugar, zero dyes, zero chemical additives.

PERFORMANCE IMPACT



Steady hydration, no crash

No sugar means no insulin spike — just clean, sustained fluid and mineral replenishment



Broader mineral spectrum

Sea salt delivers 80+ trace minerals that support muscle function, nerve signaling, and recovery



Gut stays intact

No additives or dyes — nutrient absorption stays at full capacity during and after training

The foundational athlete's choice: Water + lemon + sea salt gives you everything Gatorade claims to — sodium, potassium, and hydration — without the 34g of added sugar, petroleum-derived dyes, or synthetic additives. It builds your foundation. Gatorade chips away at it.



Better Brands

On-the-go snacks that don't compromise your foundation

These are packaged food picks — cleaner ingredients, no seed oils, no added junk. Use them for convenience, not as a replacement for whole food.

CHIPS & CRUNCH

Lesser Evil Popcorn

Coconut oil, no seed oils

CLEAN

Siete Tortilla Chips

Avocado oil, grain-free

CLEAN

Siete Potato Chips

Avocado oil base

CLEAN

Masa Tortilla Chips

Simple ingredients, corn-based

CLEAN

PROTEIN SNACKS

Wonderful Pistachios

Roasted & salted, whole food

PROTEIN

Think Jerky

Grass-fed beef, clean label

PROTEIN

Lineage Meat Sticks

Grass-fed, organ-enriched

PROTEIN

Organic String Cheese

Whole fat, organic dairy

PROTEIN

FRUIT & NATURAL SWEET

Fruit Splits

Real fruit, no added sugar

WHOLE FRUIT

Go Go Squeeze

Applesauce pouch, no additives

WHOLE FRUIT

That's It

2 ingredients — fruit only

WHOLE FRUIT

That's It Fruit Bars

Organic fruit bars, no fillers

WHOLE FRUIT

PANTRY & BREAKFAST

Purely Elizabeth

Organic granola, clean grains

GRAIN

Love Bird Cereals

Grain-free, organic, minimal sugar

GRAIN-FREE

Parm Crisps

1 ingredient — parmesan

PROTEIN

Gimme Roasted Seaweed

Sesame oil, micronutrient-rich

CLEAN

Rule of thumb for packaged food

- Limit to 1 packaged snack per day
- Use for on-the-go situations only
- Eat whole, fresh food at home whenever possible

Better Brands

Pantry staples worth buying

These are everyday cooking and pantry essentials — cleaner versions of the condiments, sauces, grains, and staples most households already use.

BREADS & GRAINS

Rise & Puff Tortillas

4 organic ingredients

GRAIN

Prager Bros Baguette

Sourdough, clean fermented grain

SOURDOUGH

Prager Bros Buns

Sourdough hamburger buns

SOURDOUGH

Bob's Red Mill Organic Masa

Organic, non-GMO corn flour

GRAIN

CONDIMENTS & SAUCES

True Made Foods Ketchup

Veggie-based, no added sugar

NO SUGAR

True Made Foods BBQ Sauce

No HFCS, clean sweetener

NO SUGAR

Chosen Foods Avocado Mayo

100% avocado oil — no seed oils

CLEAN FAT

Carbone Pizza Sauce

Simple tomato, no additives

CLEAN

PASTA, VINEGAR & SWEETENERS

Montebello Organic Pasta

Italian organic semolina

GRAIN

BioOrto Pasta Sauce

Organic, single-origin Italian

CLEAN

Bionaturae Balsamic Vinegar

Organic, no added sulfites

CLEAN

Dickinsons Raw Honey

Unfiltered, enzymes intact

NATURAL SWEET

SEASONINGS, BEANS & SPREADS

Siete Dry Seasoning

No fillers, clean spice blends

CLEAN

Siete Charro Beans

Organic, no lard or additives

PROTEIN

CB's Nuts Peanut Butter

1 ingredient — just peanuts

PROTEIN

DeLallo Simply Pesto

Basil, olive oil, no seed oils

CLEAN FAT

Notes:

Foundational Athlete Notes