

The
Good,
Better,
BEST

Guide to
Real Food

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For each of the categories on the following charts, it's best to stick to the "Better" or "Best" categories if possible and try to stay away from the "Not Recommend" category as much as you can.

Most importantly, though, is to just do what you can to eat healthy, real food and try not to stress too much about it. If your budget allows, than buying organic food from local sources is generally the healthiest option, but if that's not possible for you, then just do your best.

Any time you cook homemade meals with whole ingredients, you'll be eating something that is a lot healthier than buying fast food or eating processed, packaged meals.

	Not Recommended	Good	Better	Best
Fruits and Vegetables	GMO fruits and vegetables*	Buying whole, unprocessed fruits and vegetables and buying organic when you can.	Organic fruits and vegetables from the grocery store.	Fresh, local, organic fruits and vegetables from a farm stand or farmer's market or home-grown from your own garden.

	Not Recommended	Good	Better	Best
Meats	Deep fried meats and processed meats such as fast food chicken nuggets or deli meats with preservatives.	Fresh, non-processed meat from the grocery store that you cook yourself at home (preferably antibiotic and hormone-free.)	Organic, antibiotic and hormone-free meat from the grocery store.	Meat from humanely-raised grass-fed or pasture-raised animals (even better if it's from a local farm.)

	Not Recommended	Good	Better	Best
Eggs and Dairy	Processed cheese products, skim milk, ultra-pasteurized milk, processed egg substitutes.	Whole dairy products that are just pasteurized and not ultra-pasteurized. Whole eggs rather than processed substitutes.	Organic cage-free eggs from the grocery store. Organic dairy products.	Eggs from pasture-raised, organically fed chickens. Dairy products from grass-fed cows (preferably raw, unpasteurized dairy if possible.)

* Common GMO or genetically-modified foods include corn, soy, sugar beets, canola oil, cottonseed oil. These are best to buy organic or GMO-free if possible.

	Not Recommended	Good	Better	Best
Fats	Hydrogenated fats, margarine, non-organic vegetable oils such as canola oil, corn oil, and soybean oil (these are often made from GMO sources, too.)	Real butter, non-GMO vegetable oils, coconut oil, olive oil.	Organic butter, coconut oil, and olive oil.	Butter, tallow, or lard from grass-fed or pasture-raised animals; organic coconut oil, extra virgin olive oil.

	Not Recommended	Good	Better	Best
Sweeteners	High fructose corn syrup, corn syrup, sugar made from GMO sugar beets, artificial sweeteners and sugar substitutes.	White refined cane sugar, honey, maple syrup.	Organic cane sugar, organic honey, organic maple syrup.	Organic, unrefined whole cane sugar, organic raw honey, organic maple syrup.

	Not Recommended	Good	Better	Best
Grains and Baked Goods	Store bought, processed crackers, cookies, cereals, breads, etc. made from refined flours and with artificial ingredients and/or preservatives.	Store bought crackers, cookies, cereals, breads, etc. made with refined flours (a little in moderation is ok!) but made without any artificial ingredients.	Store bought or homemade foods made from organic grains (having a mix of refined and whole grains is a good balance) and all natural ingredients.	Homemade baked goods made from organic, mostly whole grains (with smaller amounts of refined grains in moderation) and natural, organic ingredients.