

## Zone Meal Plans

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Our recommendation to “eat meat and vegetables, nuts and seeds, some fruit, little starch, and no sugar” is adequate to the task of preventing the scourges of diet-induced disease, but a more accurate and precise prescription is necessary to optimize physical performance.

Finely tuned, a good diet will increase energy, sense of well-being, and acumen, while simultaneously flensing fat and packing on muscle. When properly composed, the right diet can nudge every important quantifiable marker for health in the right direction.

Diet is critical to optimizing human function, and our clinical experience leads us to believe that Barry Sears’s Zone Diet closely models optimal nutrition.

CrossFit’s best performers are Zone eaters. When our second-tier athletes commit to strict adherence to the Zone parameters, they generally become top-tier performers quickly. It seems that the Zone Diet accelerates and amplifies the effects of the CrossFit regimen.

Unfortunately, the full benefit of the Zone Diet is largely limited to those who have at least at first weighed and measured their food.

For a decade, we experimented with sizing and portioning strategies that avoid scales, and

measuring cups and spoons, only to conclude that natural variances in caloric intake and macronutrient composition without measurement are greater than the resolution required to turn good performance to great. Life would be much easier for us were this not so!

The “meal plans” and “block chart” (on the following pages) have been our most expedient approach for eliciting athletes’ best performances and optimal health.

Even discounting any theoretical or technical content, this portal to sound nutrition still requires some basic arithmetic and weighing and measuring portions for the first weeks.

Too many athletes, after supposedly reading Sears’ book “Enter the Zone” still ask, “So what do I eat for dinner?” They get meal plans and block charts. We can make the Zone more complicated or simpler, but not more effective.

We encourage everyone to weigh and measure portions for a couple weeks because it is supremely worth the effort, not because it is fun. If you choose to “guesstimate” portions, you will have the result of CrossFit’s top performers only if and when you are lucky.

Within a couple weeks of weighing and measuring, you will have developed an uncanny ability to estimate the mass of common food portions, but, more importantly, you will have formed a keen visual sense of your nutritional needs. This is a profound awareness.

In the Zone scheme, all of humanity calculates to either 2-, 3-, 4-, or 5-block meals at breakfast, lunch, and dinner, with either 1- or 2-block snacks between lunch and dinner and again between dinner and bedtime. We have simplified the process for determining which of the four meal sizes and two snack sizes best suits your needs. We assume that you are CrossFitters; i.e., active.

Being a “4-blocker,” for instance, means that you eat three meals each day where each meal is composed of 4 blocks of protein, 4 blocks of carbohydrate, and 4 blocks of fat. Whether you are a “smallish” medium-sized guy or a “largish” medium-sized guy would determine whether you will need snacks of 1 or 2-blocks twice a day.

The “meal plans” we give stand as examples of 2-, 3-, 4-, or 5-block meals, and the “block chart” gives quantities of common foods equivalent to 1 block of protein, carbohydrate, or fat.

Once you determine that you need, say, 4-block meals, it is simple to use the block chart and select four times something from the protein list, four times something from the carbohydrate list, and four times something from the fat list every meal.

One-block snacks are chosen from the block chart at face value for a single snack of protein, carbohydrates, and fat, whereas 2-block snacks are, naturally, chosen composed of twice something from the carbohydrates list combined with twice something from the protein list, and twice something from the fats.

Every meal, every snack, must contain equivalent blocks of protein, carbohydrate, and fat.

If the protein source is specifically labeled “non-fat,” then double the usual fat blocks for that meal. Read “Enter the Zone” to learn why.

For those eating according to Zone parameters, body fat comes off fast. When our men fall below 10 percent body fat and start approaching 5 percent, we kick up the fat intake. The majority of our best athletes end up at X blocks of protein, X blocks of carbohydrate, and 4X or 5X blocks of fat. Learn to modulate fat intake to produce a level of leanness that optimizes performance.

The Zone Diet neither prohibits nor requires any particular food. It can accommodate paleo or vegan, organic or kosher, fast food or fine dining, while delivering the benefits of high-performance nutrition. ■

### What is a Block?

A block is a unit of measure used to simplify the process of making balanced meals.

- 7 grams of protein = 1 block of protein
- 9 grams of carbohydrate = 1 block of carbohydrate
- 3 grams of fat = 1 block of fat

Since most protein sources contain fat (e.g., meat), individuals should only add 1.5 grams for each fat block when constructing meals. The block chart on the following pages outlines an amount of each item to achieve 1.5 grams of fat.

When a meal is composed of equal blocks of protein, carbohydrate, and fat, 40% of its calories are from carbohydrate, 30% from protein and 30% from fat.

The following pages contain common foods in their macronutrient category (protein, carbohydrate, or fat), along with a conversion of measurements to blocks.

This “block chart” is a convenient tool for making balanced meals. Simply choose 1 item from the protein list, 1 item from the carbohydrate list, and 1 item from the fat list to compose a 1-block meal. Or choose 2 items from each column to compose a 2-block meal, and so on.

Here is a sample 4-block meal:

- 4 oz. chicken breast
- 1 artichoke
- 1 cup of steamed vegetables with 24 crushed peanuts
- 1 sliced apple

This meals contains 28 grams of protein, 36 grams of carbohydrate, and 12 grams of fat. It is simpler, though, to think of it as a 4-block meal.

