

# Portable Snacks to Fuel Hungry Student Athletes

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*High school athletes have extraordinary nutritional needs, not only for supporting sports training, but also for their growth and development. Depending on the athlete and their sport, daily needs could range anywhere from 2,000-4,000 calories per day, with multisport and high-level athletes often requiring even more. A fueling plan that includes high-quality food eaten at meals and snacks throughout the day helps ensure athletes are fueled and focused on and off the field.*



## How Can Student Athletes Get Enough Food During the School Day?


Eating a nutritious **breakfast**, **lunch**, after-school snack and dinner is key for student athletes to get adequate nutrition throughout the day. However, even with high-quality meals, most athletes won't be able to meet their daily energy needs. That's why snacks are an essential part of a student athlete's sports nutrition plan. Preparing and packing portable snacks that can be eaten in school help athletes get enough food and prevent hunger throughout the day.

Whether it's the night before school, or the morning of, make sure you pack snacks to eat between breakfast and lunch. Student athletes that have an early lunch period should pack a snack to eat between lunch and the time they get home from school. If you're going straight from school to practice, it is also important to pack a snack or mini meal to eat after school so that you are well fueled and hydrated for practice.



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## What are Good Snack Options for Student Athletes?

Since carbohydrates are the preferred fuel source of working muscles, snacks for athletes should include carbohydrate-rich foods. Snacks should also incorporate some dietary protein and fat to help maintain and promote muscle growth, support daily energy and nutrient needs, and maintain a feeling of fullness between meals.

The following list gives some examples of portable snacks that student athletes can carry with them throughout the day:

- Apple slices or an apple sauce pouch and nut butter
- Mini bagel topped with peanut butter
- Banana and mixed nuts/seeds
- Trail mix that combines dried fruit, nuts, seeds, and mini chocolate chips
- Beef or turkey jerky and grapes
- Peanut butter and jelly sandwich

## How Can Student Athletes Keep Cold Snacks Cold While in School?

In addition to shelf-stable foods, there are many nutritious snack options that require refrigeration. Student athletes can keep cold foods cold by packing them in a mini cooler with an ice pack. Packing snacks that include both shelf-stable and cold food options gives you more variety and helps prevent you from getting bored with your daily snacks.

Here are some examples of cold snack foods to pack and carry in your small portable cooler:


- Plain or **chocolate milk**
- **Greek yogurt** with granola, fruit, and nuts
- String cheese with fruit
- Turkey and cheese roll-ups with some crackers
- Hard boiled eggs and fruit cup
- Hummus with pretzels and/or vegetables
- Whole or ½ turkey and cheese sandwich
- Drinkable yogurt and fruit

*Nutrition is such an essential part of every high school athlete's day. Having a structured daily plan and routine, including meals and snacks, is important to support adequate energy needs, muscle recovery, focus and concentration, and injury prevention!*



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