

Snack Ideas for the Busy College Student

Long days and packed schedules can make healthy, balanced eating a challenge for college students. Fast food options are readily available and can quickly turn in to a snack rut. However, most fast foods are highly processed and don't contain the nutrients you need to keep up your strength, stamina and focus.

The following are some ideas for snacks that taste good and also contain great nutrients to fuel your body. Keep this list handy, remember to plan ahead, and be patient. *Approximation, not perfection, is the goal!* It takes practice to learn how to shop and prepare the foods you need to eat well on the run. In a pinch, when you're hungry and have a long stretch of classes or rehearsals ahead of you, eat whatever food is available that tastes good and settles well. No foods are off limits! This list is simply a guideline to help you build in nutrition-rich foods whenever possible so you can feel good and have the energy you need to meet the demands of a busy schedule.

- Peanut butter and jelly and whole-wheat bread, pita, or crackers
- Vegetable soup with grated cheese
- Whole-wheat crackers or pita with peanut butter or cheese
- Yogurt with fruit or granola
- Bagel with cream cheese
- Tortilla chips with salsa
- String cheese and an apple or pear
- Banana and almond/cashew/peanut butter
- Dried fruit and nuts
- Baked potato with cheese and veggies
- Sweet potato with veggies
- Fruit dipped in yogurt
- Hardboiled egg and whole wheat crackers or fruit
- Bran muffin or pretzels and 100% fruit juice box
- Crackers with V8
- Milk with whole grain cereal, cereal bar, Fig Newtons, or oatmeal raisin cookies
- Pudding with granola or fruit
- Hummus on pita wedges
- Trail Mix - cereal, peanuts & dried fruit

- Tuna or chicken salad with crackers, pita, or whole wheat bread
- Whole grain pita bread or crackers with hummus
- Veggies (e.g. carrots, celery, cucumbers) with hummus
- Dry cereal with added dried fruit, peanuts, sunflower or pumpkin seeds
- Natural (no sugar added) fruit smoothie
- Popcorn with added parmesan cheese or other spices such as cumin, salt, or garlic powder
- Pretzels and peanut butter or hummus
- Handful of nuts
- Graham crackers with peanut butter or cream cheese
- Apples, oranges, bananas
- Cereal or granola bars
- Cinnamon raisin bagel
- Snack-box of raisins

This list is by no means exhaustive. Use your imagination and create your own snack favorites. The basic idea is to use foods that have nutrients that can fuel your body so you have the energy and focus you need to feel good and perform well.

Late night snacks and meals: Sometimes students find they are hungry late at night after a long day of classes, rehearsals, and studying. Use the above list for snack ideas. Extreme hunger can disrupt sleep so if you are very hungry at night, a snack or light meal can help you fall asleep more easily and prevent you from waking during the night. Late night meals can include a combination of pasta/rice/potato/bread, meat/fish, cheese, fruits and veggies. Avoid heavy meals, very spicy foods, and caffeine at night as these can interfere with sleep.

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