### Block Prescription Based on Sex and Body Type

Body Type	Breakfast	Lunch	Snack	Dinner	Snack	Total Blocks
Small female	2	2	2	2	2	10
Medium female	3	3	1	3	1	11
Large female	3	3	2	3	2	13
Athletic, well muscled female	4	4	1	4	1	14
Small male	4	4	2	4	2	16
Medium male	5	5	1	5	1	17
Large male	5	5	2	5	2	19
X-Large male	4	4	4	4	4	20
Hard gainer	5	5	3	5	3	21
Large hard gainer	5	5	4	5	4	23
Athletic, well muscled male	5	5	5	5	5	25

### Sample 1 Day Block Requirements for Small (16-Block) Male

	Breakfast	Lunch	Snack	Dinner	Snack
Protein	4	4	2	4	2
Carbohydrate	4	4	2	4	2
Fat	4	4	2	4	2

### Block Chart For Protein, Fat, and Carbohydrates

PROTEINS			
Food	Eyeball	Exact Cooked (grams)	Exact Uncooked (grams)
beef	1 oz.	26	34
beef, ground, 80% lean	1-1/2 oz.	27	41
calamari	1-1/2 oz.	39	45
Canadian bacon	1 oz.	25	35
catfish	1-1/2 oz.	38	46
cheese, cheddar	1 oz	—	29
cheese, cottage	1/4 cup	—	63
cheese, feta	1-1/2 oz.	—	49
cheese, ricotta	2 oz.	—	62
chicken, breast	1 oz	23	33
clams	1-1/2 oz.	27	48
crabmeat	1-1/2 oz.	39	39
duck	1-1/2 oz.	30	38
egg substitute, liquid	1/4 cup	—	70
egg, white	2 large	64	64
egg, whole	1 large	52	56
flounder/sole	1-1/2 oz.	46	56
ham	1 oz.	37	34
lamb, loin	1 oz.	24	34
lamb, ground	1-1/2 oz.	28	42
lobster	1-1/2 oz	37	42
pork, loin chop	1 oz.	27	33
pork, ground	1-1/2 oz.	27	41
pork, bacon	1 oz.	20	56
protein powder, whey	1 oz.	12	—
salmon	1-1/2 oz.	28	34
sardines	1 oz.	28	—
scallops	1-1/2 oz.	34	58
shrimp	1-1/2 oz.	29	51
soy burgers	1/2 patty	45	—
soy cheese	1 oz.	56	—
soy sausage, links	2 links	37	—
swordfish	1-1/2 oz	30	36
tofu, firm	2 oz.	86	—
tofu, soft	3 oz.	107	—
tuna steak	1-1/2 oz.	24	29
tuna, canned in water	1 oz.	36	—
turkey, breast	1 oz.	23	30
turkey, ground	1-1/2 oz.	26	36
turkey, deli meat	1-1/2 oz.	32	—

FATS		
Food	Eyeball	Exact Cooked (grams)
NUTS & SEEDS		
almonds	~ 3	3
almond butter	1/3 tsp	3
cashews	~ 3	3
macadamia nuts	~ 1	2
peanut butter	1/2 tsp	3
peanuts	~ 6	3
sunflower seeds	1/4 tsp	3
walnuts	1 tsp	2
OTHER		
almond milk, unsweetened	1/2 cup	1/2 cup
avocado	1 tbsp.	10
butter	1/3 tsp	2
coconut milk	1/2 tbsp.	7
coconut oil	1/3 tsp	2
cream cheese	1 tsp	5
cream, heavy	1/3 tsp	4
cream, light	1/2 tsp	8
half and half	1 tbsp.	13
lard	1/3 tsp	2
mayo, light	1 tsp	5
mayonnaise	1/3 tsp	2
olive oil	1/3 tsp	2
olives	~ 5	14
sour cream	1 tsp	8
tahini	1/3 tsp	3
tartar sauce	1/2 tsp	9

**Notes:**

- 1) The amount for each item is to obtain 7 grams of protein, 9 grams of carbohydrate, or 1.5 grams of fat.
- 2) Exact data rounded to nearest whole gram.
- 3) Exact data from [here](#) unless not available therein.
- 4) Fiber in carbohydrate sources is subtracted to determine a block.
- 5) Tbsp. = tablespoon.
- 6) \* mean virtually “unlimited.” Over 5 cups to accumulate a block.

Zone Meal Plans, *continued*

VEGETABLES			
Food	Eyeball	Exact Cooked (grams)	Exact Uncooked (grams)
acorn squash	3/8 cup	89	100
artichoke	1 small	270	177
arugula	*	—	439
asparagus	12 spears	425	500
bean sprouts	3 cups	265	217
beet green	1-1/4 cups	351	1450
beets	1/2 cup	112	135
black beans	1/4 cup	60	19
bok choy	3 cups	1155	761
broccoli	1-1/4 cups	232	223
Brussels sprouts	3/4 cup	200	174
butternut squash	1/3 cup	123	93
cabbage	1-1/3 cups	250	272
carrots	1/2 cup	173	132
cauliflower	1-1/4 cups	500	304
celery	2 cups	375	657
chickpeas	1/4 cup	45	18
collard greens	1-1/4 cups	545	635
corn	1/4 cup	48	54
cucumber	1 (9 inch)	—	285
dill pickles	3 (3 inch)	—	639
eggplant	1-1/2 cups	144	313
fava beans	1/3 cup	63	27
green beans	1 cup	193	211
kale	1-1/4 cups	247	175
kidney beans	1/4 cup	55	26
leeks	1 cup	137	73
lentils	1/4 cup	74	17
lettuce, iceberg	1 head	—	508
lettuce, romaine	6 cups	—	760
lima beans	1/4 cup	65	21
mushrooms	3 cups	291	399
Napa cabbage	5 cups	405	300
okra	3/4 cup	448	212
onion	1/2 cup	103	118
parsnips	1/3 (9 inch)	67	68
peas	1/3 cup	250	180
peppers, red	1-1/4 cups	165	230
pinto beans	1/4 cup	52	19
potato, white	1/3 cup	48	68

VEGETABLES			
Food	Eyeball	Exact Cooked (grams)	Exact Uncooked (grams)
radicchio	5 cups	—	250
radishes	2 cups	493	500
salsa	1/2 cup	—	190
sauerkraut	1 cup	650	—
snow peas	3/4 cup	211	182
spaghetti squash	1 cup	178	167
spinach	1-1/3 cups	667	628
summer squash, all	3 cups	309	400
sweet potato	1/3 (5 inch)	52	53
Swiss chard	1-1/4 cups	443	423
tomato	1 cup	273	335
tomato sauce	1/2 cup	235	—
turnip	3/4 cup	295	195
watercress	*	—	1140
zucchini	3 cups	536	428

