

# Breakfast Offer versus Serve—Reimbursable Meal Quick Check

For ideas regarding signage and instructions to help students and staff, see USDA Best Practice Web page at <https://healthymeals.fns.usda.gov/best-practices>

Is there a FRUIT and/or VEGETABLE on the tray in the correct portion size (minimum of 1/2 cup)?  
(Reminder: At least four food items MUST be offered from the three food groups to be eligible for OVS)

Yes

Are there 3 food ITEMS on the tray including fruit/vegetable in required portion sizes?

Yes

Congratulations! This is a reimbursable breakfast!

No

Add food item(s) in the correct portion size until you reach a minimum of three food items (one being 1/2 cup fruit or vegetable)

No

Add a FRUIT or VEGETABLE

Are there 3 food ITEMS on the tray including fruit/vegetable in required portion sizes?

Yes

Congratulations! This is a reimbursable breakfast!

No

Add correct portion size of missing component- Milk, Grain (Meat/Meat Alternate as grain), Fruit (Vegetable as Fruit)

## Daily-Required Portion Sizes:

Milk—1 cup  
Fruit— 1 cup (Grade K–12) (Can be offered as two ½-cup portions) (Starchy vegetables can substitute for fruit under certain conditions or can be an extra)  
Grains—1 oz. eq. (Grade K–12)  
(Meat/Meat Alternates (m/ma) can substitute for grains or be an extra. Must offer 1 oz. eq. grain to count m/ma as grain)

## What counts as a food item?

1 oz. eq. grain  
½-cup fruit  
1-cup milk  
Extras do NOT count as a food item

## Vegetable Subgroup List

### 1. Dark Green Vegetables

- arugula lettuce
- bok choy
- broccoli and broccoli rabe
- butter head lettuce (Boston, bibb), raw
- chard
- cilantro
- collard greens
- dark green leafy lettuce
- kale
- mesclun
- mixed dark leafy (includes romaine, chicory, escarole, and endive)
- mustard greens
- parsley
- red leaf lettuce
- romaine lettuce
- seaweed (laver)
- spinach
- turnip greens
- watercress

**REQUIREMENT:** ½ CUP PER WEEK (all grades)

### 2. Red & Orange Vegetables

- acorn squash
- butternut squash
- carrots and carrot juice
- hubbard squash
- orange and red peppers
- pumpkin
- sweet potatoes and yellow yams
- tomatoes and tomato juice

**REQUIREMENT:** ¾ CUP K–5 AND 6–8,  
1½ CUPS GRADES 9–12 PER WEEK

### 3. Beans and Peas

- black beans
- black-eyed peas (mature, dry)
- edamame (soybeans)
- garbanzo beans (chickpeas)
- kidney beans
- lentils
- lima beans (mature) including fava and mung
- navy beans
- pinto beans
- soy beans
- split peas
- white beans

**REQUIREMENT:** ½ CUP PER WEEK (all grades)

### 4. Starchy Vegetables

- cassava
- corn
- fresh cowpeas, field peas, or black-eyed peas (not dry)
- green bananas
- green lima beans
- green peas
- home fries and hashed browns (potatoes, hashed brown, frozen, plain, prepared)
- jicama
- lima beans (immature)
- parsnips
- plantains
- taro
- water chestnuts
- white potatoes
- white yams

**REQUIREMENT:** ½ CUP PER WEEK (all grades)

For more information on vegetables go to the USDA Food Buying Guide Web page at  
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-school-meal-programs>

## Vegetable Subgroup List

### 5. Other Vegetables includes all other fresh, frozen and canned vegetables, cooked or raw, such as:

- artichokes
- asparagus
- avocado
- bamboo shoots
- bean sprouts
- beets
- brussels sprouts
- cabbage (green, red, or celery/Napa)
- cactus
- cauliflower
- celery
- chives
- cucumbers and pickles
- eggplant
- garlic
- green beans
- green peppers
- iceberg (head) lettuce
- mung bean sprouts
- mushrooms
- okra
- olives
- onions
- purple bell peppers
- radishes
- seaweed (wakame)
- snow peas
- summer squash (i.e.: zucchini, yellow, spaghetti)
- tomatillos
- turnips
- wax beans
- yellow peppers
- Plus any vegetable from lists 1, 2, and 3

