

MENU PLANNING

Modifying Recipes to Meet the Practical Guide

To meet the recommendations in the [Child Care Menu Planning – Practical Guide](#), ingredients can be modified to increase whole grains and reduce sodium and sugar.

Sodium

- Reduce salt by at least half.
- Compare labels. Choose ingredients with 10% DV sodium or less.
- Dilute broth with water.
- Rinse canned goods when possible (e.g., beans, lentils).
- Enhance flavour with herbs and spices.
- Avoid adding salt if recipe uses higher sodium ingredients like cheese or soy sauce.

Sugar

Tip: To meet guidelines, limit sugar to $\frac{1}{3}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of sugar for 12 portions of a baked product (e.g., muffins).

- Reduce sugar by at least half.
- Replace sugar with unsweetened apple sauce, mashed pumpkin or banana.
- Use small amounts of dried fruit (e.g., raisins, chopped pitted dates) to add sweetness.
- Enhance flavours by using spices and extracts like cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, ginger, vanilla, almond, maple, orange or lemon.

Whole Grains

- Replace at least half the white flour with whole wheat or whole grain flour.
- Add oats to increase the whole grain content (e.g., baked goods, meatballs).
- Try other whole grains such as barley, bulgur, millet, quinoa, spelt, whole grain couscous, wild or whole grain brown rice.



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Baked goods and mixed dishes should not contain any Do Not Serve ingredients (e.g., chocolate chips, marshmallows, imitation bacon bits). For additional examples, see the [Child Care Menu Planning – Practical Guide](#).

To adapt for food allergies, refer to [Common Food Allergen Substitutions for Child Care Settings](#).