**Notes:**

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Zone Meal Plans, *continued*

FRUITS		
Food	Eyeball	Exact Uncooked (grams)
apple	1/2	79
applesauce, unsweetened	3/8 cup	89
apricots	3 small	99
banana	1/3 (9 inch)	45
blackberries	1/2 cup	210
blueberries	1/2 cup	75
cantaloupe	1/4	125
cherries	7	65
cranberries, raw	1/4 cup	117
dates	1	13
figs	3/4	55
grapefruit	1/2	140
grapes	1/2 cup	53
guava	1/2 cup	100
honeydew	1/2	110
kiwi	1	75
kumquat	3	96
mango	1/3 cup	67
nectarine	1/2	102
orange	1/2	99
papaya	2/3 cup	99
peach	1	112
pear	1/2	75
pineapple	1/2 cup	77
plum	1	89
raisins	1 tbsp.	12
raspberries	2/3 cup	167
strawberries	1 cup	160
tangerine	1	78
watermelon	1/2 cup	125

PROCESSED CARBOHYDRATES		
Food	Eyeball	Exact Cooked (grams)
bagel	1/4	17
biscuit	1/4	19
bread	1/2 slice	20
bread crumbs	1/2 oz.	20
cereal	1/2 oz.	14
chocolate bar	1/2 oz.	15
corn bread	1 inch square	14
cornstarch	4 tsp	10
croissant	1/4	21
crouton	1/2 oz.	13
donut	1/4	20
English muffin	1/4	21
flour	1-1/2 tsp	12
French fries	5	37
graham crackers	1-1/2	12
granola	1/2 oz.	20
grits	1/3 cup	63
ice cream	1/4 cup	39
melba toast	1/2 oz.	13
oatmeal	1/3 cup	90
pancake	1/2 (4 inch)	32
pasta, cooked	1/4 cup	38
pita bread	1/4	17
popcorn	2 cups	19
potato chips	1/2 cup	18
pretzels	1/2 oz	12
refried beans	1/4 cup	90
rice	3 tbsp.	32
rice cake	1	12
roll (dinner)	1/2	18
roll (hamburger, hot dog)	1/4	18
saltine crackers	4	13
taco shell	1	16
tortilla (corn)	1 (6 inch)	23
tortilla (flour)	1/2 (6 inch)	20
tortilla chips	1/2 oz	15
waffle	1/2	27

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Zone Meal Plans, *continued*

## Sample Zone Meals and Snacks

### 2-Block Menus

#### Breakfast

##### Breakfast Quesadilla

1 corn tortilla  
1/4 cup black beans  
1 egg (scrambled or fried)  
1 oz. cheese  
2 tbsp avocado

##### Breakfast Sandwich

1/2 pita bread  
1 egg (scrambled or fried)  
1 oz. cheese  
*Served with 2 macadamia nuts*

##### Fruit Salad

1/2 cup cottage cheese mixed with  
1/4 cantaloupe, cubed  
1/2 cup strawberries  
1/4 cup grapes  
*Sprinkled with 6 chopped almonds*

##### Smoothie

*Blend together:*  
1 cup milk  
1 tbsp protein powder  
1 cup frozen strawberries  
6 cashews

##### Oatmeal

1/3 cup cooked oatmeal (slightly watery)  
1/2 cup grapes  
1/4 cup cottage cheese  
2 tsp walnuts, chopped  
1 tbsp protein powder  
*Spice with vanilla extract and cinnamon*

##### Easy Breakfast

1/2 cantaloupe, cubed  
1/2 cup cottage cheese  
6 almonds

##### Steak and Eggs

1 oz. steak, grilled  
1 fried egg  
1 slice toast with  
2/3 tsp butter

#### Lunch

##### Tuna Sandwich

2 oz. canned tuna  
2 tsp light mayo  
1 slice bread

##### Tacos

1 corn tortilla  
3 oz. seasoned ground meat  
1/2 cup tomato, cubed  
1/3 cup onion (raw), chopped  
Lettuce (as garnish), chopped  
10 olives, chopped  
*Served with Tabasco to taste*

##### Deli Sandwich

1 slice bread  
3 oz. sliced deli meat  
2 tbsp avocado

##### Quesadilla

1 corn tortilla  
2 oz. cheese  
2 tbsp guacamole  
Jalapenos and salsa as garnish  
*Serve with 1/2 orange*

##### Grilled Chicken Salad

2 oz. chicken, grilled  
2 cups lettuce  
1/4 cup tomato, chopped  
1/4 cucumber, chopped  
1/4 cup green pepper (raw), chopped  
1/4 cup black beans  
2 tbsp avocado

##### Easy Lunch

3 oz. deli meat  
1 apple  
2 macadamia nuts

#### Dinner

##### Fresh Fish

3 oz. fresh fish, grilled  
1-1/3 cups zucchini (cooked), with herbs  
*Serve with large salad with 1 tbsp salad dressing of choice*

##### Beef Stew

*Saute:*  
2/3 tsp olive oil  
1/3 cup onion (raw), chopped  
5/8 green pepper (raw), chopped  
~4 oz. beef (raw), cubed  
*Add:*  
1-1/2 cups mushrooms (raw), chopped  
1/4 cup tomato sauce  
*Seasoned with garlic, Worcestershire sauce, salt and pepper*

##### Chili (serves 3)

*Saute:*  
1/3 cup onion (raw), chopped  
5/8 cup green pepper (raw), chopped  
in garlic, cumin, chili powder, and crushed red peppers  
*Add:*  
9 oz. ground beef, browned  
1 cup tomato sauce  
1/2 cup black beans  
1/4 cup kidney beans  
30 olives, chopped  
*Add fresh cilantro to taste*