**REQUIREMENT:** ½ CUP K–5 AND 6–8,  
¾ CUP FOR GRADES 9–12 PER WEEK

### 6. Additional Vegetables to Reach Total

- Mixed Vegetables (unknown amounts of each vegetable)

**REQUIREMENT:** 1 CUP K–5 AND 6–8,  
1½ CUP FOR GRADES 9–12 PER  
WEEK

## Offer versus Serve for LUNCH

Offer versus Serve (OVS) allows students to decline some of the food offered at lunch or breakfast and meals can still be claimed for reimbursement. The goals of OVS are to reduce food waste and to permit students to choose the foods they want to eat. Under OVS, schools must **offer** all the required food components in the required quantities for lunch and for breakfast. Students are required to **select** at least three components in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and at least three food items in the School Breakfast Program (SBP) and one of those items selected must be ½-cup fruit and/or vegetable. OVS operates differently at lunch and at breakfast.

A **food component** is one of five food groups that comprise a reimbursable lunch. These are fruits, vegetables, grains, meat/meat alternate (m/ma), and fluid milk. Schools must always offer all five-food components in at least the minimum daily-required quantities.

Under lunch OVS:

- OVS is required for senior high schools at lunch and optional for other grades
- Schools must offer all five required meal components in the minimum quantity
- Students must select at least three of the five components and one must be ½ cup of fruit or vegetable or a combination of both
- To count as one of the three components, the quantity must be equal to the minimum daily requirement for the food component except that ½ cup of fruit or vegetable counts as the full component requirement for all grades. The USDA made an exception for the fruit and vegetable components. If ½ cup of either fruit or vegetable is taken, it counts as the FULL COMPONENT for all grade groups.
  - Note: for grades 9–12, if two of the components selected are fruits and vegetables, the student must select the full 1 cup of the second to credit both as components selected
- Duplicates of food components cannot be counted twice
- There must be signage indicating what choices or combinations the student may select

LUNCH	Amount of Food Per Week (Minimum Per Day)			
Meal Pattern	Grades K–5	Grades K–8	Grades 6–8	Grades 9–12
<b>Fruits</b> (cups)	2½ (½)	2½ (½)	2½ (½)	5 (1)
<b>Vegetables</b> (cups)	3¾ (¾)	3¾ (¾)	3¾ (¾)	5 (1)
Includes weekly subgroups from dark green, red/orange, beans and peas (legumes), starchy, and other				
<b>Grain Minimums</b> (oz eq)	8 (1)	8 (1)	8 (1)	10 (2)
<b>Meats/Meat Alternate Minimums</b> (oz eq)	8 (1)	9 (1)	9 (1)	10 (2)
<b>Fluid Milk</b> (Cups)	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)

## Offer versus Serve for LUNCH

### Reimbursable Meals Examples



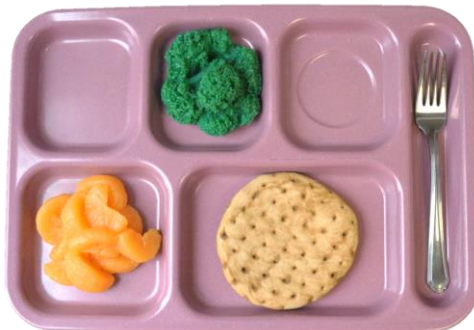
Whole grain flatbread 2 oz. eq.  
Sweet Potato Chunks 1 cup  
Grapes 1/2 cup

### Not Reimbursable Meals Examples



Grilled chicken – 2oz. Eq.  
Brown Rice – 2 oz. eq.

**No fruit or vegetable**



Broccoli 1/2 cup

Whole grain  
flatbread 2 oz.  
eq.

