

Clean Eating Recipe Modifications

Looking for a way to eat healthier that doesn't involve calorie counting, tracking points or adding up fat grams? Then the "clean eating" approach may be for you! Many public health organizations are stressing the importance of adopting a whole foods based eating pattern rich in plant foods and with minimally processed ingredients.

This back to basics approach eliminates the need for tedious tracking and counting since you are eating foods in their most nutrient-dense form, leading to more satisfying and healthful meals.


This approach is also consistent with the latest Dietary Guidelines for Americans that recommend an overall healthy eating pattern that includes a variety of whole foods and limits added sugars, fat, and salt.




When you eat foods as close to natural as possible you end up naturally consuming the right balance of nutrients. For most Americans, a key priority is increasing intake of vegetables since most of us are not getting enough. With some clever substitutions you can eat a "cleaner" diet plus get more veggies too!

Basic Clean Eating Rules:

- Meals and snacks should be based on whole foods with an emphasis on plant-based foods like fruits, vegetables, single or "intact" grains like whole oats, Quinoa or brown rice, un-processed and traditionally raised meats and poultry (grass-fed or pasture raised), pasture-raised eggs and grass-fed dairy products.
- Choose organic fruits and vegetables whenever possible. If you can't afford the higher cost for organic fruits and vegetables then the benefits of eating conventionally raised produce still outweighs the risk of eating a diet low in fruits and vegetables.
- Store-bought foods should be minimally processed. A good rule of thumb is to look for short ingredients lists that only contain items you might find in your own kitchen. Some examples would be frozen fruits and vegetables, nut butters with the nut as the only ingredient, plain yogurt.

Instead of this:	Choose this:
<p>White (refined) sugar</p>	<p>Honey, maple syrup, coconut sugar or Sucanat, dates or date syrup.</p> <p>Remember that even though these sugars are less refined they are still sugar, so use sparingly and choose less sweetened foods overall.</p>
<p>Artificial Sweeteners</p>	<p>Whole leaf Stevia or liquid Stevia</p>
<p>White rice</p>	<p>Brown rice, or grated cauliflower sautéed with olive oil and seasonings.</p> <p>Experiment with other whole grains like quinoa, millet, wheat berries, wild rice, and barley as a side instead of rice.</p>
<p>White flour</p> 	<p>Whole wheat pastry flour or white whole wheat flour for baking. Almond, cassava or coconut flours (among others) are gluten free alternatives but may or may not replace flour in a one to one ratio.</p> <p>Experiment with alternatives like using steamed cauliflower or shredded zucchini to make pizza crusts and more!</p>
<p>White flour pasta</p>	<p>100% whole grain pasta, black bean pasta (clean versions will list only black beans and water as the ingredients), zucchini “noodles”: zucchini or yellow squash cut into long “noodles” with a special tool, spaghetti squash</p>
<p>Breads</p> 	<p>All grains should be 100% whole grain on a clean eating diet but most store-bought whole grain breads and rolls contain far too many ingredients to be considered clean. Look in the freezer section for sprouted grain breads with no added preservatives and only natural, approved ingredients.</p> <p>Think out of the box and serve sandwich fillings wrapped in lettuce leaves or blanched collard greens and serve grass-fed beef burgers on portabella mushroom “buns” instead of hamburger rolls. Many restaurants offer these substitutions as well.</p>

Instead of this:	Choose this:
<p>Cooking fat</p>	<p>Choose cold-pressed oils over highly processed vegetable oils. Some good choices are cold-pressed avocado oil, extra-virgin olive oil, extra-virgin coconut oil, grass-fed butter or grass-fed ghee.</p> <p>Mashed avocado or other vegetable and fruit purees (especially squash, pumpkin, applesauce or banana) can be used to replace some of the fat in a baked recipe.</p>
<p>Milk</p> 	<p>If you can't have or choose not to drink dairy there are plenty of great alternative nut milks on the market (coconut, almond, cashew, hemp, rice) but most aren't necessarily "clean" as they often contain fillers and sugar (look for unsweetened versions when buying these).</p> <p>Try making your own nut milks but realize they won't have the added calcium, vitamin A and D found in store-bought versions.</p>
<p>Cream (for coffee)</p>	<p>Skip the non-dairy creamer and use homemade nut milk, canned coconut milk (with only 1 ingredient listed), grass-fed cow's milk or organic half and half (look for a version with only milk and cream listed).</p>
<p>Bread crumbs</p>	<p>Toasted and ground up sprouted grain bread or leftover home-baked bread, almond meal or other ground nuts like pecans.</p> <p>Some whole wheat Panko breadcrumbs may only contain 1 or 2 ingredients and could be considered "clean"—read labels to be sure.</p>
<p>Dressings</p> 	<p>Salad dressings can easily be made with just a few simple ingredients like extra virgin olive oil, balsamic vinegar, Dijon mustard and seasonings but store-bought versions often contain 20+ ingredients.</p> <p>Creamy dressings can be made using plain Greek yogurt or ripe avocado. Look for recipes until you are comfortable making your own creations!</p>

Instead of this:	Choose this:
<p>Sauces for topping</p> 	<p>Most can easily be made with a few simple ingredients. Try using high-quality balsamic vinegar reduced into a thick sauce for drizzling over cooked meats or reduce a 100% fruit juice spread or homemade jam and use it as a glaze. Tapioca starch, arrowroot starch or potato starch can all be used for thickening sauces instead of white flour—just look for conversion tables to know how much to use.</p>
<p>Salt for cooking</p>	<p>Use salt sparingly but realize that the majority of our sodium comes from processed and restaurant foods. By cutting back on and eliminating processed foods you should naturally be consuming less sodium. Try un-refined salts like Himalayan Pink Salt, Celtic Sea Salt and Real Salt for some added minerals.</p>
<p>Cold treats</p> 	<p>Make your own “ice cream” by freezing chunks of banana and blending until creamy like ice cream! Try it with other frozen fruits like mango and pineapple. Smoothies can be a great cold treat or even meal—don’t use ingredients that are high in sugar like juices, ice cream or sherbet in order to keep them healthy. Add greens like spinach and baby kale to boost the nutritional value. Try freezing them in popsicle molds for a fun treat!</p>
<p>Crunchy snack foods</p>	<p>Look for popcorn (or make your own) made with just extra virgin coconut oil and salt or make crunchy kale chips. Choose raw, unsalted nuts or roast chickpeas until they get crunchy</p>
<p>Cereal and breakfast foods</p> 	<p>Choose single grain options prepared yourself like steel-cut or regular oats. Try overnight oats for a cold option or make homemade granola and serve with milk of choice. Look for recipes for whole grain muffins, pancakes or waffles using previously mentioned ingredients and freeze them for quick options in the mornings. For a higher protein option choose make-ahead egg-omelet muffins or a frittata cut into single servings and reheated as needed throughout the week.</p>

Clean Eating Recipe Resources:

Clean Eating Magazine:
<http://www.cleaneatingmag.com/>
 Eating Well:
<http://www.eatingwell.com/>
 100 Days of Real Food:
<http://www.100daysofrealfood.com/>

The Gracious Pantry:
<http://www.thegraciouspantry.com/>
 Elana’s Pantry (Clean Eating & Gluten free):
<https://elanaspantry.com/>
 Oh She Glows (Clean, vegan recipes):
<http://ohsheglows.com/>