##### Turkey and Greens

2 oz. turkey breast, roasted  
1-1/4 cups kale, chopped and steamed  
*Saute garlic and crushed red peppers in 2/3 tsp olive oil, add the steamed kale and mix.*  
*Serve with 1 peach, sliced*

##### Easy Chicken Dinner

2 oz. chicken breast, baked  
1 orange  
2 macadamia nuts

Zone Meal Plans, *continued*

## 3-Block Menus

## Breakfast

**Breakfast Quesadilla**

1 corn tortilla  
 1/4 cup black beans  
 1/3 cup onions (raw), chopped  
 5/8 cup green pepper (raw), chopped  
 2 eggs (scrambled or fried)  
 1 oz. cheese  
 3 tbsp avocado

**Breakfast Sandwich**

1/2 pita bread  
 1 egg (scrambled or fried)  
 1 oz. cheese  
 1 oz. sliced ham  
*Serve with 1/2 apple and 3 macadamia nuts*

**Fruit Salad**

3/4 cup cottage cheese  
 1/4 cantaloupe, cubed  
 1 cup strawberries  
 1/2 cup grapes  
*Sprinkle with 9 chopped almonds*

**Smoothie**

*Blend together:*  
 1 cup milk  
 2 tbsp protein powder  
 1 cup frozen strawberries  
 1/2 cup frozen blueberries  
 9 cashews

**Oatmeal**

2/3 cup cooked oatmeal (slightly watery)  
 1/2 cup grapes  
 1/2 cup cottage cheese  
 3 tsp walnuts, chopped  
 1 tbsp protein powder  
*Spice with vanilla extract and cinnamon*

**Easy Breakfast**

3/4 cantaloupe, cubed  
 3/4 cup cottage cheese  
 9 almonds

**Steak and Eggs**

2 oz. steak, grilled  
 1 fried egg  
 1 slice toast w/ 1 tsp butter  
 1/4 cantaloupe, cubed

## Lunch

**Tuna Sandwich**

3 oz. canned tuna  
 3 tsp light mayo  
 1 slice bread  
*Serve with 1/2 apple*

**Tacos**

2 corn tortillas  
 3 oz. seasoned ground meat  
 1 oz. grated cheese  
 1/2 cup tomato, cubed  
 2/3 cup onion (raw), chopped  
 Lettuce (as garnish), chopped  
*Serve with Tabasco to taste*  
 15 olives, chopped  
*Serve with Tabasco to taste*

**Deli Sandwich**

1 slice bread  
 3 oz. sliced deli meat  
 1 oz. cheese  
 3 tbsp avocado  
*Serve with 1/2 apple*

**Quesadilla**

1 corn tortilla  
 3 oz. cheese  
 3 tbsp guacamole  
 Jalapenos and salsa as garnish  
*Serve with 1 orange*

**Grilled Chicken Salad**

3 oz. chicken, grilled  
 2 cups lettuce  
 1/4 cup tomato, chopped  
 1/4 cucumber, chopped  
 1/4 cup green pepper (raw), chopped  
 1/4 cup black beans  
 1/4 cup kidney beans  
 3 tbsp avocado

**Easy Lunch**

3 oz. deli meat  
 1 oz. sliced cheese  
 1-1/2 apples  
 3 macadamia nuts

## Dinner

**Fresh Fish**

4-1/2 oz. fresh fish, grilled  
 1-1/3 cups zucchini (cooked), with herbs  
*Serve with large salad with 1-1/2 tbsp salad dressing of choice*  
 1 cup strawberries

**Beef Stew**

*Saute:*  
 1 tsp olive oil  
 1/3 cup onion (raw), chopped  
 5/8 green pepper (raw), chopped  
 ~6 oz. beef (raw), cubed  
*Add:*  
 1-1/2 cups zucchini (raw), chopped  
 1-1/2 cups mushrooms (raw), chopped  
 1/2 cup tomato sauce  
*Season with garlic, Worcestershire sauce, salt and pepper*

**Chili (serves 3)**

*Saute:*  
 2/3 cup onion (raw), chopped  
 1-1/4 cups green pepper (raw), chopped  
 in garlic, cumin, chili powder, and crushed red peppers  
*Add:*  
 13.5 oz. ground beef, browned  
 1 cup tomato sauce  
 3/4 cup black beans  
 1/2 cup kidney beans  
 45 olives, chopped  
*Add fresh cilantro to taste*

**Turkey and Greens**

3 oz. turkey breast, roasted  
 2-1/2 cups kale, chopped and steamed  
*Saute garlic and crushed red peppers in 1 tsp olive oil, add the steamed kale and mix.*  
*Serve with 1 peach, sliced*

**Easy Dinner**

3 oz. chicken breast, baked  
 1-1/2 oranges  
 3 macadamia nuts

Zone Meal Plans, *continued*

## 4-Block Menus

## Breakfast

**Breakfast Quesadilla**

1 corn tortilla  
 1/2 cup black beans  
 1/3 cup onions (raw), chopped  
 5/8 green pepper (raw), chopped  
 2 eggs (scrambled or fried)  
 2 oz. cheese  
 4 tbsp avocado

**Breakfast Sandwich**

1/2 pita bread  
 2 eggs (scrambled or fried)  
 1 oz. cheese  
 1 oz. sliced ham  
*Serve with 1 apple and 4 macadamia nuts*

**Fruit Salad**

1 cup cottage cheese  
 1/2 cantaloupe, cubed  
 1 cup strawberries  
 1/2 cup grapes  
*Sprinkled with 12 chopped almonds*

**Smoothie**

*Blend together:*  
 2 cups milk  
 2 tbsp protein powder  
 1 cup frozen strawberries  
 1/2 cup frozen blueberries  
 12 cashews

