

Meat/Meat Alternate (M/MA) In A Nutshell



Crediting M/MA

- Measured in weight
- Credits in ounce equivalents (oz eq)
- Round down to the nearest $\frac{1}{4}$ oz eq
- Use the [USDA Food Buying Guide](https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/Home/Home)¹, a Product Formulation Statement (PFS), or a Child Nutrition (CN) label to credit M/MA

| Component | Measured by | Units of measurement | Conversions | Tools used |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|------------|
| Meat/meat alternates | WEIGHT How heavy is it? | Grams (g) Ounces (oz) Pounds (lb or #) | 28 g = 1 oz 16 oz = 1 lb | Scale |

Weight and volume are not equal or interchangeable

Crediting beans/peas (legumes) as Meat/Meat Alternate

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup of B/P (L) can either credit as $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable OR 1 ounce equivalent M/MA, but not both.

Common M/MA portions that equal 1.0 oz eq

| Item | Volume | Weight |
|---|-------------------|-------------|
| Yogurt | $\frac{1}{2}$ cup | 4 oz |
| Nuts or seeds | | 1 oz |
| Nut butter | 2 TBSP | 1.1 oz |
| Cheese (American, Cheddar, Mozzarella, Swiss) | $\frac{1}{4}$ cup | 1 oz |
| Cheese (Parmesan or Romano) | $\frac{3}{8}$ cup | 1 oz |
| Cottage cheese | $\frac{1}{4}$ cup | 2 oz |
| Cooked beans/peas (legumes) | $\frac{1}{4}$ cup | |
| Pasta made of 100% legume flour | $\frac{1}{4}$ cup | |
| Large whole egg | $\frac{1}{2}$ ea | 1 oz |
| Tofu | $\frac{1}{4}$ cup | 2.2 oz |
| Surimi seafood | | 3 oz |
| Fresh and frozen boneless meat, poultry, and fish | | 1 oz cooked |
| Tempeh | | 1 oz |

Note that nuts or seeds can only meet half the M/MA requirement at lunch. Nut or seed butter can be used to meet the entire M/MA requirement at any meal.

¹ <https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/Home/Home>

Lunch Meal Pattern

| Meal Pattern Component | Grades K-5 | Grades 6-8 | Grades K-8 | Grades 9-12 |
|-------------------------------|--|--|------------|---|
| Meats/Meat Alternates (oz eq) | Weekly: ≥ 8 oz eq Daily: 1 oz eq | Weekly: ≥ 9 oz eq Daily: 1 oz eq | | Weekly: ≥ 10 oz eq Daily: 2 oz eq |

Breakfast Meal Pattern

| Meal Pattern Component | Grades K-5 | Grades 6-8 | Grades K-8 | Grades 9-12 |
|-------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Grains (oz eq) | Weekly: ≥ 7 oz eq Daily: 1 oz eq | Weekly: ≥ 8 oz eq Daily: 1 oz eq | Weekly: ≥ 8 oz eq Daily: 1 oz eq | Weekly: ≥ 9 oz eq Daily: 1 oz eq |
| Meats/Meat Alternates (oz eq) | <p style="text-align: center;">0 oz eq required daily</p> <p>There is no separate meat/meat alternate component in the SBP. Schools may substitute 1 oz eq of meat/meat alternate for 1 oz eq of grains after the minimum daily 1 oz eq grain requirement is met. A school may also offer meat/meat alternate as an extra food and not credit the item towards any component.</p> | | | |

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