

TOOLS, TIPS & INFORMATION FOR THE KITCHEN ~

Portion Control

PORTION CONTROL

The goal is to serve good tasting, attractive food to each child every day. Consistency is the key. The first person and the last person served deserve the same quality food and the same portion size.

Portion control means getting the right number of servings from a recipe and serving the right amount of food to students. Portioning matters because it:

- Meets the USDA meal pattern requirements.
- Provides the right amount of serving size to meet the nutritional needs of students.
- Ensures standardized recipe yields will be accurate.
- Contributes in giving a consistent yield and portion size.
- Provides a consistent portion size for customers.
- Guides the ordering and the preparation of food.
- Controls cost and minimizes waste.

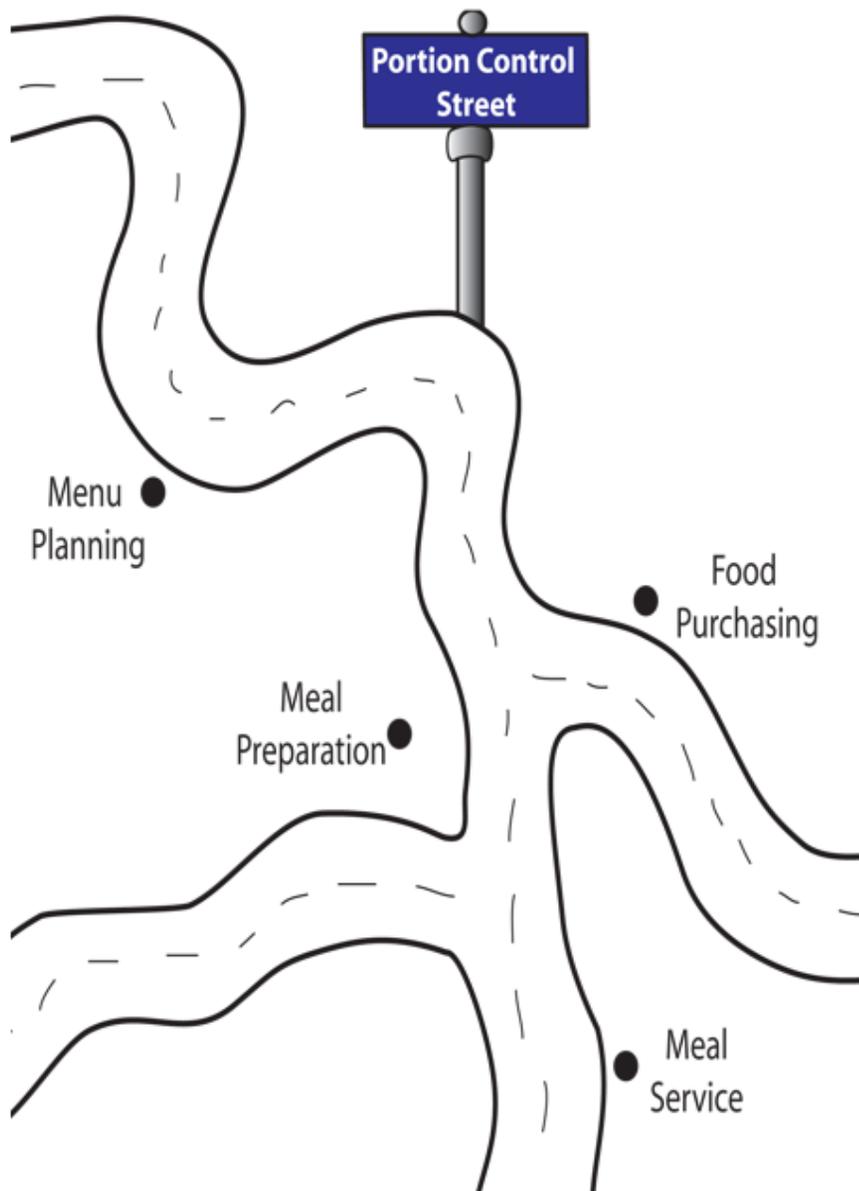
RESOURCES

On the Road to Professional Food Preparation, Institute of Child Nutrition, 2007

THINGS TO CONSIDER

- The common portioning units used are by count, volume measure, or weight. Depending on the food product, one or more common portioning units can be used.
- A standardized recipe will yield a certain number of servings. The cost of a meal item that is prepared using a standardized recipe is based on this assumption.
- Controlling the cost of food is a constant concern and a challenge in child nutrition programs. Menu planning and serving a specific number of portions per recipe is important to control the cost of food.
- Portion control is one way of keeping students and children happy and satisfied with the meals. Serving the planned portion sizes means there will be a sufficient amount of food, and customers will not be kept waiting while more food is prepared.
- The last customer deserves the same quality and quantity as the first customer.
- It is important for all staff to understand that portion control is a team effort and those kitchens whose team works together can be more successful at controlling the cost of food and minimizing waste. Serving an extra or a different sized portion every so often might not seem to make a big difference on a day to day basis, but makes a difference when portion control is not practiced accurately over a period of time.

PORTION CONTROL IS LIKE FOLLOWING A ROAD MAP



Portion control is important throughout all child nutrition programs. It involves planning menus carefully, purchasing an adequate amount of food, preparing, storing and serving food.

- **Menu Planning** – The menu planner must determine the projected number of servings needed and ensure they are consistent with the USDA meal pattern requirements.
- **Food Purchasing** – For the food order to be accurate, the correct portion size of each food item must be served. If larger portions than those planned are served, there will not be enough food available to serve all of the customers.
- **Meal Preparation** – It is important to consider portion control during the preparation of food. Standardized recipes indicate the expected yield. In order to obtain the expected number of portions of the specified size, accurately follow the recipe:
 - When measuring and weighing the ingredients
 - When combining the ingredients, and
 - When cooking the product.

If the recipe is not followed accurately with the use of the correct size serving utensil, the recipe will not yield the correct number of portions of the specified size.

- **Meal Service** – The most obvious time to use portion control is when serving food. Serving planned portion sizes for each food item will help control cost, minimize food waste, and satisfy customers. Controlling portion size on the serving line begins with the server knowing the portion sizes that was planned and prepared for each food item. The portion size should be recorded on the production record.
 - Serving portions that are too small results in:
 - Customer dissatisfaction
 - Leftovers
 - Food waste
 - Meals that do not meet the USDA meal pattern requirements for a reimbursable meal
 - Serving portions that are too large results in:
 - Increased food costs
 - Customer dissatisfaction
 - Meals that do not meet the USDA meal pattern requirements for dietary standards