

The Victorian Government has developed the Healthy Choices framework to help make sure that healthy foods and drinks are offered and promoted in places like hospitals, health services, sport and recreation centres, parks and workplaces.

A classification guide

The *Healthy choices: food and drink classification guide*¹ uses a traffic light system to classify foods and drinks as **GREEN (best choices)**, **AMBER (choose carefully)** or **RED (limit)**. The guide describes foods and drinks in each category and explains how to decide which category a food or drink fits into.

Training for retail food outlets and caterers:

Cooks, chefs, managers (online)

By completing this training you will learn:

- the importance of supporting healthy eating in your community
- about the Victorian Government's Healthy Choices guidelines
- how to assess your own menus, products and recipes using FoodChecker
- steps to transforming your menu
- how to promote healthier options for sales success
- simple ways to modify recipes
- how to source healthier products

You can do training anywhere, anytime, online. It takes less than one hour to finish, and you can do it at your own pace by saving your progress as you go.

There's no formal assessment but there are some interactive activities to check your knowledge.

Register/log in.

Point of sale staff (online)

You will learn:

- the importance of promoting healthy eating in your community
- about the Victorian Governments' Healthy Choices guidelines for retail food outlets and caterers
- how foods and drinks are classified using a traffic light system: **GREEN**, **AMBER** and **RED**
- how to label and promote foods and drinks according to their classification

Online training takes less than one hour to finish, and you can do it at your own pace by saving your progress as you go.

You will be able to download a certificate after completing a short post-training questionnaire.

Register/log in.

¹ *Healthy choices: food and drink classification guide*, Department of Health and Human Services, 2014, www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/preventive-health/nutrition/healthy-choices-for-retail-outlets-vending-machines-catering.

Foods and drinks are classified as **GREEN**, **AMBER** or **RED** according to their nutritional value.

Wherever foods and drinks are offered, at least **50%** of choices should be from the **GREEN** category.

RED items should not be provided in workplace catering. In retail outlets and vending machines, less than **20%** of choices should be from the **RED** category.

The Healthy Choices guidelines are used to promote healthy foods and drinks in retail outlets, vending machines and workplace catering.

The guidelines categorise foods and drinks into three groups. These are:

The GREEN category – best choices

Foods and drinks in the **GREEN** category are the healthiest choices. They are usually:

- good sources of important nutrients
- lower in saturated fat, added sugar and/or salt
- lower in energy (kilojoules)
- higher in fibre.

GREEN foods and drinks should always be available and they should be promoted as the best choices.

Wherever foods and drinks are offered (e.g. retail outlets, vending machines and catering), at least **50%** of choices should be from the **GREEN** category.

The AMBER category – choose carefully

AMBER foods and drinks should be selected carefully and should only be eaten in moderation. Although **AMBER** items may provide some good nutrients they can:

- 2 lead you to take in too much energy (kilojoules)
- 3 contain saturated fat, added sugar and/or salt.

4 **AMBER** foods and drinks may be offered, but should not dominate. They should not be promoted over **GREEN** choices.

The RED category – limit

Foods and drinks in the **RED** category are not essential. If they are consumed too often, or in large amounts, they can lead to weight gain and chronic diseases.

In general **RED** choices are:

- high in energy (kilojoules)
- high in saturated fat, added sugar and/or salt
- low in important nutrients such as fibre.

RED foods and drinks should be consumed rarely and only in small amounts. In retail outlets and vending machines, no more than **20%** of foods and drinks should be from the **RED** category.

RED foods and drinks should not be provided in workplace catering.

The table below includes examples of foods and drinks in the **GREEN**, **AMBER** and **RED** categories

| GREEN – best choices | AMBER – choose carefully | RED – limit |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| Bread | Some savoury breads and crackers | Sugary drinks (e.g. soft drinks, sports drinks) |
| High fibre breakfast cereals | Some wholemeal muffins or scones with added fruit and vegetables | Confectionery |
| Reduced fat milk, cheese and yoghurt | Dried fruit | Ice creams and dairy desserts |
| Lean meat | Fish canned in brine or oil | Biscuits, cakes, slices and sweet pastries |
| Fish | Salted nuts and seeds | Saturated fats and oils (e.g. butter, cream) |
| Eggs | Some oven baked potato products | Deep fried foods |
| Plain nuts and seeds | Regular fat milk, cheese, yoghurt and custard | Crisps and chips |
| Tofu | Some flavoured milk | Pies, sausage rolls |
| Fruit (fresh, frozen) | 99% fruit juice | Devon, salami, Strasburg |
| Vegetables | Artificially sweetened drinks | Sausages, saveloys |
| Legumes and beans | | |
| Water | | |



For more examples of foods and drinks in each category, or to learn how to classify products, please refer to the *Healthy choices: food and drink classification guide*¹.

¹ *Healthy choices: food and drink classification guide*, Department of Health and Human Services, 2014, www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/preventive-health/nutrition/healthy-choices-for-retail-outlets-vending-machines-catering.

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There are many ways to make healthier foods and drinks more appealing for consumers. Use these ideas to help you get started

If **GREEN** items are more expensive, consider increasing the price of similar **RED** items so that the price of the healthier option is comparable.

To meet the Healthy Choices guidelines, healthier foods and drinks should be promoted and displayed in prominent areas and unhealthy foods and drinks should not be encouraged.

This means thinking about labelling, placement, pricing and promotion of foods and drinks in your food service or organisation.

Labelling

- Clearly label the foods and drinks you offer as **GREEN (best choices)**, **AMBER (choose carefully)** or **RED (limit)**.
- Make sure that an explanation of what each colour means is clearly visible.

Coloured dots (stickers) for labelling are inexpensive and can be purchased from most newsagents or office supply stores.

Placement

5 Place **GREEN** items in prominent areas, for example:

- at eye level on shelves, in fridges and in vending machines
- at the front of cabinets and bain maries
- in high traffic areas (e.g. reception desks, counters in waiting areas, entrances and exits of food outlets, beside cash registers, in dining areas).

6 Display **AMBER** items more prominently than **RED** choices.

7 Avoid placing **RED** items in prominent areas.

Pricing

- Try to make sure **GREEN** and **AMBER** items are affordable.
- Make **GREEN** items a similar price or cheaper than **RED** products in the same category (e.g. make a bottle of water a similar price or cheaper than a can of soft drink).

Promotion

2 Promote **GREEN** options in visible areas such as counters, cabinets, fridges, vending machines, menu boards, staff notice boards, in lifts and via promotional stands and product displays.

3 Present **GREEN** options attractively.

4 Include **GREEN** options in special offers (e.g. meal deals, 'two for one' offers, loyalty cards).

5 Avoid marketing **RED** options, and do not include these in special offers or upsizing promotions