NUTRITION FOR RUNNERS

SHOPPING LIST

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Shopping List

TO GET YOURSELF STARTED IN THE KITCHEN, here’s a shopping list of ingredients you might want to pick up or keep on hand. Most of the work in healthy eating is just being prepared! Do yourself a favor and keep your kitchen stocked with these nutritious, runner-friendly foods. We’ve included tips and details about why some of these foods are so especially helpful for runners, too.

Carbohydrates:

✦ 90 second plain brown rice – instant rice makes putting together dinner or simple lunches a snap. Try throwing this on top of salad with some beans – it’s delicious!

✦ Quinoa – quinoa not only provides fiber and complex carbohydrates like many other grains, but it is also a high protein choice that contains all the essential amino acids, making it great for muscle recovery.

✦ Whole wheat pasta – whole wheat pasta has significantly more fiber and protein than white pasta, so it will keep you fuller longer. It also contains more B-vitamins, which are necessary for energy metabolism.

✦ Sweet potatoes – sweet potatoes are not only a good source of complex carbohydrates and fiber, but they also contain manganese and copper – trace minerals that are hard to come by but are important for muscle function.

✦ Whole wheat bread/pita/English muffins/tortillas - keep an eye on the ingredient lists - they should be short and full of real food ingredients that you understand.

✦ Rolled (old fashioned) oats - this less processed version of oats microwaves just as well as instant oatmeal does.

✦ Barley - barley is a whole grain, packed with fiber, and contains 8 essential amino acids (that’s protein). It also has a pleasant, chewy texture. Try it in place of brown rice or another whole grain!

✦ Whole wheat or rice/nut crackers - again, make sure the ingredient lists are short and full of things you recognize!
Fresh and Frozen fruits and veggies:

✦ Bananas, apples, oranges, grapes, seasonal fruit (berries, etc.)

✦ **Frozen tart cherries and wild blueberries** – tart cherries and wild (not just regular, but wild) blueberries have been in the spotlight recently for anti-inflammatory effects that can dramatically reduce post-workout soreness, mainly thanks to their extraordinarily high antioxidant content.

✦ **Broccoli, spinach, kale, carrots, peppers, seasonal veggies**

✦ **Beets** (canned works too!) – beets have been shown to improve athletic performance by reducing the amount of oxygen needed to maintain muscle performance, resulting from their high nitrate content that's converted to nitric oxide in the body.

Protein:

✦ **Eggs** – eggs are a complete vegetarian protein, meaning they contain all essential amino acids to help promote muscle recovery. They also contain a hefty dose of vitamin K, vital for healthy, strong bones.

✦ **Greek yogurt** – yogurt, along with other dairy products, is a great source of protein and calcium, helping with muscle recovery and bone strength. The healthy bacteria found in yogurt can also help improve digestive health and reduce inflammation that affects muscle and joint pain.

✦ **Cottage cheese** - packed with protein. Try it with fruit and nuts as a snack, or stir into oatmeal!

✦ **Chicken breasts / rotisserie chicken**

✦ **Ground bison** - try ground bison in place of ground beef in your next recipe - it contains nearly twice the amount of iron, a nutrient especially important for runners.

✦ **Canned beans** – beans provide carbohydrates with fiber in addition to protein, making them satisfying and filling while providing you with muscle-rebuilding protein needed for after a workout. Buying them canned is more expensive than dry, but much more convenient if you’re strapped for time!

✦ **Canned/pouch tuna** - choose chunk light tuna packed in water. The chunk light variety is lower in mercury than regular albacore!

✦ **Canned sardines** - yes, sardines! Packed with omega-3’s, loaded with calcium (because of the tiny edible bones in the fish), and a good source of protein,
sardines are just about as cheap as healthy food gets. They’re shelf stable, too! Try them in place of tuna in the tuna salad recipe in the meal guide.

- **Fish** (e.g. Salmon, tilapia, etc – fresh or frozen) – salmon, in particular, is a great source of omega-3 fatty acids, anti-inflammatory agents that can help relieve soreness and speed up recovery while improving blood flow and heart function. If possible, choose wild fish which have fewer contaminants and more nutrients.

- **Edamame** – soybeans provide quality muscle-recovering vegetarian protein in addition to iron, an essential mineral that’s linked to energy levels.

**Fats:**

- **Avocado** - great source of those healthy omega-3 fatty acids.

- **Cheese** - choose those that are minimally processed, and the more flavorful, the better, so you don’t need to use as much to still get the same taste! Sharp cheddar, goat, and feta cheese are a few of our favorites.

- **Oils** – in addition to the standard olive oil, a few other healthy oils to try are coconut, flaxseed, and walnut oils. Try flaxseed or walnut oil in place of olive oil in homemade salad dressings - delicious, and a great source of omega-3 fatty acids.

- **Nut butters/nuts** – nuts provide plenty of healthy fats, which can help lower LDL (“bad”) cholesterol and raise HDL (“good”) cholesterol, combined with a little protein for staying power. When choosing nut butter, check the ingredient list - it should only be nuts and salt, nothing else.

- **Flax seeds** – flax seeds are high in protein, fiber, and omega-3 fatty acids – just make sure you buy ground flax seeds, as your body can’t digest and reap the benefits from the whole seeds.

- **Chia seeds** – chia seeds are a complete source of protein, high in fiber, and contain plenty of omega-3 fatty acids, making them an all-around superfood for runners. In addition, they can absorb about 9 times their weight in water, which is released slowly as you digest them, helping to keep you hydrated. Try tossing some into your next smoothie!
Condiments, Sauces and More:

- Hummus
- Salsa
- Guacamole
- Hot sauce
- Dijon mustard
- Balsamic vinegar
- Lemons/limes