



PERFORM ELITE
— FOOTBALL ACADEMY —

ATHLETE NUTRITION GUIDE

Fuel Your Performance. Train Hard. Recover Stronger.

Performance Nutrition for Youth Football Athletes

EAT LIKE A PRO • HYDRATE LIKE A PRO • RECOVER LIKE A PRO



[01]

Fuel Wins Games

WHY NUTRITION MATTERS FOR ATHLETES

What you eat is part of your training. Every sprint, every 1v1, every late-game run is powered by the fuel you put in your body. Young athletes are growing AND training, which means your body needs more energy and better quality food than someone who doesn't play.

ENERGY

Fuel speed, power
& endurance

RECOVERY

Repair muscles
& come back stronger

GROWTH

Build strong
bones & muscles

FOCUS

Sharper decisions
on & off the pitch

The Perform Elite Plate

Training Day Type	How To Build Your Plate	Example
Rest / Light Day	½ plate vegetables & fruit • ¼ plate protein • ¼ plate carbs	Salad, potatoes & salmon
Hard Training Day	1/3 plate vegetables & fruit • ¼ plate protein • the rest carbs	Chicken stir fry with rice
Game Day	½ plate carbs • ¼ plate protein • ¼ plate vegetables & fruit	Pasta with meat sauce

- Carbs go up on harder days — they are your main fuel for football.
- Protein stays steady every day — your muscles are always rebuilding.
- Colourful fruit and vegetables every day for vitamins, minerals, and recovery.



[02]

Carbohydrates

YOUR NUMBER ONE FUEL

Carbohydrates fuel speed, power, and endurance. They're stored in your muscles as glycogen — your football fuel tank. A full tank means you're still sprinting in the last five minutes when everyone else is walking.

How Much

Training Load	Daily Carbohydrates	What That Looks Like
Light days	3–5 g per kg bodyweight	Carbs at each meal
Moderate training	5–7 g per kg bodyweight	Carbs at each meal + snacks
Heavy training / game days	6–8 g per kg bodyweight	Bigger carb portions, carb-rich snacks

Best Sources

Rice • Pasta • Potatoes • Oats • Bread & wraps • Fruit • Couscous • Cereal • Beans

Around Training

- **Before (1–3 h):** carb-based meal or snack — pasta, rice, oatmeal, banana, toast.
- **During (games over 60 min):** sips of sports drink or small fruit bites at breaks.
- **After:** carbs with every recovery meal/snack to refill the tank for tomorrow.

PRO TIP

Low energy in the second half usually isn't fitness — it's fuel. If you fade late in games, look at what you ate that day.



[03]

Protein

BUILD & REPAIR

Protein is the building block of muscle. Training breaks muscle down; protein (plus sleep) builds it back stronger. Spread it through the day — your body uses it better in regular doses than in one giant dinner.

How Much

Who	Daily Protein	Per Meal Guide
Youth athletes (general)	1.2–1.6 g per kg bodyweight	Palm-sized portion each meal
Heavy training blocks	1.4–2.0 g per kg bodyweight	Protein at every meal + 1–2 snacks

Best Sources

Chicken • Fish • Eggs • Greek yogurt • Milk & chocolate milk • Beans & lentils • Tofu • Cheese • Lean beef

Around Training

- **Before:** a little protein with your pre-training meal (1–3 h out).
- **During:** nothing needed — water and carbs only.
- **After (within ~1 h):** 15–30 g protein with carbs — chocolate milk, yogurt with fruit, turkey sandwich.

PRO TIP

Chocolate milk is one of the best (and cheapest) recovery drinks in the game: carbs + protein + fluid + electrolytes in one cup.



[04]

Healthy Fats

LONG-LASTING ENERGY & GROWTH

Fats are long-burning fuel. They support hormones, growing brains and bodies, and help your body absorb key vitamins. Choose quality fats daily — just keep them light right before training, because they digest slowly.

How Much

- Roughly **1–1.5 g per kg bodyweight per day** for most young athletes — about a thumb-sized portion of healthy fat at each meal.
- Prioritize **omega-3s** (salmon, sardines, walnuts, chia) — great for recovery, focus, and reducing soreness.

