



5 Weeks To Fitness

The Ultimate Paleo Food List

Paleo is all the rage right now with many athletes recommending the low starch diet. There are also plenty of those who say no-way to paleo eating, writing it off as just another fad. I personally tried it a couple of years back in conjunction with low mileage running + weight training and achieved great body composition results. I didn't test the diet with marathon running at that time so you'll need to experiment.

I'm conducting my own "*Paleo For Endurance Athletes*" experiment right now which you can keep tabs on right here.

Below is a comprehensive but incomplete list of foods that both comply with paleo eating and do not comply with paleo eating. Use this list as a starting point for paleo eating, and as two rules of thumb;

1. If it comes in a packet with an ingredients list then it's unlikely to be paleo.
2. If it grew in the ground, swam in the sea, roamed the land or flew in the sky then you can eat it. (*caveat - just make sure it was a herbivore*)

Contents

[Paleo Allowed Foods](#)

[Paleo Meats](#)

[Paleo Vegetables](#)

[Paleo Oils/Fats](#)

[Paleo Nuts](#)

[Paleo Diet Fruits](#)

[Paleo Excluded Foods](#)

[Dairy](#)

[Soft/Sugary Drinks](#)

[Grains \(Wheat/Maize\)](#)

[Legumes/Pulses \(Peas & Beans\)](#)

[Other Off Limits Foods](#)

[Sweets, Cakes & Candy Bars](#)



5 Weeks To Fitness

Paleo Allowed Foods

Paleo Meats

Almost all meats are good for paleo eating unless they have been heavily processed. Many meats commonly available pre-packed in the supermarket are not of high quality. They often have gas added to the packet to keep the meat looking fresh. This gas is toxic and hidden from you because it's in their "process" and not an ingredient. Look for vacuum-packed organic meat or buy from a small reliable local source or farm outlet.

Poultry

Turkey

Chicken

Pork

Steak

Beef

Lamb

Venison

Buffalo

Rabbit

Goat

Bacon

Eggs (duck, chicken or goose)

Paleo Vegetables

Pretty much any vegetable you can think of is ok for Paleo eating. The only caveat to that is starchy veg* such as white potatoes. Sweet potato is good for paleo but don't overdo it. Have a medium-sized portion a couple of times per week at most. If you're training hard then you could sneak another serving or two in per week. If you're dieting best to leave them out.

Asparagus

Avocado

Artichoke hearts

Brussels sprouts

Carrots

Parsnip

Swedes

Turnip



5 Weeks To Fitness

Spinach
Leeks
Fennel
Bok Choi
Cress
Chard
Chilli Peppers
Kale
Radish
Celery
Broccoli
Zucchini
Courgette
Cucumber
Cabbage
Bell Peppers
Sweet Peppers
Cauliflower
Eggplant
Onions
Garlic
Butternut Squash*
Acorn Squash*
Yam*
Sweet Potato*
Beets*
Lettuce

Paleo Oils/Fats

Fats have been demonised over the past 50 years or so and that mainly came about by virtue of some bright spark coming up with the now-infamous food triangle. Fats from vegetables such as avocado are essential in maintaining a healthy body. Animal fats, however, are not as good, so keep those at a minimum. Use coconut oil for cooking and avoid processed vegetable oils. They have been destroyed in the manufacturing process and are actually more harmful to your health despite what clever marketing might suggest.

Coconut oil
Olive oil
Macadamia Oil



5 Weeks To Fitness

Avocado Oil
Grass-fed Butter (in small amounts)
Other cold pressed veg oils

Paleo Nuts

Most nuts are really good for you. Some health advice suggests you should activate your nuts by heating gently first then allowing to cool down. Others suggest steeping your nuts in water overnight then rinsing the next day to remove any toxins. I don't know about that but what I will say is having a packet of raw nuts on board during the day helps keeps cravings at bay.

Almonds
Cashews
Hazelnuts
Pecans
Pine Nuts
Pumpkin Seeds
Sunflower Seeds
Macadamia Nut
Walnuts

Paleo Diet Fruits

When you are choosing your dried fruit make sure there's no other ingredient on the packet other than the fruit. Some manufacturers add corn syrup and preservatives to dried fruit to make it last longer on the shelf.

