



Restaurant Guide

The Nuts and Bolts of Nutrition Bars

We know that eating a variety of whole foods from all food groups is the ideal way to eat.



These bars made our list of top picks.

Images courtesy of ThinkThin, Kind

But we also know that sometimes life just gets in the way of our best laid plans. That's when having a nutrition bar in your bag or glove compartment can save the day. In a perfect world, nutrition bars would be just what their name promises: a bar loaded with a variety of beneficial nutrients, but low in less desirable ingredients, like sugar, saturated fat, and refined foods. And, of course it would taste great. But which bars meet those criteria?

Today's nutrition bars run the gamut from simple fruit and nut concoctions to protein, vitamin and mineral powerhouses, and everything in between. Reading labels can be very helpful in figuring out what bars meet your specific needs, be it high protein, high fiber, low sugar, low saturated fat, or unrefined. Knowing what you want from your nutrition bar will help you choose. For a pre-workout snack, a protein-rich bar with adequate carbohydrates is beneficial. And if you want a snack to hold you over until the next meal, choose a high-fiber, low-sugar bar.

Helpful Hints. Here are some tips to keep in mind when grabbing your emergency nutrition bar.

- ▶ **Read the Ingredients List.** Some nutrition bars contain alternative sweeteners to keep calories low. Another common ingredient is inulin or chicory root fiber to boost grams of fiber. While there's nothing wrong with these types of ingredients, both have been known to cause gastrointestinal problems in some people. You may want to avoid these bars if you have issues.
- ▶ **Check the Serving Size.** Most bars are considered an entire serving. However, some consider half a bar to be a serving; eating a full bar would mean you're doubling your intake of all the nutrients.
- ▶ **Beware of Glorified Candy Bars.** Some bars contain up to six and a half teaspoons of sugar, which is more than a chocolate bar. Note that those packed with fruit will contain naturally occurring sugar, so look for sources of added sugars, such as cane sugar or brown rice syrup, in ingredients lists. High levels of sugar in fruit-less bars represent added sugars. **EN**

—Heidi McIndoo, MS, RD

Nutrition Bars Nutritional Comparison

✓ = **EN's Picks.** As with all EN comparisons, this is only a sampling of products. Picks contain no more than 3 g sat fat (15% DV) and 12 g sugar, and at least 3 g fiber (11% DV) and 6 g protein (12% DV).

NUTRITION BARS*	Serving Size (g)	Calories	Total Fat (g)	Sat Fat (g)	Carbs (g)	Sodium (mg)	Fiber (g)	Sugar (g)	Protein (g)
✓ 88 Acres Chocolate and Sea Salt	45	200	10	2.5	22	125	3	12	6
Balance Peanut Butter	50	200	7	3	21	170	<1	17	15
Bobo's Oat Bars, Original (1/2 bar)	43	180	6	1.5	29	20	3	9	3
Clif Bar Cool Mint Chocolate	68	250	5	1.5	43	180	5	22	9
Clif Kit's Organic Fruit & Seed Bar, Cherry & Pumpkin Seed	49	170	4	0.5	32	70	4	26	4
✓ Curate Indulgent Dark Chocolate & Hazelnuts	45	200	11	3	22	70	4	10	6
Gomacro Protein Paradise Cashew Caramel	60	260	11	2	30	35	1	10	11
Gomacro Whole-Hearted Heaven Almond Butter & Carob	57	230	9	1	36	30	3	12	4
Go Raw Pumpkin Seed Sprouted Bar (large size)	51	240	16	3	16	160	5	5	9
✓ Kashi Go Lean Peanut & Hemp Crunch	45	200	10	1.5	21	135	5	9	9
✓ Kind Fruit & Nut Peanut Butter & Strawberry	40	190	11	1.5	19	25	3	11	7
✓ Kind Nuts & Spices Caramel Almond & Sea Salt	40	200	16	3	15	125	7	5	6
Kind Plus Dark Chocolate Cherry Cashew	40	170	9	3	24	20	4	14	3
LaraBar Apple Pie	45	190	10	1	24	5	5	18	4
LaraBar Crunchy Nut & Seed Maple Cinnamon	35	200	16	3	12	50	4	6	5
✓ Luna Lemonzest	48	190	6	2.5	26	95	3	9	9
✓ Luna Protein Chocolate Cupcake	48	190	6	2.5	26	140	4	9	9
✓ Luna S'Mores	48	190	6	2.5	27	130	3	9	9
Navitas Naturals Superfood & Goji	40	190	11	2	20	5	2	9	4
Nugo Dark Mocha Chocolate	50	200	5	3	30	70	2	14	10
Nugo Organic Dark Chocolate Pomegranate	50	190	5	3	26	60	2	16	10
✓ Nugo Slim Raspberry Truffle	45	180	4.5	2	19	170	7	2	17
Powerbar Chocolate	65	220	3	1	45	200	3	26	9
ProBar Base Cookie Dough	70	290	9	6	33	390	4	16	20
✓ ProBar Bite PB Crunch	46	190	8	1.5	27	70	3	10	6
ProBar Meal Koka Moka	85	370	17	2.5	48	20	6	22	9
Powercrunch Triple Chocolate	40	205	13	6	10	100	1	5	13
✓ Quest Bar Strawberry Cheesecake	60	170	7	1	23	160	13	2	20
Sahale Snacks Layered Nut Bar Salted Carmel Apple Pecan	40	200	12	3	18	170	2	9	5
Superfood Health Warrior Chia Bars Banana Nut	25	100	5	0.5	14	45	4	5	3
Tanka Turkey & Buffalo with Cranberries, Jalapeno	28	80	2	1	9	340	1	6	7
Think Thin High Protein White Chocolate	60	230	8	2.5	24	230	0	0	20
✓ Think Thin High Protein & Fiber Chocolate Peanut Butter Toffee	50	180	6	2	24	260	5	2	13
✓ Think Thin Protein & Fiber Salted Caramel	40	150	5	1.5	20	210	5	5	10
Trader Joe's Nutty Seedy Fruity Bar	57	360	33	15	12	5	4	6	7
Vega One Chocolate Peanut Butter	64	270	11	3.5	34	65	3	18	13
Vega One Protein & Snack Bar Chocolate Caramel	49	200	9	4.5	24	65	4	12	11
Wilde BolDR Maple Uncured Bacon Blueberry	30	100	1.5	0	10	180	1	5	11
Zing Dark Chocolate Coconut	50	210	10	3.5	25	50	6	13	10
ZonePerfect Fudge Graham	50	210	7	4	23	200	3	15	14

*Based on 1 bar, unless noted. Note: g=gram, mg=milligram, sat fat=saturated fat, carb=carbohydrates, DV=Daily Value, Daily requirement based on 2,000 calorie/day diet. Source: product labels