



The 3 Best Snacks to Keep in Your Bag

It's hard to stay on track with your health goals when you're always busy. Whether you're jumping from meeting to meeting, shuttling the kids to their activities, or squeezing in a quick workout, it's too easy to grab a snack from a vending machine, break room, or checkout line. Unfortunately, these quick fixes are often high in sugar or salt and low in nutrients, leaving you feeling unsatisfied and low on energy. Stay on track (and save money) by packing your own convenient, nutritious, tasty snacks!

These snacks offer a good mix of complex carbs and fiber, healthy fat, and protein to fill you up and give you energy. They do not need refrigeration and are portion control-friendly, making them perfect for on-the-go lifestyles. They also provide the vitamins, minerals, and phytonutrients your body needs to thrive. Each snack has between 200 and 250 calories, which is enough to ward off the hungries but not too many to sabotage your weight control efforts.

1. Almond Date Bites:

Simply press an almond into a pitted date and store in a food container or zipper bag. This combination is a perfect balance of natural sweetness and crunch, providing fiber, healthy fats, and a touch of protein. You can substitute prunes or apricots for the dates, and any nuts you like for the almonds. Serving size: 3 almond date bites.

2. Hearty Seed Crunch Mix:

Combine 1/2 cup raw shelled pumpkin seeds (pepitas), 1/2 cup raw sunflower seeds, 1/4 cup rolled oats, and 1/4 cup raisins in a bag or bowl. This combination is a great source of essential minerals, fiber, protein, and healthy fats. You can substitute any unsweetened chopped dried fruit for the raisins. Serving size: 1/3 cup.

3. Crispy Roasted Chickpeas:

Roast chickpeas with a touch of olive oil and a sprinkle of your favorite spices - see the recipe below. Chickpeas are rich in protein, fiber, and complex carbs, making them an excellent choice for sustained energy. Serving size: 1/2 cup.

Keeping healthy snacks like this in your bag ensures that you have real-food, satisfying options ready when hunger strikes, helping you stay on track with your nutrition goals no matter how busy your day gets!

Crispy Roasted Chickpeas



Ingredients:

- 1 can (15 ounces) chickpeas (garbanzo beans), drained and rinsed
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional)
- 1/2 teaspoon salt (optional)

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
2. Drain and rinse the chickpeas thoroughly. Spread them out on a clean kitchen towel or paper towels and pat them dry. Removing as much moisture as possible helps them roast evenly and get crispy.
3. In a mixing bowl, toss the dried chickpeas with olive oil until evenly coated. Add seasonings. Mix well.
4. Spread the chickpeas in a single layer on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Roast for 25-30 minutes, shaking the pan halfway through. Keep an eye on them towards the end to prevent burning. They should be golden brown and crispy.
5. Let them cool completely on the baking sheet. They will continue to crisp up as they cool.
6. Once cooled, store them in an airtight container at room temperature.
7. Variations: Feel free to substitute your favorite spices and seasonings. If you like sweet spices, swap the seasonings for 1 tsp cinnamon, 1/2 tsp nutmeg, a pinch of ground cloves, and a pinch of salt for an interesting twist.