Paleo people didn't have access to fruit all year round and they certainly didn't have the variety we do today. So take it easy on the fruit, you don't want to be overloading on sweet fruit and spiking your blood sugar levels unless you're in competition then maybe you should consider a higher fruit intake.

Apple
Avocado
Blackberries
Papaya
Peaches
Plums
Mango
Lychee



5 Weeks To Fitness

Blueberries
Grapes
Lemon
Strawberries
Watermelon
Pineapple Guava
Lime
Raspberries
Cantaloupe
Tangerine
Figs
Oranges
Bananas*

***A Note For Athletes;**

As your body adjusts to the new lower sugar diet, you will find after a period of adjustment that your blood sugar set point has lowered. This means whenever you do consume sugary foods such as oranges, apples and ripe bananas, they will have a greater effect on performance output.

Paleo Excluded Foods

The following is a list of foods that are excluded from the paleo eating plan. You will likely find it difficult to adjust to the new plan but I assure you after you do, your body will thank you. There are no half measures here, you simply have to go cold turkey. Consider cutting your mileage back a couple of notches while you're on the plan.

Dairy

All dairy is pretty much off the menu except where you add a drop of full-fat milk to your coffee or tea. I also use butter in cooking sometimes.

Butter
Cheese
Cottage Cheese
Non-fat dairy creamer
Low-fat milk
Whole milk (sometimes)
Dairy spreads
Cream cheese



5 Weeks To Fitness

Powdered milk
Yoghurt
Pudding
Frozen Yogurt
Ice cream

Soft/Sugary Drinks

Soft drinks and processed juices of all kinds are out of the question regardless of how good their marketing is, K? Out I tells ya! The exception I make is where you juice your own fruit at home and mix with vegetable juice also made at home. Some Paleo advocates say you shouldn't drink calories, and I'd agree with that, however, I like to add an apple and orange to my veggie juice for taste. Besides, I'm gonna eat the apple and orange anyway!

Coke
Sprite
Pepsi
Mountain Dew
Fruit Juices
Apple Juice
Orange Juice
Grape Juice
Strawberry Juice
Chinola Juice
Mango Juice

Grains (Wheat/Maize)

Anything that has a grain in it you should avoid on the paleo diet. My view is that if our ancestors were omnivores then it's likely they ate wild grains and grasses, and even stored them for winter time.

I'll mostly avoid grains and oats during this experiment but I may have porridge on the morning of a long run. [Subscribe to Weeks To Fitness](#) to get updates on how I'm handling the new diet.

Cereals
Bread
Muffins
Scones
Pitta Bread



5 Weeks To Fitness

Tortillas
Other Flat Bread
Toast
Sandwiches
Biscuits
Wheat Thins
Crackers
Oats*
Corn
Wheat

Legumes/Pulses (Peas & Beans)

If you don't know what a legume is that's OK, either did I for a long time. They are otherwise known as pulses and generally include all peas and pulses. We make exceptions to the below which include green beans, mange tout, and snow peas because the green vegetable is very good for you.

Black Beans
Broad Beans
Fava Beans
Garbanzo Beans
Horse Beans
Kidney Beans
Lima Beans
Mung Beans
Adzuki Beans
Navy Beans
Pinto Beans
Red Beans
String Beans
White Beans
Black Eyed Peas
Chickpeas
Peanuts
Peanut butter
Miso
Lentils
Lupins
Mesquite
Soybeans



5 Weeks To Fitness

All soybean products and derivatives
Tofu

Other Off Limits Foods

Fatty Processed Meats or Cheap Cuts
Spam (tinned meat)
Hot Dogs
Burger Joint Burgers & Fast Food
Pizza & Pasta
Packaged Meat Slices
Starchy Vegetables such as white potatoes
Deep-Fried Meat or Vegetables
All Flour Based Products

Sweets, Cakes & Candy Bars

Not much elaboration needed here. If it's a chocolate bar, energy bar, protein bar, "health" bar of any kind, a dessert, a pudding, confectionery of any kind, or even home baking then it's off-limits.

Don't kid yourself! If it comes in a packet with an ingredients list it's very likely off-limits.