

# Food Labelling



There is lots of information on a food label!

**Nutrition tables** – usually printed on the back and found on pre-packed foods with more than one ingredient

This information must be given per 100g; some manufacturers also give this information per portion, but remember a manufacturers portion is not necessarily the same as your portion

Typical values	100g contains	Each slice (typically 44g) contains	% RI*	RI* for an average adult
Energy	985kJ 235kcal	435kJ 105kcal	5%	8400kJ 2000kcal
Fat	1.5g	0.7g	1%	70g
of which saturates	0.3g	0.1g	1%	20g
Carbohydrate	45.5g	20.0g		
of which sugars	3.8g	1.7g	2%	90g
Fibre	2.8g	1.2g		
Protein	7.7g	3.4g		
Salt	1.0g	0.4g	7%	6g

This pack contains 16 servings  
\*Reference intake of an average adult (8400kJ / 2000kcal)

**Energy** – given as KJ and kcal. KJ is the metric equivalent of kcal

**Fat** – total fat which includes saturated and unsaturated fats

**Of which saturates** – total of saturated fat only

**Carbohydrate** – total for starch and sugars

**Of which sugars** – includes naturally occurring sugar eg in milk (lactose) and in fruit (fructose) and added sugars

**Fibre** – the amount of fibre within the food

**Protein** – the amount of protein within the food

**Sodium/Salt** – salt content within the food

(Please note: multiply sodium by 2.5 to get your actual salt content)

**RI's and %** - reference intakes based on average adult female requiring 2000kcal a day. These % are not useful unless you actually need 2000kcal a day

## Traffic Light System (voluntary guidance for the UK)

All manufacturers who use traffic lights on their products use the information in the table below to identify which colours apply to their products. The colours are always worked on 100g of the food NOT by portion or serving.

	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	
Colour	Green	Amber	Red	
Fat Criteria for 100g of food	Less than 3.0g	3.0g to 17.5g	More than 17.5g	More than 21g/portion
Saturates	Less than 1.5g	1.5g to 5.0g	More than 5.0g	More than 6.0g/portion
(Total) Sugars	Less than 5.0g	5.0g to 22.5g	More than 22.5g	More than 27g/portion
Salt	Less than 0.3g	0.3g to 1.5g	More than 1.5g	More than 1.8g/portion

**Mostly Greens – LOW** This is the healthiest choice, and you can eat in larger amounts.

**Mostly Ambers – MEDIUM** This food is neither high nor low in a nutrient and can be eaten quite often.

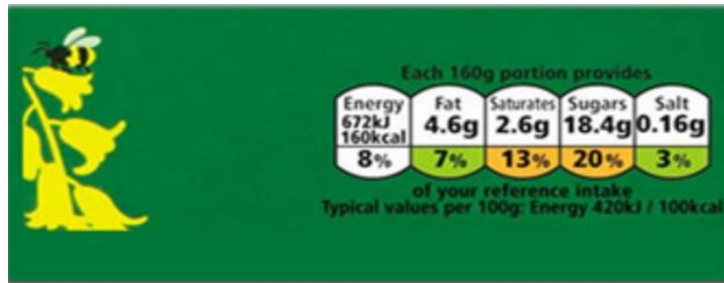
**Mostly Reds – HIGH** The more reds on the front, the less healthy the food is likely to be. OK occasionally or in small amounts but not regularly.

**Be aware of some foods** – for example, a bag of jelly babies or boiled sweets will show as green on the traffic light system for the fat content, saturated fat and salt content so therefore look healthy, as it only has 1 red light showing. However, looking closer, this red could be extremely high for this one food and therefore be a less healthy choice

### Front of pack labels

Governed by EU legislation. If front of pack information is displayed it must be in the standard format illustrated below. It is optional if the traffic light colours are also displayed here.

The figures in the shapes give the energy, fat, saturated fat, sugar and salt content of a given portion of that food. The portion size it refers to must be displayed above the shapes. The energy per 100g of the food must also be displayed under the shapes.



## What's a serving?

Food manufacturers decide what is an acceptable 'serving' or portion size for their own product (e.g. 50g porridge). But remember your serving/portion size might be different from this.



## Ingredients List

These are listed in order of weight, so the main ingredient in the packaged food will always come first. It is listed from the highest amount to lowest amount, so if the first few ingredients are high-fat ingredients, such as cream, butter or oil, then the food in question is a high-fat food. If the first few ingredients include e.g. sugar, syrup, fructose, then the food is likely to be high in sugar.



## Food allergy or allergy advice

There are 14 main food allergens in foods e.g. milk, wheat, eggs. If a food contains any of these allergens, they must be printed in bold in the ingredients list.

**14 Allergens** | Food Standards Agency | food.gov.uk  
Coming to a food label near you

The way allergens are labelled on prepacked foods is changing because of new regulations. The Food Information Regulation, which comes into force in December 2014, introduces a requirement that food businesses must provide information about the allergenic ingredients used in any food they sell or provide.

