

When It's Snack Crunch Time, Where Should You Turn?

Healthy Savory Snacks Nutritional Comparison

As with all *EN* comparisons, this is only a sampling of what's available. Products are listed alphabetically.

✓ = *EN*'s Picks. Snacks contain at or below 135 calories (7% DV), 1 g saturated fat (5% DV), and 175 mg sodium (7% DV); two or fewer ingredients not found in a typical kitchen; and the first ingredient is the nutrient-rich ingredient the product's name or label reflects.

Snacks (based on 28 g or one-ounce serving size)	Calories	Fat (g)	Sat Fat (g)	Fiber (g)	Sodium (mg)
NUT-BASED SNACKS					
Back to Nature Bar Harbor Blend	130	7	1.5	2	0
✓ Back to Nature Red Rock Blend	120	6	0	2	0
Blue Diamond Almond Nut Thins Smokehouse	121	3	0	<1	149
Blue Diamond Pecan Nut Thins	121	3	0	<1	121
Emerald Trail Mix Berry Blend	120	6	1.5	2	45
Emerald Trail Mix S'mores Blend	140	7	2	2	55
✓ Planters Daybreak Blend Apple Cinnamon Trailmix	132	7	<.5	1.5	49
✓ Planters Harvest Almond Orchard Blend	132	7	1	2.5	21
Planters Trail Mix Spicy Nuts & Cajun Sticks	154	11	1.5	2	261
Trader Joe's Macadamias Mix Gingerly with Cranberries & Almonds Trek Mix	150	13	1.5	2	60
Trader Joe's Organic Trek Mix	140	8	2.5	1.5	0
Trader Joe's Simply the Best Trek Mix	140	9	1.5	2	14
✓ True North Almond Cranberry Crisps	130	5	0	2	160
True North Apple Cinnamon Nut Clusters	170	12	1	3	70
True North Citrus Burst Nut Clusters	170	11	1.5	3	70
True North Pecan Almond Peanut Clusters	170	13	2	3	75
True North Pistachio Crisps	140	7	1	2	260
VEGETABLE-BASED SNACKS					
365 Veggie Chips Original	130	7	1	1	250
Calbee Snack Salad Snap Pea Crisps	150	8	1	2	125
Eatsmart Veggie Crisps—100 Calorie Packs (21.3 g)	100	5	0	1	230
Good Health Natural Foods Veggie Stix	130	5	1	0	310
Nature's Promise Natural Vegetable Sticks	130	7	0.5	0	290
Pirate's Booty Veggie	130	5	0	1	120
Terra Exotic Vegetable Chips Original	150	9	1	3	50
Terra Stix Original	150	9	1	3	45
Trader Joe's Crunchy Curls Tasty Lentil & Potato Snack	130	4.5	0.5	4	380
✓ Trader Joe's Green Beans Lightly Salted Crunchy Green Beans	130	4.5	0	4	160
Trader Joe's Vegetable Root Chips	160	10	0.5	3	35
Trader Joe-San Wasabi Peas	112	3	1	<1	224
WHOLE GRAIN-BASED SNACKS					
Back to Nature Seeded Flatbread Cracker, Multigrain Flax	130	4	0	2	120
Back to Nature Seeded Flatbread Cracker, White Cheddar Flax	130	4.5	0.5	2	140
✓ Kashi Whole Grain Crackers, Original	112	3	0	4	79
✓ Kashi Whole Grain Crackers, Roasted Garlic	112	3	0	4	70
✓ Kashi TLC Honey Sesame	121	3	0	2	149
✓ Kashi TLC Original 7 Grain	121	3	0	2	149
✓ Kashi TLC Party Stoneground 7 Grain	130	5	0.5	3	140
OTHER SNACKS					
Good Health Natural Foods Humbles Hummus Chips, Olive Oil, Lemon, Feta	120	4.5	0.5	1	280
✓ Good Health Natural Foods Humbles Hummus Chips, Sesame Garlic	120	4	0	1	135
Smart Puffs, Real Wisconsin Cheddar	140	7	1	0	200
Trader Joe's Sesame Seaweed Rice Balls	120	4.5	0.5	<1	190

Note: g=gram, mg=milligram, Sat fat=saturated fat, DV=Daily Value, daily requirement based on 2,000 calorie/day diet. Source: food manufacturer labels.

Even for those of us whose sweet tooth tends to guide our snacking choices, it's nice to enjoy a savory tidbit now and again. These days the snack selection offered at your supermarket, quick-stop or even gas station goes way beyond your basic chip. Gone are the days of simply getting fat and salt in your snack. Today's crunchy treats are chock full of nuts, whole grains and even vegetables. But are they as good for you as they seem?

Helpful Hints

Before you start munching, consider the following tips:

- **Check for yourself.** Pictures of fresh-from-the-garden veggies and statements such as “made with real carrots” can be deceiving. To know what you're really getting, flip over the package and check the ingredients list. Ingredients are listed in descending order of amount. So, a food that lists real vegetables at the top of a short list contains far more vegetables than a food that lists them at the end of a long list, or simply lists vegetable “powder.”
- **Don't be fooled by whole grains.** Whole grain is the nutritional buzzword of the moment, but it can lead to confusion. Again, the ingredient list is your tool. A food that contains whole grain lists ingredients like whole wheat, oats, rye, and brown rice first. Don't get tricked by a food made mostly with enriched/processed wheat or grains with just a smidge of whole grain thrown in at the end.
- **Fat is not the enemy.** At least not always. In nut-based snacks fat content tends to climb. This fat, however, is the heart-healthy unsaturated kind. Go ahead and indulge; just keep an eye on portion size and calories.
- **Perfect partners.** Our favorite munchies (see *EN*'s picks) are the perfect building block to a balanced snack. Simply pair them with yogurt for a calcium and protein boost, or fruit for a vitamin punch, and you'll be nibbling a nutritional knockout.

— Heidi McIndoo, M.S., R.D.