

# Vegan and Vegetarian Diets

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Whether you're vegan, veggie, flexitarian or just interested in eating more veg, our nutritionists are here to help

A plant-based diet explained

Plant-based eating is closely aligned with the Mediterranean diet, consisting of plenty of vegetables, fruit, wholegrains and pulses, with small amounts of fish, lean meat and dairy. This is what separates plant-based and vegan diets. Shifting your focus to a plant-based diet will help you to reach the healthy-eating recommendations for fibre, vegetables, fish and oily fish easily. While this type of diet is naturally lower in saturated fats, it is not a low-fat way of eating. Saturated fats are replaced with healthier, unsaturated fats from plant oils, fish and nuts



Vegetarianism

The most common vegetarian diet in the UK is the lacto-ovo. This consists of cutting out meat, poultry, fish and seafood, but including eggs and dairy. A lot of vegetarians won't eat other animal products such as gelatine or rennet.

Are vegan and vegetarian diets healthy?

With a bit of planning and variation, vegan and vegetarian diets can be healthy and provide all the nutrients your body needs. Alternatives are key to a successful, healthy vegan or vegetarian diet so we've listed a few options below:

- Protein – you should include a range of protein sources to provide all the amino acids your body needs, for example beans, lentils, nuts, seeds, Quorn, tofu and milk alternatives such as nut or rice drinks.
- Vitamin B12 – commonly found in yeast extracts, fortified breakfast cereals and fortified milk alternatives such as soya or nut drinks.
- Iodine – look for products fortified in iodine to ensure you get enough, such as some milk alternatives. It's also found in seaweed, for example sushi rolls, however, it tends to be high in iodine so only small amounts are needed.



- Iron – typically found in pulses, leafy green vegetables, fortified breakfast cereals and bread. Combining these with foods high in vitamin C, such as kiwi fruits, peppers and sweet potatoes, will help your body to absorb plant-based iron.
- Selenium – found in nuts, especially Brazil nuts, and bread.
- Calcium – if you're avoiding milk, alternative sources include enriched soya/oat/nut/rice-based drinks, dried fruit, leafy green vegetables and sesame seeds.
- Omega 3 – the richest source of omega 3 for vegetarians are flaxseeds, walnuts and rapeseed oil. These provide short chain omega 3 fats, which our bodies convert into the heart-healthy, long-chain omega 3 fats. It can be difficult to obtain enough omega 3 in a strict vegan diet so you may need an algal supplement.

Look out for our labelling

Our Foodhalls are full of delicious vegan and vegetarian options, just look out for the logos on the front of the packaging or the green vegan statement on the back.

Want to plan your vegan-friendly shopping list?

Take a look at our list of M&S dishes suitable for vegans. We update this monthly to ensure it's accurate and you can ask a member of staff to help you find what's available in your local store. And the foods on the vegan list will not contain any of the following:



- Meat, fish, poultry protein or any products derived from slaughtered animals – for example, animal lecithin and animal rennet
- Animal carcass fats including suet, lard and dripping
- Meat, fish or bone stock
- Gelatine, aspic, cochineal or carmine
- Egg or egg derivatives
- Milk or dairy products including butter, yoghurt and cream, or dairy derivatives
- Honey

Download the Vegan Food List Here ([https://mands.storiq.net/files/api?path=Food/Vegan%20Food%20List%20-%20Feb%202022/Vegan%20List.pdf&bucket\\_key=local&mode=download](https://mands.storiq.net/files/api?path=Food/Vegan%20Food%20List%20-%20Feb%202022/Vegan%20List.pdf&bucket_key=local&mode=download))