

5 Best Nutrition Bars

What to look for--and avoid--in your on-the-go wellness snack.

Updated on May 18, 2011, 5:21 pm ET

By [Jackie Newgent](#) Find in [Diet+Health](#)



It used to be that anything in a “nutrition” bar form tasted like cardboard. As a foodie, I couldn’t consider it “food.” But now you’ve got a lot of choices – in fact, you might find that there are so many varieties that you’re not sure which is the best bet.

So here’s a list to help you pick one that’s just-right for you. (By the way, the bars I’m recommending are designed as a snack to give you a nutrition boost between meals, not bars that are designed to replace meals, give athletes a performance edge, or treat medical conditions).

Look at what’s in it. Don’t worry about the number of ingredients. Instead, see what those ingredients are. If they look like they could go into a recipe, that’s a good starting point. Be sure that the first ingredient is a whole plant food source, like ground whole soybeans, almonds, or raisins. And if you see the word “artificial,” leave it on the shelf.

Do a quick check of these five key nutrition facts: calories, saturated fat, trans fat, dietary fiber, and protein. Look for a bar that provides up to 200 calories. Anything significantly over 200 calories could be bad news if you want to manage your weight. Be sure that the bar provides no more than 15% of the Daily Value (DV) for saturated fat (3 or fewer grams) and 0% DV for trans fat to keep it heart-friendly. Plus, aim for at least 3 grams each of fiber and protein to help give you a feeling of fullness.

Don’t worry too much about the vitamins and minerals. If you’re getting a balanced bar made with whole plant-based ingredients, you’ll be getting whole nutrition. If you already take a multivitamin supplement, you don’t need bars that are loaded with added vitamins and minerals.

Remember that taste rules. You can’t determine how tasty your nutrition bar is without actually opening it, but reading through the ingredient list will help. If you like the sound of items on the ingredient list, give it a try. There’s no reason why your nutrition bar shouldn’t taste good! And if you don’t like the taste of one, there’s plenty more to choose from.

Read 5 Power Breakfast Foods

These tasty, nutrient-rich bars stand up to our checklist test.

For nuttiness:

KIND Fruit + Nut

Flavor: Nut Delight

Calories: 200; Saturated Fat: 2g; Trans Fat: 0g; Fiber: 3g; Protein: 7g

A nut lover's dream.

For the crunchies:

Barbara's Crunchy Organic Granola Bars

Flavor: Oats & Honey

Calories: 190; Saturated Fat: 1g; Trans Fat: 0g; Fiber: 3g; Protein: 4g

Great choice for women who eat little or no meat as it provides 8% of the daily value for iron.

Read What Yogurt Is Right For You?

For whole soy goodness:

SOYJOY Baked Whole Soy & Fruit Bar

Flavor: Apple Walnut

Calories: 140; Saturated Fat: 2.5g; Trans Fat: 0g; Fiber: 3g; Protein: 4g

For fresh-from-the-oven essence, unwrap and gently heat in the microwave for 15 seconds.

For dessert aficionados:

Kashi TLC Tasty Little Chewies

Flavor: Raspberry Chocolate

Calories: 120; Saturated Fat: 0.5g; Trans Fat: 0g; Fiber: 4g; Protein: 4g

A delicious way to boost your intake of health-promoting whole grains.

For choosy palates:

Larabar

Flavor: Cocoa Môle

Calories: 190; Saturated Fat: 1g; Trans Fat: 0g; Fiber: 5g; Protein: 4g

If you're into full flavors, this bar will wow your tastebuds.

Jackie Newgent, RD, is a New York City-based nutritionist, author of [Big Green Cookbook](#) and [The All-Natural Diabetes Cookbook](#), and healthy cooking instructor at [The Institute of Culinary Education](#). Follow her [@jackienewgent](#)

Source: <http://www.bettyconfidential.com/ar/ld/a/5-Best-Nutrition-Bars.html>