

What to Eat Before and After Your Workout

A simple beginner's guide to getting the most out of every session.

THE BASICS

Carbs fuel the workout. **Protein** repairs and builds muscle afterward. What you eat across the whole day matters more than perfect timing. Timing is the fine-tuning.

BEFORE THE WORKOUT

WHEN	WHAT	EXAMPLES
2-3 hours out (full meal)	Carbs + protein, low in fat and fiber.	Chicken, rice and veggies; oatmeal with eggs; turkey sandwich with fruit
30-60 minutes out (light snack)	Mostly easy carbs, a little protein.	Banana with peanut butter; toast with honey; rice cakes; Greek yogurt with fruit
Early AM / no time	A small fast carb 15-30 minutes out. Easy sessions fasted are fine; hard ones go better fueled.	Banana, dried fruit, or a small glass of juice

Avoid right before: big high-fat or high-fiber meals (burgers, heavy salads, lots of beans). They sit heavy and cause stomach trouble.

AFTER THE WORKOUT

Within 1-2 hours, get both:

Protein: 20-40 g	A palm or two of chicken, fish or lean meat; 3-4 eggs; or a protein shake.
Carbs: a fist or two	Rice, potatoes, fruit, oats or bread to refill your energy stores.

Easy post-workout meals: protein shake and a banana; chicken, rice and veggies; eggs and toast with fruit; Greek yogurt with berries and granola.

No need to rush within 30 minutes. If your next meal is within a couple of hours, that meal is your recovery meal.

DAILY TARGETS (KEEP IT SIMPLE)

- **Protein:** about 0.7-1 g per pound of bodyweight per day, spread over 3-4 meals.
- **Carbs:** higher on hard training days, lower on rest days.
- **Water:** sip all day. Add a pinch of salt or electrolytes after heavy sweating.

RULES OF THUMB

1. Don't try anything new on a hard training day. Test foods in practice first.
2. If your stomach feels off, eat earlier or go smaller and simpler.
3. Eat enough overall. Under-eating kills energy and recovery.
4. Sleep and hydration matter as much as any meal.

Questions about your own nutrition? Ask your ESA coach. This guide is general information, not medical advice.