Mandarin  
oranges 1/2 cup

Reimbursable for K–8 only

**NOT** reimbursable for 9–12

If three components are taken for 9–12 and 2 of them are a fruit and a vegetable, if the student takes a half cup of the fruit, a full cup needs to be taken for the vegetable and vice versa.



Broiled fish 2 oz. eq.  
Whole Grain Bread 2 oz. eq.  
Fat Free Chocolate milk 1 cup

**No fruit or vegetable**



Ginger Chicken 2 oz. eq.  
Strawberries 1/2 cup  
Green Beans 1/2 cup  
Brown Rice 2 oz. eq.  
Fat-free Chocolate Milk 1 cup



Grilled chicken 2 oz. eq.  
Corn tortilla 2 oz. eq.  
Tomato slice 1/4 cup  
Fat free milk 1 cup

**Short on vegetable serving**

### Resources:

<http://cns.ucdavis.edu/resources/webinars/ovs.html>  
[http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cn/SP41\\_2015a.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cn/SP41_2015a.pdf)  
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/SP43-2014os.pdf>

Offer versus Serve for LUNCH

## Offer versus Serve for BREAKFAST

Offer versus Serve (OVS) allows students to decline some of the food offered at lunch or breakfast and meals can still be claimed for reimbursement. The goals of OVS are to reduce food waste and to permit students to choose the foods they want to eat. Under OVS, schools must **offer** all the required food components in the required quantities for lunch and for breakfast. Students are required to **select** at least three components in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and at least three food items in the School Breakfast Program (SBP) and one of those items selected must be ½-cup fruit and/or vegetable. OVS operates differently at lunch and at breakfast.

A **food component** is one of three food groups that comprise a reimbursable breakfast. These are fruits (or vegetables offered as a substitute for fruit), grains (or M/MA offered as a substitute for grains), and fluid milk. Schools must always offer all three-food components in at least the minimum daily-required quantities.

A **food item** is a specific food offered within the three food components. For the purposes of OVS, a school must offer at least four food items from the three required food components (fruits, grains, milk). If only three food items are offered, then this is not considered OVS and the student must take all that is offered.

Examples of what is considered a food item:

1 oz. eq. grain = one food item

½ cup fruit = one food item

1 cup milk = one food item

Under breakfast OVS:

- OVS optional for all grade levels
- At least four food items must be offered from the three food groups to be eligible for OVS
- All students, at any grade level, must select at least three food items *not* COMPONENTS
- One item selected must be ½ cup of fruit or vegetable or a combination of both
- If selected, grains (or M/MA offered for this component) and milk, must meet the daily minimum required amount
- There must be signage indicating what choices or combinations the student may select

BREAKFAST	Amount of Food Per Week (Minimum Per Day)					
Meal Pattern	Grades K–12	Grades K–5	Grades K–8	Grades 6–8	Grades 6–12	Grades 9–12
Fruits (cups)	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)
Vegetables (cups) Optional as extra or substitute for fruits under certain conditions	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grain <b>Minimums</b> (oz eq)	9 (1)	7 (1)	8 (1)	8 (1)	9 (1)	9 (1)
Meat/Meat Alternate Minimums (oz eq) Optional as extra or substitute for grains. Must serve at least 1 oz eq grain each day.	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fluid Milk (Cups)	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)	5 (1)



## Offer versus Serve for BREAKFAST

### Example 1: (four-food item menu)

Oatmeal (½ cup/1 oz. eq. grain) = one food item  
 Apple slices (½ cup) = one food item  
 Orange juice (½ cup) = one food item  
 Milk (1 cup) = one food item

Possible reimbursable meal combinations:

Oatmeal, apple, and milk, **or**  
 Oatmeal, orange juice, and milk, **or**  
 Apple, orange juice, and milk, **or**  
 Oatmeal, apple, orange juice, milk

In this example (1), the menu planner offers 1 cup of fruit but split into ½-cup servings to count as two food items. Therefore, in this example there are four food items being offered: ½-cup oatmeal, ½-cup apple slices, ½-cup orange juice, and 1-cup milk. The student must select at least three of the four food items and one of those items must be ½-cup fruit or they can select all items offered.

