

Run By the Numbers

All of the popular weight-loss plans that recognize the difference between low GI and high GI carbohydrates strongly recommend eating low GI foods to maintain your weight and health. But things aren't that easy for runners, who need to include a mix of both high and low GI foods in prerun and postrun meals in order to get maximum performance benefits. That's because high GI foods can help boost speed and aid in recovery, while low GI foods extend endurance. So here's what to eat, when:

Before You Run: Go low here. Studies have shown that eating low GI foods about 2 hours before a workout help maintain steady blood-sugar levels during exercise compared with high GI foods. Therefore, you're able to run longer.

In one study, cyclists were given either a high or a low GI meal a few hours before a hard ride lasting 2 hours. The cyclists were then instructed to pedal all out for as long as they could. Cyclists pedaled almost 60 percent longer after the low GI preexercise meal versus the high GI, and they also maintained higher blood-sugar levels. The researchers attribute this to the slow and steady release of carbohydrates from the low GI meal.

Fruit, old-fashioned oatmeal, and low-fat yogurt are great low GI foods to eat about 2 hours before you run to help sustain you for the long haul. But if you find yourself fueling up just minutes before you hit the road, reach for a higher GI energy bar or sports drink so that the carbs will get into your system faster.

While You Run: Time to get high. Eating high GI foods and beverages during exercise helps boost performance. The quickly digested carbohydrates in sports drinks, gels, and energy bars (most bars have moderate to high GIs) offer an immediate source of sugar for your hard-working muscles. The quick-release carbohydrates also keep you feeling alert, as your brain thrives on sugar for fuel.

After You Run: High GI foods are essential when you're trying to restock your glycogen stores. A study with cyclists demonstrated that eating high GI foods following an exhausting session boosted glycogen stores almost twice as much as equal amounts of low GI foods. So after your runs, fuel up with high GI foods such as potatoes, cereals, or waffles.

Glycemic Index Range		
Low GI	Medium GI	High GI
55 or less	56 - 69	70 or more

Low GI Foods	Intermediate GI Foods	High GI Foods
<p><u>Breads</u> Burgen Soy-Lin®, PerforMAX®, fruit loaf, Vogel's honey and oat®</p> <p><u>Breakfast Cereals</u> All Bran fruit'n oats®, All Bran®, Guardian®, porridge, Special K®, Rice Bran</p> <p><u>Grains</u> Barley, Pasta (all types), Noodles, Bulgur, Semolina</p> <p><u>Legumes</u> All Beans (eg kidney, soy, baked bean, etc...) peas, and lentils</p> <p><u>Starchy Vegetables</u> Sweet potato, taro</p> <p><u>Fruit</u> Cherries, grapefruit, peach, dried apricots, apple, pear, plums, orange, grapes, kiwi fruit, banana</p> <p><u>Other</u> Skim milk Plain Yogurt Soy beverage Pumpernickel bread Al dente (firm) pasta Chick peas</p>	<p><u>Breads</u> Hamburger bun, rye bread, croissant, light rye, crumpet, wholemeal, Whole wheat bread</p> <p><u>Breakfast Cereals</u> Oatbran, untoasted muesli, Just Right®, Nutri Grain®, Sustain®, Weet-Bix® Shredded wheat cereal</p> <p><u>Grains</u> Basmati rice, wild rice, Sunrice Doongara® rice, Mahatma Premium® Classic, couscous, cornmeal, tapioca, Brown rice</p> <p><u>Legumes</u></p> <p><u>Starchy Vegetables</u> New potato</p> <p><u>Fruit</u> Sultanas, raw and canned apricots, mango, paw paw, raisins, rockmelon, pineapple</p>	<p><u>Breads</u> White bread, bagel, blackbread, Wonderwhite®, gluten-free bread</p> <p><u>Breakfast Cereals</u> Rice Chex, Bran Flakes®, Coco Pops®, Puffed Wheat®, Rice Bubbles®, Rice Krispies™ Cheerios™ Cornflakes®</p> <p><u>Grains</u> Brown rice, calrose rice, jasmine rice, Instant rice</p> <p><u>Legumes</u> Broad beans</p> <p><u>Starchy Vegetables</u> Other potatoes, parsnip, Instant mashed potatoes, Baked white potato french fries,</p> <p><u>Fruit</u> Watermelon, Dried dates, Strawberries,</p> <p><u>Other</u> Ice cream Digestive cookies Table sugar (sucrose) Soda crackers Jellybeans</p>

