

SETTING UP A BREAKFAST BAR



This information sheet provides guidance on setting up a healthy breakfast facility in your workplace, to help your employees get their day off to a healthy start:

- Plan how your breakfast bar will be set up and how it will be funded.
- Hold a launch event and get people excited about what's on offer.
- Use the ingredients list and breakfast ideas to help you cater for a range of needs and tastes.

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SETTING UP A BREAKFAST BAR GETTING STARTED

Research by the British Dietetic Association found that the average British worker spends over £20,000 during their working life on snack food – that’s around £2 per day – not including their lunchtime or breakfast meals.¹

But the interesting fact is that about one-third of all workers regularly skip breakfast. Perhaps the reason we are a nation of snack addicts could be down to starting the day on an empty tank. Breakfast provides the body with energy to fuel us at the start of the day. A healthy breakfast is particularly important to people who want to lose weight, and research shows that adults and children who eat breakfast regularly are less likely to be overweight than those who don't. Having breakfast helps overcome the need to snack on high-calorie foods during the day.

The reasons employees give for not eating before they start their working day often include lack of time, family commitments, or not feeling ready to eat early in the morning. Providing facilities in the workplace for employees to have breakfast could help to remove some of these obstacles.

Other reasons for introducing healthier breakfast facilities at work might include:

- Providing an opportunity for employees to eat breakfast in a pleasant environment and to start the day on a positive note.
- Improved employee concentration and performance during the day.
- Engaging employees in making healthier choices about their diet.
- Better social interaction and team-working among employees.
- Improved communication among employees in different departments.
- Benefits for low-income families by providing a no-cost or low-cost breakfast.

Getting started

There are many different ways in which you could encourage employees to eat breakfast on a regular basis:

- If your workplace already offers breakfast on-site, you could consider running an awareness campaign on the benefits of a nutritious breakfast.
- If your workplace has vending machines, you could consider asking your supplier to include healthy breakfast options.
- If your workplace has employee kitchen facilities, you could consider providing an assortment of breakfast foods for an agreed time period for employees to try free of charge. Perhaps invite a local health food store to visit with a sample of their healthy breakfast options for employees to try.
- If your workplace has an employee kitchen but no facilities, you could simply consider introducing some new equipment. A lot can be achieved with a fridge, kettle and toaster!

Before you are ready to launch your new breakfast initiative, there are a few things that you will need to consider and agree on:

1. The aims and objectives of this initiative

For example, will the breakfast initiative run as a pilot to determine interest levels to start off with? Who are you trying to target? Are you providing facilities and/or food? How will you measure the success of your initiative? How do you know there is an interest for this initiative?

2. Who needs to be involved?

For example, who will be responsible for buying and storing food? Who will be responsible for equipment? Ensure that whoever is running this initiative is aware of food hygiene requirements.

¹ Cited in: Food Vision website [foodvision.gov.uk/pages/workplaces](https://www.foodvision.gov.uk/pages/workplaces)

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3. Where and when will the breakfast bar run?

For example, are there existing staff facilities that can extend their opening hours? Does your staff kitchen area have sufficient space to store additional food and equipment? Make sure that your facilities have sufficient space for preparing and clearing away food. This includes access to fridges, hot water and rubbish disposal. If you are going to share facilities, get agreement on the use and cleaning of the area.

4. How many people will you be able to accommodate?

This is particularly important if someone is to be responsible for buying food.

5. How will the initiative be funded?

Is there a budget to allow the food and facilities to be provided free of charge or at a subsidised price? What will the price structure be? Check that your organisation's public liability insurance covers the provision of food.

6. Are there any cultural or religious issues relating to food that you need to be aware of? Do any employees have special dietary needs?

7. Have all health and safety issues been addressed?

Promoting your breakfast initiatives

Here are some other ideas to help get this initiative started and to generate a high level of interest:

- Invite the local press to cover the opening and to take photographs.
- Talk about the initiative at team or departmental meetings.
- Send personalised invitations.
- Run a first-day raffle for those who attend.
- Launch a healthy breakfast competition.
- Provide a healthy breakfast quiz.
- Have a theme day.
- Have a 'Bring a friend for free' day.

The NHS choices website provides additional information about the importance of breakfast, and some suggestions for breakfast at home or on the go. See [nhs.uk/livewell](https://www.nhs.uk/livewell)

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BREAKFAST INGREDIENTS

Below is a shopping list of ingredients that could be stored in even a small kitchen space, and some ideas for healthy breakfast options.

Store cupboard	Store cupboard	Freezer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wholemeal bread, bagels, fruit buns, raisin bread, scones, teacakes, tortilla wraps or crumpets • Wholegrain breakfast cereals – unsweetened, lower-salt varieties • Muesli • Jumbo millet flakes • Rolled oats • Unsweetened apple / orange / cranberry juice • Rice milk or oat milk • Honey • Wholegrain tortilla wraps • Selection of dried fruits, eg, raisins, sultanas, apricots • Selection of tinned fruit in fruit juice • Selection of unsalted nuts and seeds • Unsalted nut butters* • Low-sugar, low-salt baked beans • Tinned tomatoes • Wholewheat pancakes or crumpets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skimmed or semi-skimmed milk • Low-fat fruit yoghurt • Plain yoghurt • Selection of fresh fruits • Eggs • Low-fat spreads • Fruit juices • Fresh fruits • Low-fat cream cheese 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection of frozen fruits • Ice cubes

* Nut butters are high in fat and therefore calories, so people following a calorie-controlled diet should limit how much they use them.

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BREAKFAST IDEAS



Breakfast ideas

- Offer a variety of different fruits and fruit juices each day.
- Keep things simple with an assortment of wholegrain breakfast cereals. These can be made more exciting with different toppings – for example, dried apricots and raisins; frozen berries; tinned peaches in fruit juice; sliced strawberries and natural yoghurt; black, red and green grapes; pineapple chunks in natural juice; sliced apple with a few unsalted chopped nuts; or sliced kiwi fruits.
- Offer a range of wholegrain bread which can be used for breakfast sandwiches or for toasting. For example, wholemeal toast with peanut butter and sliced apple.
- Offer ‘wake-up smoothies’ – for example, blitz together ½ pineapple, ½ lime, 2 apples, apple juice and ice cubes
- Tortilla wraps ‘breakfast-style’ – for example, sliced apple and banana topped with a little Greek yoghurt, raisins and honey.
- Porridge is great during the colder months. Try warm porridge with various toppings such as ground almonds, sliced apple or pear, dried fruit or honey.
- Low-sugar, low-salt muesli. For example, top traditional muesli with yoghurt, pumpkin seeds and frozen berries.
- Top wholemeal toast with baked beans or scrambled eggs.
- Top wholemeal bagels with low-fat cream cheese and fresh fruit salad.
- Boiled egg with wholemeal toast or crumpets.

Kitchen equipment

Preparing simple breakfasts requires very little kitchen equipment.

Top tips for making your breakfast area appealing:

- Keep the area clean and tidy.
- Provide newspapers or magazines.
- Play music or have access to TV and radio.
- Provide access to the internet.
- Include a range of problem-solving puzzles and challenges.
- Provide healthy lifestyle information.
- Set up areas where employees can talk.
- Offer vouchers for regular use.
- Run special offer campaigns.
- Hold celebration events.
- Keep on marketing the service.
- Ask for feedback.

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