### Example 3: (five-item menu)

Cereal (1 oz. eq.) = one food item  
 Toast (1 oz. eq.) = one food item  
 Fruit (½ cup) = one food item  
 Fruit (½ cup) = one food item  
 Milk (1 cup) = one food item

Some possible reimbursable meal combinations:

Two toasts, ½ fruit, **or**  
 Two cereal, two fruit (1 cup), **or**  
 Cereal, fruit, milk

In this example (3), the menu planner is offering two different 1 oz. eq. grain items at breakfast and students are allowed to take multiple 1 oz. eq. grains including two of the same grain. It is at the discretion of the menu planner to allow duplicates for the grains or duplicates of M/MA when substituted for grains. You may also offer duplicates of fruit. However, you may **not** offer duplicates of milk.

### Example 2: (five-food item menu)

4 oz. Muffin (= 2 oz. eq. grains) = two food items  
 Banana (1/2 cup) = one food item  
 Apple juice (1/2 cup) = one food item  
 Milk (1 cup) = one food item

Possible reimbursable meal combinations:

All food items, **or**  
 Muffin and banana, **or**  
 Muffin and apple juice, **or**  
 Banana, apple juice, and milk

In this example (2), the muffin is a 2 oz. eq. grain, so the menu planner has the discretion to count it as one or two food items. In our example, the menu planner counted the muffin as two food items.

Therefore, five food items are being offered to students under OVS. When five food items are offered, the student may take all five-food items or four, or any three-food items. There are four combinations for the student to walk away with three food items. Remember that students must take ½-cup fruit for a reimbursable meal.

### Example 4: (five-food item menu)

Choice of entrée  
 (each with 2 oz. eq. grains) = two food items  
 Breakfast burrito  
 Yogurt and graham crackers  
 Cereal and graham crackers  
 Fruit (½-cup) 3 choices, may take 2 =two food items  
 Milk (1 cup) =one food item

Possible reimbursable meal combinations:

Entrée, one fruit, milk **or**  
 Entrée, two fruits **or**  
 Two fruits, milk

In this example (4), the school sets up the breakfast as a choice of entrée, fruit, and milk. The entrée includes 2 oz. eq. grains or combination of grains and M/MA to count as two food items and the student can choose to take one entrée. There are multiple choices of fruit, ½ cup each, and students are allowed to take up to two fruit items. Lastly, students can select milk.

Resources:

<http://cns.ucdavis.edu/resources/webinars/ovs.html>  
[http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cn/SP41\\_2015a.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cn/SP41_2015a.pdf)  
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/SP43-2014os.pdf>



## Offer versus Serve for BREAKFAST

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For ideas regarding signage and instructions to help students and staff, see USDA Best Practice Web page at <https://healthymeals.fns.usda.gov/best-practices>

Is there a FRUIT and/or VEGETABLE on the tray in the correct portion size (minimum of 1/2 cup)?

Yes

Are 3 of the 5 food COMPONENTS on the tray including the fruit/vegetable in required portion sizes?

Yes

Congratulations! This is a reimbursable lunch!

No

Add a component(s) in the correct portion size until you reach a minimum of three components (one being 1/2 cup fruit or vegetable)

No

Add a FRUIT or VEGETABLE

Are 3 of the 5 food COMPONENTS on the tray including the fruit/vegetable in required portion sizes?

Yes

Congratulations! This is a reimbursable lunch!

No

Add correct portion size of missing component (Milk, Meat/Meat Alternate, Grain, Fruit, Vegetable)

## Daily-Required Portion Sizes:

Milk—1 cup  
Fruit— 1/2 cup (Grade K–8); 1 cup (Grade 9–12)  
Vegetables—3/4 cup (Grade K–8); 1 cup (Grade 9–12)  
Grains—1 oz. eq. (Grade K–8); 2 oz. eq. (Grade 9–12)  
Meat/Meat Alternate—1 oz. eq. (Grade K–8); 2 oz. eq. (Grade 9–12)