



Check the Label – Whole Grains in Bread Products

The 2010 Dietary Guidelines recommends increasing the intake of whole grains by replacing refined grains with whole grain. Reading the labels and knowing how to recognize whole grain ingredients will help you choose products based on whole grain content.

Whole grains contain all parts of the kernel:

- **The Endosperm:** the largest part of the kernel which is ground to make white flour
- **The Bran:** the hard outer covering
- **The Germ:** the tiniest part of the kernel, the part that would grow new wheat if planted

When all parts of the kernel are ground together, the result is 100% whole grain flour. Purchased wheat, rye, oat and multi-grain bread products may contain refined grains or flour that are NOT whole grains. To be certain that bread is made from whole grains or whole grain flour, check the ingredient listing on the label and look at the ingredients. The items in column 1 below contain all parts of the grain. The ingredients in the middle column are accurate descriptions of the package contents, but some parts of the whole grain MAY be missing. These words alone do not guarantee that an ingredient is whole grain or a refined grain. The ingredients in the last column are refined from whole grains but missing one or more parts of the whole kernel.

Whole Grain Ingredients	May or May not be Whole Grain Ingredients	Not Whole Grain Ingredients
Whole [name of grain]	Wheat Flour	Enriched Flour
Whole [name of flour]	Unbleached Flour	Degerminated Cornmeal
Whole Grain [name of grain]	Semolina Flour	Bran
[name of Grain] Berries	Durum Wheat Flour	Wheat Germ
Stone Ground Whole [name of grain]	Organic Flour	Pearled Barley
Oats	Stone ground Flour	
Oatmeal	Multigrain	
Rolled Oats		
Buckwheat		
Millet		
Whole White Flour		
Bulgur		
Graham Flour		

The words “whole grain” on the package does not necessarily mean the product contains 100 percent whole grains. If the first ingredient listed contains the word "whole" (such as "whole wheat flour" or "whole oats"), it is likely – but not guaranteed – that the product is predominantly whole grain. If there are two grain ingredients and only the second ingredient listed is a whole grain, the product may contain as little as 1% or as much as 49% whole grain. If there are several grain ingredients, the situation gets more complex. For instance, a "multigrain bread" may contain 30% refined flour and 70% whole grain. But the whole grains are split between several different grains, and each whole grain may comprise less than 30% of the total.

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Reliable tools for selecting whole grains include:

- Whole Grain Stamp program (Whole Grain Council)
 - Basic Whole Grain Stamp – Appears on products that contains at least half a serving of whole grain per labeled serving.
 - 100% Stamp – Appears on products that contains a full serving or more of whole grain in each labeled serving.
 - FDA regulated health whole grain health claim: “Diets rich in whole grains and other plant foods and low in fat, saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease and some cancers”. If the product carries the whole grain health claim, the FDA requires that 51% of the weight of the ingredients must be whole grain.

Keep in mind that:

- Grams of dietary that appears on the nutrition label is not reliable indicator of whole grain content. Both fiber and whole grains have health benefits. Fiber varies from grain to grain. In addition, high-fiber products sometimes contain bran or other added fiber and may have very little, if any, whole grains.
- Color is not a predictor of whole grain content. Dark or brown bread is often a whole grain but it may be added molasses or caramel food coloring. Alternatively, whole grain foods may be light in color, such as those made from oats or white wheat. White whole wheat is a variety of wheat which lacks the bran color. It has a milder flavor and softer texture than the red whole wheat which may make it more appealing to individuals who are more accustomed to the tasted of refined wheat flour. White whole-wheat bread is nutritionally similar to that of regular whole wheat bread.