



# The WA School Food and Drink Criteria

## Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

### What is the WA School Food and Drink Criteria?

The WA School Food and Drink Criteria (WASFDC) classifies food and drink provided in schools according to a traffic light system: GREEN (healthiest), AMBER, or RED (least healthy).

The WASFDC supports implementation of the Department of Education Student Health in Public Schools Procedures, Appendix B. Healthy Food and Drink (HFD Procedure).

### When do schools have to start using the WA School Food and Drink Criteria?

Schools do not need to change their canteen menu immediately. Schools should plan for any required changes as part of their regular menu review process. When adding a new food or drink to the menu, classify the item using the WASFDC.

### Where can I get help and information about how to use the WA School Food and Drink Criteria?

FreshSNAP is the Fresh School Nutrition Advisory Program funded by the Western Australian Department of Health and delivered by Nutrition Australia WA to support the implementation of the HFD Procedure in WA schools.

FreshSNAP has developed a range of exciting resources to help school canteens classify food and drink against the WASFDC.

[FreshSNAP](#) provides free:

- phone, email and face to face support
- FoodChecker, an online menu assessment tool

- FoodChecker training
- traffic light training (online and face to face)
- new online tools and resources
- GREEN and AMBER recipes

For more information and to access these services visit [freshsnap.org.au](https://freshsnap.org.au).

### What is FoodChecker?

FoodChecker is a free online food and drink classification tool built into the FreshSNAP program to help all public, independent, and catholic schools, and agricultural and residential colleges.

This tool does all the hard work of classifying food and drink to assist canteens, caterers and cooks in meeting the requirements of the HFD Procedure.

With [FoodChecker](#) you can:

- classify all food and drink against the WASFDC
- get immediate feedback on menus, ingredients, products and recipes
- find out the percentage of GREEN, AMBER and selected RED, and RED items on your menu
- check if your menu complies with the HFD Procedure
- receive recommendations for simple swaps and product or ingredient alternatives
- save your menus, recipes and products.

For assistance on reclassifying products, recipes and/or menus, sign up for free access to [FoodChecker](#) or contact [FreshSNAP](#) directly.

## Are the requirements for schools changing?

Yes, the HFD Procedure has changed. Principals are to ensure the canteen/food service menu promotes a wide range of healthy food with menus comprised of GREEN, AMBER and RED food and drink as follows:

- GREEN items – account for a minimum of 60% of the menu
- AMBER items – account for a maximum of 40% of the menu, with savoury commercial products that are AMBER items offered on a maximum of two days per week
  - where an AMBER item has been reclassified as a RED item it may be included on the menu and included in your AMBER count. These 'selected RED items' may only be offered on the same two days a week as AMBER savoury commercial products
  - this cannot be applied retrospectively. Once a RED item has been removed from a menu, it cannot be re-introduced
- RED items are not on the menu (other than those included in your AMBER count as outlined above).

## Where can I find more information about the Student Health in Public Schools Procedures, Appendix B. Healthy Food and Drink?

The Department of Education [website](#)

### What are 'selected RED items'?

Some RED items previously classified as AMBER can continue to be sold in school canteens on the same two days as AMBER savoury commercial products if they are already on the menu.

These items have nutrient criteria cut-offs, which can be viewed [here](#) or you can use [FoodChecker](#) to instantly classify the items in your canteen.

The 'selected RED items' are:

- Some commercial savoury pastry foods such as pies and sausage rolls.

- Some ham.
- Some commercial hot potato and other vegetable products, such as hot chips and wedges.

Visit the Department of Health website for more information on '[selected RED items](#)' or contact [www.freshsnap.org.au](http://www.freshsnap.org.au) for further assistance.

## What are the major changes in the WA School Food and Drink Criteria?

The WASFDC classifies some food and drink differently and this may change the GREEN, AMBER, or RED classification of food and drink items on canteen menus.

Major changes include:

- the number of GREEN food and drink items has increased
- allowances have been added for common AMBER and RED ingredients. Which, when used in small amounts, won't change the traffic light colour of that recipe
- some food items will be required to be served with at least half a serve of salad or vegetables
- some food and drink have been reclassified RED.

See [here](#) for more information on the evidence behind these changes.

For assistance on reclassifying products, recipes and/or menus, sign up for free access to [FoodChecker](#) or contact [FreshSNAP](#) directly.

## Have all the food and drink classifications changed?

No, some classifications have not changed, these include:

- plain fruit, vegetables, bread, grains, rice, lean meat, lean poultry, fish, nuts and seeds, eggs, and water will remain GREEN
- food and drink high in fat, sugar or salt such as sugary drinks, artificially sweetened drinks, butter, lollies and energy drinks will remain RED.

## What food and drink items are now reclassified GREEN?

- All dairy (milk, yoghurt, cheese).
- All canned vegetables and legumes.
- Plain pizza bases.
- All tinned fish.
- All vegetable and legume patties, falafels, tofu, and tempeh.
- Cheese and cracker snack packs.
- Plain popcorn.

## What food and drink items will be required to be served with at least half a serve of salad or vegetables?

- AMBER red meat, poultry, fish and seafood, such as chicken wings.
- Crumbed or coated red meat, poultry, fish or seafood, such as chicken nuggets.
- Burger patties, rissoles, meatballs and fish cakes.
- Processed poultry meat, such as pressed chicken.
- Commercial vegetable and legume patties, falafels, tofu, and tempeh.
- Commercial plant-based meat alternatives, such as vegetarian sausages.
- Commercial hot meals, such as ready made meals.

## Why have some AMBER food and drink been reclassified RED?

To align with the Australian Dietary Guidelines, the Council of Australian Government Health Council National Interim Guide to Reduce Children's Exposure to Unhealthy Food and Drink Promotion and the Australian Curriculum.

See [here](#) for more information on the evidence behind these changes.

## Does this mean children are not allowed to eat RED food and drink at school?

The HFD Procedure and WASFDC do not regulate what children bring to school in their lunchbox, only what is sold at school. The Department of Education does not support the inspection of children's lunchboxes for nutritional content.

## Where can I access further support and resources to assist me?

The FreshSNAP website, [freshsnap.org.au](https://freshsnap.org.au) has many useful resources, tools, training, recipes and links to further information.

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