There are 14 major allergens which need to be mentioned either on a label or through provided information such as menus where they are used as ingredients in a food. Here are the allergens, and some examples of where they can be found:

- 1 Celery**  
This includes celery stalks, leaves, seeds and the root called celeriac. You can find celery in celery salt, salads, some meat products, soups and stock cubes.
- 2 Cereals containing gluten**  
Wheat (such as spelt and Kamut), rye, barley and oats is often found in foods containing flour, such as some types of baking powder, batter, bread, biscuits, cereals, meat products, pasta, pastry, soups, soups and food foods which are dusted with flour.
- 3 Crustaceans**  
Cubes, lobster, prawns and scallops are crustaceans. Shrimp paste, often used in Thai and south-east Asian curries or salads, is an ingredient to look out for.
- 4 Eggs**  
Eggs are often found in cakes, some meat products, mayonnaise, mousses, pasta, quiche, soups and pastries or foods brushed or glazed with egg.
- 5 Fish**  
You will find this in some fish soups, pizzas, relishes, salad dressings, stock cubes and Worcestershire sauce.
- 6 Lupin**  
Yes, lupin is a flower, but it's also found in flour (lupin flour) and seeds can be used in some types of bread, pastries and even in pasta.
- 7 Milk**  
Milk is a common ingredient in butter, cheese, cream, milk powders and yogurt. It can also be found in foods brushed or glazed with milk, and in powdered soups and sauces.
- 8 Molluscs**  
These include mussels, land snails, squid and whelks, but can also be commonly found in oyster sauce or as an ingredient in fish dishes.
- 9 Mustard**  
Liquid mustard, mustard powder and mustard seeds fall into this category. This ingredient can also be found in breads, curries, marinades, meat products, salad dressings, soups and soups.
- 10 Nuts**  
Not to be mistaken with peanuts (which are actually a legume and grow underground), this ingredient refers to nuts which grow on trees, like walnuts, almonds and hazelnuts. You can find nuts in breads, biscuits, crackers, desserts, nut powders (often used in Asian cooking), soft-iced cakes, ice cream, margarine (corned paste), nut oils and sauces.
- 11 Peanuts**  
Peanuts are actually a legume and grow underground, which is why it's sometimes called a groundnut. Peanuts are often used as an ingredient in biscuits, cakes, cookies, desserts, sauces (such as satay sauce), as well as in groundnut oil and peanut flour.
- 12 Sesame seeds**  
These seeds can often be found in breads (sprinkled on hamburger buns for example), breadsticks, hummus, sesame oil and tahini. They are sometimes toasted and used in salads.
- 13 Soya**  
Often found in bean curd, edamame beans, miso paste, textured soya protein, soya flour or tofu, soya is a staple ingredient in oriental food. It can also be found in desserts, ice cream, meat products, soups and vegetable products.
- 14 Sulphur dioxide (sometimes known as sulphites)**  
This is an ingredient often used in dried fruit such as raisins, dried apricots and prunes. You might also find it in meat products, soft drinks, vegetables as well as in wine and beer. If you have asthma, you have a higher risk of developing a reaction to sulphur dioxide.

## Additional Information

**Use By** – dates are used on foods that go off quickly, such as chilled meat, dairy products, and ready meals. It's currently an offence for shops to sell food past this date. It is not safe to consume after this date. For 'use by' dates to be valid, foods must also have been stored according to advice on the packaging. If a food can be frozen the use by date can be extended but follow the advice on the packet.

**Best Before** – dates are shown where there may be no immediate risk of food poisoning, but after this date, food will be going stale or losing its flavour. It is not illegal to sell foods after this date shown.

**Health Claims** – any claims made about the nutritional and health benefits of a food must be based on science. Only claims the European Commission has approved can be used on food packaging. General claims about benefits to overall good health, such as 'healthy' or good for you', are only allowed if accompanied by an approved claim. This means that these claims must be backed up by an explanation of why the food is 'healthy'. Labels are not allowed to claim that food can treat, prevent, or cure any disease or medical condition. These sorts of claims can only be made for licensed medicines.

**Light or Lite** – to say that a food is 'light' or 'lite', it must be at least 30% lower in at least one typical value, such as calories or fat, than standard products. The label must explain exactly what has been reduced and by how much, for example 'light: 30% less fat'. You may be surprised at how little difference there is between foods that carry claims and those that don't! A 'light' or 'lite' version of one brand of crisps may contain the same amount of fat or calories as the standard version of another brand.

**Low fat** – a claim that a food is low in fat may only be made where the product contains no more than 3g of fat per 100g for solids or 1.5g of fat per 100ml for liquids.

**No added sugar** – this usually means that the food has not had sugar added to it as an ingredient. A food that has 'no added sugar' might still taste sweet and can still contain sugar. Sugars occur naturally in food such as milk and fruit. But we don't need to cut down on these types of sugar: it is food containing added sugars that we should be cutting down on. Just because a food contains 'no added sugar', this does not necessarily mean it has low sugar content. The food may contain ingredients that have a naturally high sugar content (such as fruit), or have added milk, which contains lactose, a type of sugar that occurs naturally in milk.

**Unsweetened** – this usually means that no sugar or sweetener has been added to the food to make it taste sweet. This doesn't necessarily mean that the food will not contain naturally occurring sugars found in fruit or milk.