Best Sources

Avocado • Olive oil • Nuts & nut butter • Seeds • Salmon & sardines • Eggs

Around Training

- Keep fat **low in the 1–2 hours before** training and games — it sits in the stomach and can make you feel heavy.
- Normal healthy-fat portions at all other meals.

The Macro Team

Fuel	Job On The Team	Think Of It As
Carbohydrates	Fast energy for sprints, skills, and endurance	Your match-day fuel tank
Protein	Repairs and builds muscle after training	Your construction crew
Fats	Slow-burning energy, growth, and health	Your long-life battery
Water	Carries everything, controls temperature	The engine oil — nothing works without it

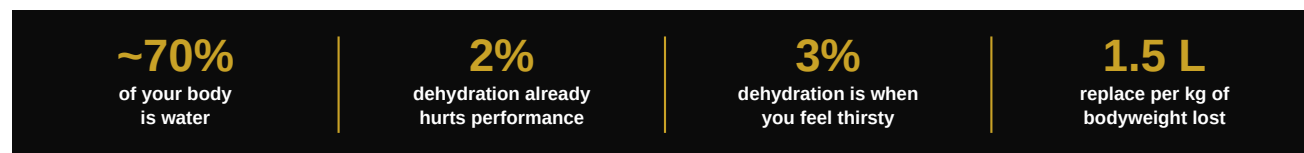


[05]

Hydration

THE EASIEST PERFORMANCE WIN

Losing just 2% of your bodyweight in sweat measurably hurts speed, focus, and decision-making — and it happens before you even feel thirsty. Thirst is a late warning, not a fuel gauge.



Signs You're Dehydrated

Dark urine • Headaches • Early fatigue • Muscle cramps • Loss of focus • Fast heart rate

Daily Habits

- Drink early and often — start the day with a glass of water.
- Check the toilet: aim for light lemonade-coloured urine in the morning.
- Keep a water bottle visible at school, home, and training.
- Drink fluids with meals and snacks — food sodium helps you hold onto fluid.

Around Games & Training

When	What To Do
Before	Sip regularly through the day; small frequent sips in the last hour. Salty snacks (crackers, pretzels) help you retain fluid.
During	Big gulps every 10–15 minutes at breaks. For games or sessions over an hour in the heat, a sports drink can help.
After	Pair fluids with your recovery snack/meal. Water, milk, chocolate milk, or a smoothie are great choices.



[06]

Game Day Fueling

COUNT DOWN TO KICKOFF LIKE A PRO

Use this countdown for every game. The closer you get to kickoff, the lighter and more carb-focused your fuel becomes — so you start with a full tank and an empty stomach.

Hours Before	What To Eat	Examples
3–4 HOURS	Full balanced meal: high carbs, moderate protein, low fat	Pasta with chicken • Rice with fish & veg • Chicken stir fry
2 HOURS	High-carb snack or small meal	Egg & toast • Cereal with milk • Bagel with jam
1 HOUR	Small, easy-to-digest carbs + fluids with electrolytes	Banana • Half a bagel • Granola bar • Sports drink sips
KICKOFF (0)	Nothing heavy — just sips of fluid; a few fruit bites at halftime if needed	Water or sports drink • Orange slices
AFTER	Recovery snack within 30 min, full meal within 2 hours	Chocolate milk + banana, then a balanced dinner

Game Day Rules

- Nothing new on game day — test all foods and drinks on training days first.
- Fibre and fat slow digestion: keep them light before kickoff to avoid a heavy stomach.
- Every body is different — adjust timings until you find what works, and stick with it.



[07]

Recovery: The 3 R's

REFUEL • REBUILD • REHYDRATE

Training empties your battery. Recovery nutrition recharges it — so you adapt, grow, and show up fresh for the next session. Aim for a recovery snack within 30 minutes and a balanced meal within 2 hours of finishing.

REFUEL	REBUILD	REHYDRATE
Replenish energy with 30–60 g of carbohydrates in your recovery snack.	Support muscle growth with 15–25 g of protein in your recovery snack.	Replace fluids and electrolytes with drinks and salty foods after training.
Bagel • Large fruit • Granola bar • Pretzels • Cereal	Greek yogurt • Chocolate milk • Tuna • Protein bar • Eggs	Water • Milk • Smoothie • Sports drink • Salty snacks

Easy Recovery Combos (Carbs + Protein + Fluids)

- Chocolate milk and a banana — the classic for a reason.
- Greek yogurt with berries and granola.
- Turkey or tuna sandwich with a glass of milk.
- Smoothie: milk, banana, oats, and peanut butter.