**Oatmeal**

1 cup cooked oatmeal (slightly watery)  
 1/2 cup grapes  
 3/4 cup cottage cheese  
 4 tsp walnuts, chopped  
 1 tbsp protein powder  
*Spice with vanilla extract and cinnamon*

**Easy Breakfast**

1 cantaloupe, cubed  
 1 cup cottage cheese  
 12 almonds

**Steak and Eggs**

3 oz. steak, grilled  
 1 fried egg  
 1 slice bread with 1-1/3 tsp butter  
 1/2 cantaloupe, cubed

## Lunch

**Tuna Sandwich**

4 oz. canned tuna  
 4 tsp light mayo  
 1 slice bread  
*Serve with 1 apple*

**Tacos**

2 corn tortillas  
 4-1/2 oz. seasoned ground meat  
 1 oz. cheese, grated  
 1/2 cup tomato, cubed  
 1/3 cup onion (raw), chopped  
 Lettuce (as garnish), chopped  
 20 olives, chopped  
*Serve with Tabasco to taste*  
*Serve with 1/2 apple*

**Deli Sandwich**

2 slices of bread  
 4-1/2 oz. sliced deli meat  
 1 oz. cheese  
 4 tbsp avocado

**Quesadilla**

2 corn tortillas  
 4 oz. cheese  
 4 tbsp guacamole  
 Jalapenos and salsa as garnish  
*Serve with 1 orange*

**Grilled Chicken Salad**

4 oz. chicken, grilled  
 2 cups lettuce  
 1/4 cup tomato, chopped  
 1/4 cucumber, chopped  
 1/4 cup green pepper (raw), chopped  
 1/2 cup black beans  
 1/4 cup kidney beans  
 4 tbsp avocado

**Easy Lunch**

4-1/2 oz. deli meat  
 1 oz. cheese  
 1 apple  
 1 grapefruit  
 4 macadamia nuts

## Dinner

**Fresh Fish**

6 oz. fresh fish, grilled  
 1-1/3 cups zucchini (cooked), with herbs  
*Serve with large salad with 2 tbsp salad dressing of choice*  
 2 cups strawberries

**Beef Stew**

*Saute:*  
 1-1/3 tsp olive oil  
 1/3 cup onion (raw), chopped  
 5/8 green pepper (raw), chopped  
 ~8 oz. (beef (raw), cubed)  
*Add:*  
 1-1/2 cups zucchini (raw), chopped  
 1-1/2 cups mushrooms (raw), chopped  
 1 cup tomato sauce  
*Season with garlic, Worcestershire sauce, salt and pepper*  
*Serve with 1 cup strawberries*

**Chili (serves 3)**

*Saute:*  
 2/3 cup onion (raw), chopped  
 1-1/4 cups green pepper (raw), chopped  
 in garlic, cumin, chili powder, and crushed red peppers  
*Add:*  
 18 oz. ground beef, browned  
 2 cups tomato sauce  
 3/4 cup black beans  
 3/4 cup kidney beans  
 60 olives, chopped  
*Add fresh cilantro to taste*

**Turkey and Greens**

4 oz. turkey breast, roasted  
 2-1/2 cups kale, chopped and steamed  
*Saute garlic and crushed red peppers in 1-1/3 tsp olive oil, add kale and mix.*  
*Serve with 2 peaches, sliced*

**Easy Dinner**

4 oz. chicken breast, baked  
 2 oranges  
 4 macadamia nuts

## 5-Block Menus

## Breakfast

**Breakfast Quesadilla**

2 corn tortillas  
 1/2 cup black beans  
 1/3 cup onions (raw), chopped  
 5/8 cup green pepper (raw), chopped  
 3 eggs (scrambled or fried)  
 2 oz. cheese  
 5 tbsp avocado

**Breakfast Sandwich**

1/2 pita bread  
 2 eggs (scrambled or fried)  
 2 oz. cheese  
 1 oz. ham, sliced  
*Serve with* 1-1/2 apples and  
 5 macadamia nuts

**Fruit Salad**

1-1/4 cups cottage cheese  
 1/2 cantaloupe, cubed  
 1 cup strawberries  
 1 cup grapes  
*Sprinkle with* 15 chopped almonds

**Smoothie**

*Blend together:*  
 2 cups milk  
 3 tbsp protein powder  
 2 cups frozen strawberries  
 1/2 cup frozen blueberries  
 15 cashews

**Oatmeal**

1 cup cooked oatmeal (slightly watery)  
 1 cup grapes  
 1 cup cottage cheese  
 5 tsp walnuts, chopped  
 1 tbsp protein powder  
*Spice with* vanilla extract and cinnamon

**Easy Breakfast**

1-1/4 cantaloupe, cubed  
 1-1/4 cups cottage cheese  
 ~ 15 almonds

**Steak and Eggs**

3 oz. steak, grilled  
 2 fried eggs  
 1 slice bread with 1-2/3 tsp butter  
 3/4 cantaloupe, cubed

## Lunch

**Tuna Sandwich**

5 oz. canned tuna  
 5 tsp light mayo  
 1 slice bread  
*Serve with* 1-1/2 apples

**Tacos**

2 corn tortillas  
 6 oz. seasoned ground meat  
 1 oz. cheese, grated  
 1/2 cup tomato, cubed  
 1/3 cup onion (raw), chopped  
 Lettuce (as garnish), chopped  
 25 olives, chopped  
*Serve with* Tabasco to taste  
*Serve with* 1 apple

**Deli Sandwich**

2 slices bread  
 4-1/2 oz. deli meat  
 2 oz. cheese  
 5 tbsp avocado  
 1/2 apple

**Quesadilla**

2 corn tortillas  
 5 oz. cheese  
 5 tbsp guacamole  
 Jalapenos and salsa as garnish  
*Serve with* 1-1/2 oranges

**Grilled Chicken Salad**

5 oz. chicken, grilled  
 2 cups lettuce  
 1/4 cup tomato, chopped  
 1/4 cucumber, chopped  
 1/4 cup green pepper (raw), chopped  
 1/2 cup black beans  
 1/2 cup kidney beans  
 5 tbsp avocado

