

# Diets through the years

Welcome to our activity investigating how diets have changed over the years.

In the last 80 years diets have changed, not least as in 1942 the UK was being rationed during the second world war. How have diets changed? The examples in this activity represent all four of the main sections in the eatwell guide: fruit and vegetables (banana, green veg); starchy carbohydrates (bread); protein (red meat) and dairy (whole milk).

The aim of the activity is to think whether the example of each food group has increased or decreased in the last 80 years. All the examples are measured in grams per person per week. To run the activity, you need to print out both sheets, cut out the two amounts for each food and then stick them on the date that you think is correct.

When thinking about these differences the following information could help you decide.

- Red meat is naturally nutrient-rich which means it provides a substantial amount of vitamins and minerals, and is also a great source of protein so will keep you feeling fuller for longer and help avoid those snacks between meals.
- Starchy carbohydrates provide a lot of the energy gained from food. We need energy to live and grow. As far as possible wholegrain varieties of the carbohydrates should be chosen as they include fibre and many important vitamins.
- Fruit and vegetables provide many vitamins, minerals as well as some carbohydrate. They also contain phytochemicals (plant chemicals) which are very biologically active and have been shown to help reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease and cancer. Aim to eat at least five portions of fruit and vegetables a day.
- Dairy and dairy alternatives are good sources of protein and vitamins. They also contain calcium, which helps keep our bones healthy and strong. Semi-skimmed, skimmed, and 1% fat milk all contain less fat than full-fat milk, but still give you protein, vitamins and calcium.

All of these food groups are shown in the Eatwell Guide:

<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/consumers/healthy-eating/eatwell>

Now over to you. Do you think any of the highlighted foods are consumed more today than all those years ago? If so, which ones?

Have fun.

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Some of the results may surprise you.

The figures are in grams per person per week.

	<b>1942</b>	<b>2020</b>
Bananas	0	204
Bread	1,718	634
Green Veg	438	192
Red Meat	391	211
Whole Milk	1,978	352