Don't Forget Sleep

Sleep is when most repair happens. Young athletes should aim for 9–11 hours. A small protein snack before bed (milk, Greek yogurt) supports overnight recovery.



[08]

Everyday Eating

BALANCED SNACKS & A SAMPLE DAY

Eat a balanced meal or snack every 2–4 hours to stay energized and focused. A balanced snack = carbohydrate (energy) + protein (staying power).

Winning Snack Ideas

- Fruit + nut butter
- Greek yogurt + berries
- Cheese + whole-grain crackers
- Cereal with milk and fruit
- Hummus + carrots + crackers
- Tuna pita wrap
- Smoothie with yogurt and fruit
- Homemade trail mix + a banana

A Sample Training Day

Meal	Example
Breakfast	Scrambled eggs, toast, fruit, and milk
Morning snack	Yogurt and a banana
Lunch	Chicken wrap with veggies and rice
Pre-training snack	Smoothie, or fruit with a granola bar
Dinner	Salmon, potatoes, broccoli, and water
Before bed	Glass of milk or Greek yogurt

Common Mistakes To Avoid

- Skipping breakfast before school or games.
- Relying on fast food, energy drinks, or sugary sodas for energy.
- Forgetting to drink water through the school day.
- Skipping the recovery snack after training.
- Trying something new on game day.



[09]

Training During Ramadan

PERFORMING WHILE FASTING

Many of our athletes fast during Ramadan. With smart planning, you can honour your fast and still train and play well. The keys are the three T's: **Timing** (when you eat), **Type** (what you eat), and **Total** (eating and drinking enough across the night).

Suhoor — Pre-Dawn Meal

- Slow-release carbs for lasting energy: oats, whole-grain bread, rice.
- Protein for muscle repair: eggs, yogurt, beans.
- Hydrating foods and fluids; include omega-3 sources like nuts.
- Eat as close to dawn as is practical.
- Example: banana porridge with nuts, or scrambled eggs with whole-grain toast and avocado.

Iftar — Sunset Meal

- Break the fast with dates and water, then eat a couple of smaller meals rather than one huge one.
- Quick-release carbs to refuel, lean protein to rebuild, healthy fats in moderation.
- Example: lentil soup, chicken and rice, fish bowl, fruit platter.

Hydration Between Sunset & Dawn

- Aim for 2–4 litres of fluids across the evening: water, milk, juice, smoothies.
- Include electrolytes (salty foods, electrolyte drinks) and limit caffeine.
- During daytime training, rinsing the mouth with water can help freshness without breaking the fast.

Coaches will adapt training intensity during Ramadan. Tell your coach you're fasting — we'll support you, never single you out.



[10]

Supplements & Final Word

FOOD FIRST. ALWAYS.

Do Young Athletes Need Supplements?

Almost never. For growing athletes, real food beats powders and pills: it's safer, cheaper, and comes with vitamins, minerals, and fibre that supplements miss. Protein powders, pre-workouts, and energy drinks are not recommended for youth athletes — caffeine in particular has no place in youth sport.

- A food-first plate covers everything a young footballer needs to grow and perform.
- If a supplement is ever being considered (e.g., vitamin D in winter), it should go through a doctor or registered dietitian first.
- Be skeptical of anything social media sells you. If it sounds like a shortcut, it is.

The Perform Elite Top 10

#	Habit
1	Eat breakfast every single day.
2	Carbs are fuel — more on hard days, plenty on game day.
3	Protein at every meal, spread through the day.
4	Healthy fats daily; keep them light right before training.
5	Drink water all day — check your urine colour.
6	Follow the game-day countdown: 3–4 h meal, 2 h snack, 1 h light carbs.
7	Recovery snack within 30 minutes: carbs + protein + fluids.
8	Balanced meal within 2 hours of training.
9	Sleep 9–11 hours — recovery's secret weapon.
10	Nothing new on game day.

This guide provides general sports-nutrition education for young athletes and is not medical advice. For individual plans, allergies, or medical conditions, consult a physician or registered dietitian.