7 Steps to Making a Salad in a Jar

Making an easy, on-the-go meal never has been simpler. Tap into your creative side and make your own salad in a jar recipe. Invite kids to help prepare them. Add the salad dressing of your choice and layers of tasty ingredients, and shake together when ready to eat.

Safety Tips: Thoroughly rinse vegetables and/or fruit before cutting and adding to your salad. Water speeds spoilage/wilting of salads, so spin lettuce and vegetables in a salad spinner and/or pat dry with paper toweling. Store salad in refrigerator at 40 F. For best quality, use the salad in a jar within three to four days* of preparation.

* If using cooked meat, use salad within three days of preparation.

Equipment: 1-quart jar for a single serving; 2-quart (or larger) jar for multiple servings

The calorie content per half cup of each ingredient, or per amount indicated in description, is shown in parentheses.

1. Add 1 to 2 tablespoons (or to taste) of your dressing of choice to the jar. See the calorie information on the label.
   - Salad dressings add flavor to your salad and help with nutrient absorption, so don’t be afraid to expand your horizons and try something new.

Tip: Pre-made salad dressings tend to contain excess sodium. Try making your own salad dressing to avoid excess sodium while adding a personalized flavor. See the NDSU Extension publication “7 Tips for Choosing and Using Healthful Oils and Fats” (https://tinyurl.com/HealthfulOils) to learn about creating a salad dressing.

2. Choose one or a variety of vegetables.
   Add ½ cup of vegetables for texture, flavor and nutrition. Here are some suggestions:
   - Diced, canned, drained and rinsed beets (25)
   - Sliced fresh red or green bell peppers (10)
   - Chopped fresh broccoli (15)
   - Chopped fresh carrots (26)
   - Fresh cauliflower florets (13)
   - Fresh celery (8)
   - Canned corn, drained and rinsed (55)
   - Edamame, prepared from frozen (94)
   - Fresh cut green beans (13)
   - Sliced fresh mushrooms (8)
   - Cubed steamed/baked russet potatoes (60)
   - Sliced fresh radish (9)
   - Cubed steamed/baked sweet potatoes (57)
   - Diced fresh/canned tomatoes (30)
   - Chopped steamed/baked zucchini (11)

Tip: Enhance the flavor by roasting vegetables in a 400 F oven with olive oil and desired seasonings before adding them to your salad.
3. Choose one or more fruit(s) if desired.
Add ½ cup of fruit to add fiber, additional nutrients and a touch of sweetness. Examples of fruit(s) are:
- Chopped fresh apple (33)
- Fresh blueberries (42)
- Canned, sectioned grapefruit (44)
- Fresh grapes (33)
- Fresh mango pieces (50)
- Fresh orange slices (42)
- Fresh raspberries (32)
- Sliced fresh strawberries (27)
- Fresh or canned pineapple chunks (41)

4. Choose one grain if desired. Add ½ cup of cooked and cooled grain of choice to balance the flavor.
- Cooked pearled barley (97)
- Cooked brown rice (120)
- Cooked couscous (88)
- Cooked penne whole-wheat pasta (72)
- Cooked quinoa (111)
- Cooked white rice (103)

Tip: Add quinoa to your salad creation to increase fiber and protein content for an extra-satisfying salad.

5. Choose one or more proteins.
Add ½ cup of protein to your salad.
- Beans and legumes (canned or cooked; drained and rinsed)
  - Black (110)
  - Kidney (96)
  - Pinto (99)
- Chopped baked/grilled chicken (115)
- Canned, drained and rinsed chickpeas (100)
- Fish
  - Baked/grilled cod (45)
  - Baked/grilled salmon (77)
  - Baked/grilled tilapia (55)
  - Canned, drained tuna (66)

- Chopped hard-cooked whole egg (105)
- Boiled lentils (115)
- Medium cooked shrimp (39)
- Cooked ground turkey (85)
- Low-sodium turkey breast lunchmeat (44)
- Cooked ground beef (89)
- Diced baked ham (142)

Tip: Use lean meats and trim away extra fat for optimal nutrition. Be sure to cook meat to a safe internal cooking temperature.

6. Choose one leafy green vegetable.
Add 1 cup of leafy green vegetables to serve as the base of your salad. Examples include:
- Chopped fresh arugula (5)
- Chopped fresh cabbage (22)
- Chopped fresh kale (33)
- Shredded fresh romaine lettuce (8)
- Chopped fresh spinach (7)
- Fresh spring mix (8)

7. Choose one or more toppings. Toppings enhance flavor, interest and nutrition in your salad creation. Add about 1 tablespoon of each desired topping. Calorie content shown is per tablespoon.
- Crumbled blue cheese (30)
- Plain croutons (8)
- Dried cranberries (25)
- Crumbled feta cheese (25)
- Nuts
  - Sliced almonds (33)
  - Chopped pecans (47)
  - Chopped walnuts (48)
- Canned, sliced, drained and rinsed olives (13)
- Roasted unsalted pumpkin seeds (18)
- Raisins (33)
- Shredded cheddar cheese (29)
- Roasted unsalted sunflower seeds (47)

Julie Garden-Robinson, Ph.D., R.D., L.R.D., Food and Nutrition Specialist
Ashley Gehl, Dietetic Intern, NDSU Extension

For more information about nutrition, food safety and health, visit this website:  
www.ag.ndsu.edu/food

For more information on this and other topics, see www.ag.ndsu.edu

NDSU encourages you to use and share this content, but please do so under the conditions of our Creative Commons license.
You may copy, distribute, transmit and adapt this work as long as you give full attribution, don’t use the work for commercial purposes and share your resulting work similarly. For more information, visit www.ag.ndsu.edu/agcomm/creative-commons.