**Easy Lunch**

4-1/2 oz. deli meat  
 2 oz. cheese  
 1-1/2 apples  
 1 grapefruit  
 5 macadamia nuts

## Dinner

**Fresh Fish**

7-1/2 oz. fresh fish, grilled  
 1-1/3 cups zucchini (cooked), with herbs  
*Serve with* large salad with 1/4  
 cup black beans and 2-1/2 tbsp  
 salad dressing of choice  
 2 cups strawberries

**Beef Stew**

*Saute:*  
 1-2/3 tsp olive oil  
 2/3 cup onion (raw), chopped  
 1-1/4 cups green pepper (raw), chopped  
 ~10 oz. beef (raw), cubed  
*Add:*  
 1-1/2 cups zucchini (raw), chopped  
 1-1/2 cups mushrooms (raw), chopped  
 1 cup tomato sauce  
*Season with* garlic, Worcestershire sauce,  
 salt and pepper  
*Serve with* 2 cups strawberries

**Chili (serves 3)**

*Saute:*  
 2/3 cup onion (raw), chopped  
 2-1/2 cups green pepper (raw), chopped  
 in garlic, cumin, chili powder, and crushed  
 red peppers  
*Add:*  
 22.5 oz. ground beef, browned  
 2 cups tomato sauce  
 1 cup black beans  
 1 cup kidney beans  
 75 olives, chopped  
*Add* fresh cilantro to taste

**Turkey and Greens**

5 oz. turkey breast, roasted  
 2-1/2 cups kale, chopped and steamed  
*Saute* garlic and crushed red peppers in  
 1-2/3 tsp olive oil, add steamed kale and  
 mix.  
*Serve with* 3 peaches, sliced

**Easy Dinner**

5 oz. chicken breast, baked  
 2-1/2 oranges  
 5 macadamia nuts

Zone Meal Plans, *continued*

## 1-Block Snacks

1 hard-boiled egg  
1/2 orange  
6 peanuts

1/2 cup plain yogurt  
*Sprinkled with* 3 cashews, chopped

1 oz. cheese  
1/2 apple  
1 macadamia nut

1 oz. canned chicken or tuna  
1 peach  
1/2 tsp peanut butter

1-1/2 oz. deli-style ham or turkey  
1 carrot  
5 olives

1 oz. mozzarella string cheese  
1/2 cup grapes  
1 tbsp avocado

1 oz. jack cheese  
1 tbsp guacamole  
1 cup tomato

1 cup strawberries  
1/4 cup cottage cheese  
1 macadamia nut

1 poached egg  
1/2 slice bread  
1/2 tsp peanut butter

1/4 cup cottage cheese  
1/2 carrot  
3 celery stalks  
5 olives

3 oz. soft tofu  
1/2 apple  
1/2 tsp peanut butter

1 oz. tuna  
1 large tossed salad  
1 tsp salad dressing of choice

1 hard boiled egg  
1 large spinach salad  
1 tsp salad dressing of choice

1 oz. grilled turkey breast  
1/2 cup blueberries  
3 cashews

*Blend:*

1 cup water  
1 tbsp protein powder  
1/2 cup grapes  
1/3 tsp coconut oil

*Blend:*

1 cup water  
1/2 oz. spirulina  
1 cup frozen strawberries  
3 cashews

1 oz. cheddar cheese melted over  
1/2 apple  
*Sprinkled with* 1 tsp walnuts, chopped

1/4 cup cottage cheese  
1/2 cup pineapple  
6 peanuts

1 oz. sardines  
1/2 nectarine  
5 olives

1-1/2 oz. feta cheese  
1 cup diced tomato  
5 olives

1-1/2 oz. salmon  
12 asparagus spears  
1/3 tsp olive oil

1-1/2 oz. shrimp  
2 cups broccoli (raw)  
6 peanuts

1 oz. Canadian bacon  
1 plum  
1 macadamia nut

1-1/2 oz. deli-style turkey  
1 tangerine  
1 tbsp avocado

1/4 cup cottage cheese  
1 cup sliced tomato  
1/3 tsp olive oil

1-1/2 oz. scallops  
1 sliced cucumber  
1/2 tsp tartar sauce

1 oz. lamb  
1/4 cup chick peas  
1/3 tsp tahini

## Typical CrossFit Block Prescriptions and Adjustments

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To best understand the Zone Diet, CrossFitters should read Dr. Barry Sears book “Enter the Zone.” This article gives more information regarding block prescriptions and “fat intake” adjustments for CrossFitters.

The chart based on sex and body type in the “Zone Meal Plans” article is perfect way to begin the Zone. In cases where the athlete chooses the wrong block size, this can be modified after a few weeks once the desired results are not achieved. While starting at a block higher or lower than ideal may slow progress, it is infinitely more important to start weighing and measuring intake than not to start at all.

Dr. Barry Sears details a more precise method to calculate one’s block prescription in “Enter the Zone.” It is:

$$\text{Zone block prescription} = \text{lean body mass (lb.)} * \text{activity level (g/lb. of lean body mass)} / 7 \text{ (g protein/block)}$$

The activity level ranges on a scale of 0-1. For those who work out several days a week and do not have a labor-intensive job, the activity level should be 0.7 (most CrossFitters). This simplifies to a Zone block prescription that is 10 percent of lean mass.

The activity factor should increase if the athlete does CrossFit two or more times a day, trains for another sport in addition to CrossFit, or holds a strenuous daily job (e.g., construction, farming, etc., and potentially coaching, if on one’s feet all day). Although CrossFit workouts are relatively intense, they are not long in duration. An individual does not need to increase the activity level value based on intensity alone; activity volume determines this.

### Sample Calculation Of The Zone Block Prescription

Suppose an athlete is 185 lb. (84 kg) with 16 percent body fat. He does CrossFit five days per week and works in a typical office environment. A sample calculation of his Zone block prescription follows.

