

Building a Great Smoothie

Smoothies are convenient and tasty and are a great way to incorporate a generous amount of vitamins, minerals, protein, calcium and fibre into one glass. You can have a smoothie to kick start your day, use before or after your workout or as an afternoon snack. Varying your ingredients and making sure to include fat and protein will keep you from getting bored and ensure you're getting the nutrients you need. Here are 5 tips to make a better smoothie:

1. Start with a liquid first – cow's milk, almond, rice, hemp or coconut milk, juice or water are all great choices for a liquid base. If you are using fruit juice, use it sparingly, since it is high in concentrated sugars.

2. The key to a great smoothie is to have different kinds of frozen fruit on hand. Using frozen fruit makes it thick and frosty (like a milkshake!). Keep strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, cranberries and blueberries on hand, which have the highest levels of antioxidants. Frozen banana chunks are a must as well!

3. Don't limit yourself to fruit. Leafy greens such as spinach, kale, chard or romaine lettuce are all great to add to a smoothie. Herbs such as mint, parsley and cilantro are also nice additions.



4. Make sure to include a source of protein! Adding protein will make your smoothie more filling and reduce spikes in blood sugar for balanced energy throughout the morning. It also rebuilds muscle tissue after a workout. You can buy a protein powder or try adding greek-style yogurt; cottage cheese or silken tofu.

5. Adding healthy fats to your smoothie is also a good option. Avocados or nut butters give your smoothie a rich, creamy texture. They make your smoothie more satisfying and boost the absorption of many vitamins in the fruits and vegetables.

6. This is a great opportunity to add additional ingredients that will up the nutrient density to your smoothie: a spoonful of unsweetened cocoa powder, matcha green tea, chia seeds, ground flax seeds, Greens+, wheat germ & oat bran are just a few suggestions.

Here are some great smoothie recipes. Don't be afraid to experiment – it is rare to find a bad tasting smoothie!

Big Green Smoothie

1 cup ice cubes
½ ripe avocado
1-2 kale leaves
½ cup baby spinach
2 tsp pure vanilla extract
1 cup unsweetened coconut water
1 tbsp agave syrup or honey OR ½ frozen banana

Shape Shifter

½ cup frozen blueberries
½ frozen banana
1 tbsp raw cocoa powder
½ avocado
1 handful baby spinach
1 tbsp raw honey
2 cups water
Pinch of cayenne
Scoop of chocolate protein powder



Very Berry Smoothie

1 cup milk (you can also try a bit of OJ/water)
¾ cup each frozen strawberries and raspberries
½ cup vanilla yogurt

Pear-Kale-Mint Smoothie

4 kale leaves (can also use any greens – baby spinach or romaine)
1 pear (cut into chunks)
Water
5 mint leaves