

# SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM OFFER VS. SERVE

Children who are offered food choices are more likely to eat the foods they like rather than throw the food away. Offer Versus Serve (OVS) is an optional style to menu planning and meal service that helps Summer Meal sponsors reduce food waste and costs, while ensuring children receive nutritious meals they enjoy. You can use OVS at breakfast, lunch, and supper meals. OVS is not allowed at snack.

## Terms to Know

- **Food Component** - One of the food groups that comprise a reimbursable breakfast, lunch, or supper. Food components include milk, fruit and vegetable, grains, and meat/meat alternate.
- **Food Item** - Foods that are part of a food component. For example, broccoli is a food item in the fruit and vegetable component.

## How Does OVS Work?

### Breakfast

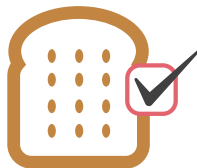
Offer four food items, one from each component:

- Milk
- Fruit & vegetable
- Grains
- Meat/meat alternate, or fruit/vegetable, or grains

All food items offered must be different from each other. For example, a flaked cereal and a puffed cereal are two types of cereals that are not identical, but they are the same food item.

REQUIRED FOOD COMPONENT	YOU OFFER THESE FOOD ITEMS
Milk	Low-fat (1%) milk
Fruit and vegetable	Apple slices
Grains	Whole-wheat toast
Additional Food Item (meat/meat alternate, fruit/vegetable, grains)	Peanut butter

A child must take at least 3 different food items out of the 4 food items offered.



- Note: The child may select all 4 food items

## Lunch or Supper

Offer five food items from the four food components:

- Milk
- Fruits & vegetables
- Fruits & vegetables
- Grains
- Meat/meat alternate

All food items offered must be different from each other. For example, orange slices and orange juice are two types of oranges that are not identical, but they are the same food item.

REQUIRED FOOD COMPONENT	YOU OFFER THESE FOOD ITEMS
Milk	Fat-free (skim) milk
Fruits and vegetables	Green beans
Fruits and vegetables	Orange slices
Grains	Whole-wheat roll
Meat/meat alternate	Grilled chicken

A child must take at least 3 food components out of the 5 food items offered.



- Note: The child may select all 5 food items

## Resources

For more information and examples of OVS meals, check out the Summer Meals Toolkit:

[https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/sfsp/SMT\\_OVS.pdf](https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/sfsp/SMT_OVS.pdf)