First, lean body mass is calculated (calipers are a convenient, easy-to-use, and reasonably accurate method):

$$\text{lean body mass} = 185 \text{ lb.} - (0.16 * 185 \text{ lb.}) = 185 \text{ lb.} - 29.6 \text{ lb.} = 155.4 \text{ lb.}$$

Because the activity factor is 0.7, the simplified formula is used:

$$\text{block prescription} = 155.4 \text{ lb.} * 0.10 = 15.54 \text{ or } \sim 15 \text{ blocks}$$

Typical CrossFit Block Prescriptions and Adjustments, *continued*

This means that the example athlete above would eat 15 blocks/day, or:

<b>Protein</b>	15 blocks * 7 g	= 105 g (420 calories)
<b>Carbohydrate</b>	15 blocks * 9 g	= 135 g (540 calories)
<b>Fat</b>	15 blocks * 3 g	= 45 g (405 calories)
<b>Total Calories</b>		= 1,365

Note, the total calories presented here are underestimated due to hidden calories. Most foods are classified by a single macronutrient, despite some other macronutrients present (e.g., nuts are classified as a fat, but have some protein and carbohydrate calories). These less predominant macronutrients for each source are not included in the total calorie calculations.

This athlete could also choose to round up to 16 blocks, particularly if the athlete is more likely to have compliance issues. The Zone prescription is a calorie-restrictive diet and can be difficult especially for new-adopters. Rounding up to the next whole block when one's calculation has a decimal value may result in a slower progress, but may also get better long-term compliance. Once the athlete has become accustomed to the diet, then the total blocks can be lowered to 15, particularly if desired body composition is not yet achieved.

### Increasing Fat Intake

The caloric restriction leans out the athlete while providing enough protein and carbohydrate for typical CrossFit activity levels. However, the athlete can become too lean. The athlete is considered "too lean" when performance decreases in combination with continued weight loss. "Too lean" should not be based on body-weight or appearance alone. When a loss of mass coincides with a drop in performance, the athlete needs to add calories to the diet. This can be accomplished by doubling the fat intake.

For the 15-block example athlete, daily food intake at two times the fat would be:

<b>Protein</b>	15 blocks * 7 g	= 105 g (420 calories)
<b>Carbohydrate</b>	15 blocks * 9 g	= 135 g (540 calories)
<b>Fat</b>	30 blocks * 3 g	= 90 g (810 calories)
<b>Total Calories</b>		= 1,770

Typical CrossFit Block Prescriptions and Adjustments, *continued*

At twice the fat, the macronutrient ratio based on calories has changed from 30% protein, 40% carbohydrate, 30% fat to: 23% protein, 31% carbohydrate, 46% fat. Fat can continue to be multiplied if the athlete has further mass loss and performance decline. Many CrossFit athletes have a diet including five times the fat.

For the 15-block athlete, daily food intake at five times the fat would be:

<b>Protein</b>	15 blocks * 7 g	= 105 g (420 calories)
<b>Carbohydrate</b>	15 blocks * 9 g	= 135 g (540 calories)
<b>Fat</b>	75 blocks * 3 g	= 225 g (2,025 calories)
<b>Total Calories</b>		= 2,985

At five times the fat, the macronutrient ratio based on calories has changed to: 14% protein, 18% carbohydrate, 68% fat. ■

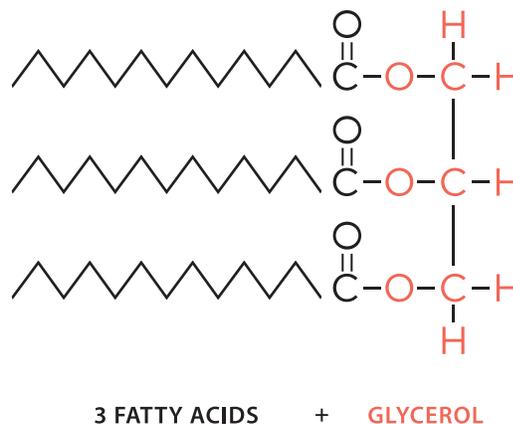
## Supplementation

Whole, unprocessed foods are the best source of both macronutrients and micronutrients in terms of composition, variety, and density, such that supplementation is generally not recommended. We contend that eating a high-quality whole food based diet in known quantities are the most important tenets of nutrition for improved performance and health. Not only are supplements generally poorer nutrient sources, but they are also an unnecessary focus for someone not following our basic diet plan of weighed and measured meat and vegetables, etc.

