

This page was adapted from the government's website on the latest food pyramid.
<http://www.mypyramid.gov/pyramid/meat.html#>

What foods are included in the protein group?

All foods made from meat, poultry, fish, dry beans or peas, eggs, nuts, and seeds are considered part of this group.

NOTES:

- Dry beans and peas are part of this group as well as the vegetable group.
- Most meat and poultry choices should be lean or low-fat.
- Fish, nuts, and seeds contain healthy oils, so choose these foods frequently instead of meat or poultry.
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Some commonly eaten choices in the Meat and Beans group, with selection tips, are:

Meats*	Poultry*	<i>bean burgers:</i>	Fish*	<i>Shellfish such as:</i>
<i>Lean cuts of:</i>	chicken	garden burgers	<i>Finfish such as:</i>	clams
beef	duck	veggie burgers	catfish	crab
ham	goose		cod	crayfish
lamb	turkey	tempeh	flounder	lobster
pork	ground chicken	texturized vegetable	haddock	mussels
veal	ground turkey	protein (TVP)	halibut	octopus
	Eggs*	Nuts & seeds*	herring	oysters
<i>Game meats:</i>	chicken eggs	almonds	mackerel	scallops
bison	duck eggs	cashews	pollock	squid (calamari)
rabbit	Dry beans and peas:	hazelnuts (filberts)	porgy	shrimp
venison	black beans	mixed nuts	salmon	
	black-eyed peas	peanuts	sea bass	<i>Canned fish such as:</i>
<i>Lean ground meats:</i>	chickpeas (garbanzo beans)	peanut butter	snapper	anchovies
beef	falafel	pecans	swordfish	clams
pork	kidney beans	pistachios	trout	tuna
lamb	lentils	pumpkin seeds	tuna	sardines
	lima beans (mature)	sesame seeds		
<i>Lean luncheon meats</i>	navy beans	sunflower seeds		
	pinto beans	walnuts		
<i>Organ meats:</i>	soy beans			
liver	split peas			
giblets	tofu (bean curd made from soy beans)			
	white beans			

*NOTES:

- Choose lean or low-fat meat and poultry.
- If higher fat choices are made, such as regular ground beef (75 to 80% lean) or chicken with skin, the fat in the product counts as part of the **discretionary calorie** allowance.
- If solid fat is added in cooking, such as frying chicken in shortening or frying eggs in butter or stick margarine, this also counts as part of the **discretionary calorie** allowance.
- Select fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids, such as salmon, trout, and herring, more often (See [Why is it important to include fish, nuts, and seeds?](#)).
- Liver and other organ meats are high in cholesterol. Egg yolks are also high in cholesterol, but egg whites are cholesterol-free.
- Processed meats such as ham, sausage, frankfurters, and luncheon or deli meats have added sodium. Check the ingredient and Nutrition Facts label to help limit sodium intake. Fresh chicken, turkey, and pork that have been enhanced with a salt-containing solution also have added sodium. Check the product label for statements such as "self-basting" or "contains up to ___% of ___", which mean that a sodium-containing solution has been added to the product.
- Sunflower seeds, almonds, and hazelnuts (filberts) are the richest sources of vitamin E in this food group. To help meet vitamin E recommendations, make these your nut and seed choices more often.

Discretionary calories are those calories that are not needed. These are the "extra" calories you allow yourself from nutrient poor foods such as sugar and solid fat. In your calculations for your day to day caloric needs you can allow yourself a few calories (100-300 as an example) for fun and not necessarily nutritious.