Sugar, corn syrup 100
Hard candy 95-100
Hard Liquor 95
Rice (instant) 91
Carrot juice 90
Puffed Rice cereal 90
Rice Chex cereal 89
Honey 87
Most candy 80-95
Cakes and most deserts 70-85
Corn Flakes 85
Potatoes (baked) 84
Potatoes (instant, mashed) 84
Rice Krispies 82
Pretzels 82
White bread 81
Dried figs 80
Jelly beans 80
Carrots 65-80
Angel food cake 77
Vanilla wafers 77
Potato chips, corn chips 60-77
Rice cakes 77
Stuffing 77
Waffles, pancakes 77
Watermelon 72-76
Cheerios 75
Corn Bran cereal 75
French fries 75
Potatoes (boiled) 74
Bran Flakes 74
Banana (over ripe) 74
Graham crackers 74
Potatoes (mashed) 73
Beer 73
Bagel (plain) 72
Saltines or water crackers 72
Whole wheat bread 72
Millet 71
Cream of wheat cereal 71
Rice (regular white) 70
Corn tortilla 70
Shredded Wheat cereal 69
Corn meal 68
Wheat Thins crackers 68
Brown rice 68
Raisins 68
Baked beans (canned) 68
Grapenuts cereal 68

Gnocchi (potato pasta) 67
Life cereal 66
Oatmeal (quick cooking) 66
Pineapple 66
Banana 65
Melons 65
Couscous 65
Pasta (regular white, refined) 65
Rye bread (regular) 64
Ice cream (regular) 64
Orange juice 60
Pop corn 60

Low Glycemic Index foods

Eat More of These Foods to maintain healthy glucose levels!

Celery, lettuce 0
Green vegetables, eggplant, onions, garlic, cauliflower, sprouts, radishes, etc. 0-25
Eggs 10
Peanuts/nuts 10
Most meats/fish (unprocessed) 12
Venison 12
Yogurt (plain, unsweetened) 14
Soybeans 18
Fructose (fruit sugar) 20
Greens (beet, collard, etc.) 20
Green beans (Hidatsa) 20
Cherries 22
Plums 25
Grapefruit 25
Lentils (red) 25
Barley (pearled) 25
Milk (regular) 27
Kidney beans 27
Apricots, dried 30
Beans-dried (black, kidney, butter) 30
Lentils (green) 30
Corn (Mandan) 30-35
Milk (skim) 32
Split peas 32
Strawberries, raspberries, black berries (fresh) 32
Flax seeds 32
Chickpeas 33
Pears 36
Tomatoes 38
Pinto or navy beans 39
Yogurt (fruit-sweetened-no sugar) 38
Apples 30-38

Peaches 30-40
Peanut butter (no sugar added) 40
Blueberries (fresh) 40
Apple juice 41
Oats (steel cut) 42
Black eyed peas 42
Kidney beans (canned) 42
Chickpeas (canned) 42
Grapes 43
Soy milk 43
Banana (under ripe) 43
Oranges 40-44
Red wine 44
All Bran cereal 44
Whole wheat pasta 45
Bulgar 47
Wild rice 48-55
Yams 48
Pumpernickel bread 49
Grapefruit juice 49
Squash (most varieties) 50-55
Rye bread (whole grain) 50
Oatmeal (old fashioned) 50
Kiwi 52
Buckwheat (Kasha) 54
Sweet potatoes 54
Pasta (protein enriched) 55
Oat bran cereal 55
Sweet corn 55-60
Mango 56
Potatoes (new, boiled w/ skin) 57
Pita bread 58
Beets 59