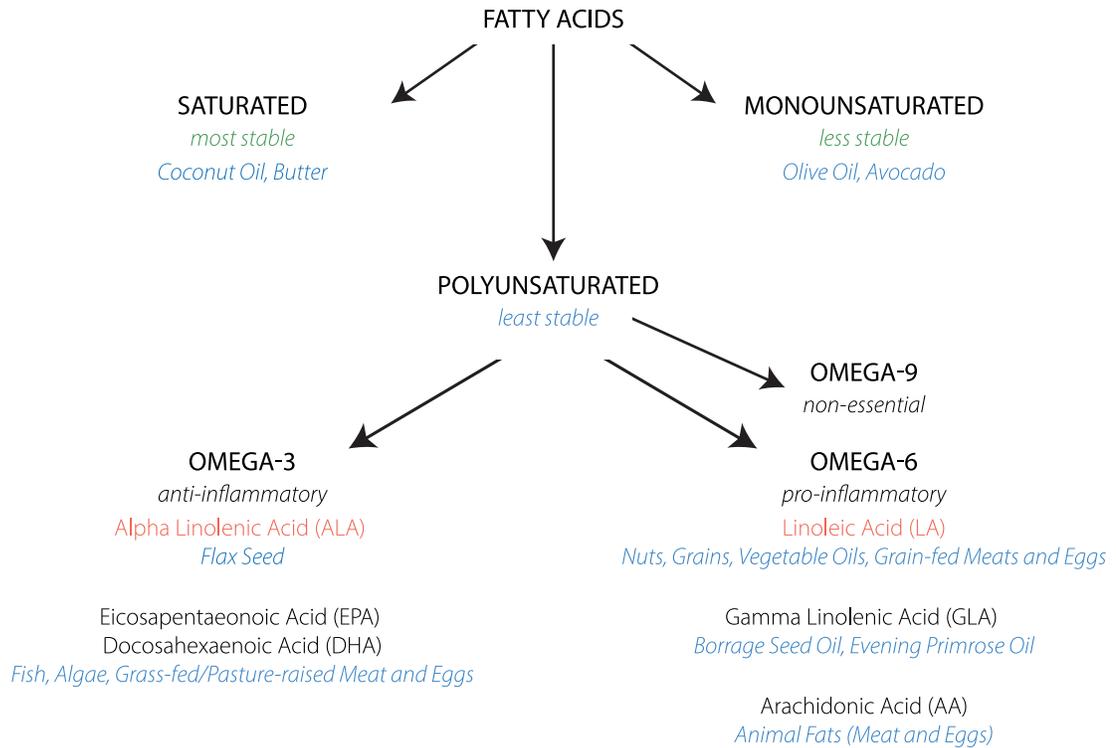
However, there is one supplement that we find is beneficial enough to make a blanket recommendation, and that is fish oil. Fish oil provides omega-3 fatty acids, which are a type of polyunsaturated fat.

Physiological fats are known as triglycerides in biological terms; they are composed of a glycerol backbone with three fatty acids attached (Figure 1). The attached fatty acids are mixtures of saturated, monounsaturated, and polyunsaturated fats. Although one fatty acid is prominent in each food, all three are represented to some degree. Figure 2 provides a summary of the types of fat and example foods of each.

The two types of polyunsaturated fats found most frequently in foods are omega-3 and omega-6 fats. Classifying a fatty acid as omega-3 vs. omega-6 is dependent on chemical structure. Polyunsaturated fats are sources of the two essential fatty acids, meaning they must be obtained from the diet. They are alpha-linolenic acid (ALA) (an omega-3) and linoleic acid (LA) (an omega-6). Omega-3 fats are known as “anti-inflammatory” fats, and omega-6 fats are known as “pro-inflammatory” fats based on their physiological functions. Both are needed in relatively equal quantities.



**Figure 1.** Fat in Food is in the Form of a Triglyceride.



**APPROXIMATE PALEO ERA RATIO**

2 OMEGA-6 : 1 OMEGA -3

**CURRENT RATIO**

20 OMEGA-6 : 1 OMEGA -3

*pro-inflammatory*

**Figure 2.** Summary of Fatty Acids and Example Food Sources.

Current diets tend to have too many omega-6 fats, pushing the balance towards pro-inflammatory physiological processes. The current omega-6:omega-3 ratio is approximately 20:1 and higher, where primitive populations likely had a ratio closer to 2:1. Sources of omega-6 fats to the diet are: vegetable oils, nuts, conventionally raised (grain fed/feed lot) meat and eggs, and farm-raised fish. Eliminating processed food according to our diet should reduce exposure to omega-6 fats from vegetable oils. However, most meat and eggs are conventionally raised, which result in greater omega-6 content than if they were wild or grass-fed. Nuts and seeds also have more omega-6 fats than omega-3. Therefore, it is possible that even though one eats the foods on our list, his or her diet could still be pro-inflammatory relative to the ancestral past.

Fish-oil supplementation improves the ratio of omega-6 to omega-3 fatty acids and reduces the inflammatory responses in the body. Fish oil provides two types of omega-3 fatty acids: eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), the form of omega-3 fats

preferred by the brain and body. The body can convert ALA to EPA and DHA, but the conversion process is inefficient. Some practitioners have recommended a combined daily intake on the order of 3 grams of EPA and DHA for an otherwise healthy individual, although the exact amount is dictated by one's total omega-6 intake. Each brand of fish oil has a different concentration of EPA and DHA per serving as indicated on the label. Individuals may have to take multiple servings to get 3 grams of EPA and DHA, as brands may include omega-3s that are not either (e.g., ALA). Flax seed or oil is not an appropriate supplement for omega-3's. Flax is a good source of ALA, but because of the poor conversion to EPA and DHA, it is not recommended. If the individual is vegan, DHA can be obtained with algae oil.

Research has indicated positive health benefits by supplementing with fish oil. Omega-3 fats help increase the fluidity of cell membranes, and research has indicated supplementation can improve insulin sensitivity, cardiovascular function, nervous-system function, immune health, memory, and mood issues. Omega-3's also function as an anti-coagulant, so military personnel should consider removing fish oil supplements from their diet a couple of weeks prior to deployment. It may also be appropriate for those with an upcoming surgery to stop taking fish oil two weeks from that date. These individuals should talk with their doctor regarding these circumstances.

It is possible to avoid omega-3 supplementation depending on food intake, although the individual needs to be fastidious with his or her diet. This could be accomplished by avoidance of all vegetable oils (which are used at most every restaurant), and nuts and seeds. Meat would have to be grass-fed, eggs pasture raised, and wild-caught fish should be consumed a few times a week. Because this is not practical for many people, supplementation is used.

Besides the ratio of omega-6 to omega-3's in the diet, the total amount of polyunsaturated fat is an important consideration. It is not ideal to take in high doses of either omega-6 (vegetable oils, nuts) or omega-3 fats (based on the stability of polyunsaturated fats relative to other fats, Figure 2). Fish oil supplementation does not negate the effects of a bad diet (e.g., eating fast food or excessive amounts of nuts and nut butters). The total recommended polyunsaturated fat intake in a diet is not well-established; an equal representation of the three fats appears prudent. Individuals should work with a primary care doctor to determine if supplementation is appropriate, particularly in cases with specific medical conditions. ■