

Your SMART guide for making heart-healthy choices in every aisle. Packed with practical tips to support your cholesterol-lowering goals, both in-store or online.

				
Store Aisle	SMART Heroes	Also Go For...	Avoid	SMART Tips
Fruit & Veg 	Okra, aubergines, Brussels sprouts, broccoli, apricots, oranges and cabbage.	All and any fruit and veg. Aim for 5-a-day and eat the rainbow.	More than 150ml of fruit juice or smoothies in one day.	All count: fresh, frozen, canned in juice or water, and dried.
Meat & Plant Alternatives 	Tofu and soya mince.	Plain Quorn™ fillets, pieces or mince; other meat alternatives – check the label for green or amber saturated fat and salt; poultry without the skin.	Fatty, red and processed meat.	See the beans and lentils aisle for more Cholesterol SMART® proteins.
Fish 	One weekly serving of oily fish for your heart healthy omega-3!	All varieties count! Eat 2 portions every week, one of which should be oily (e.g., salmon, mackerel, and sardines).	Battered or with a creamy sauce.	Frozen and canned also count.
Milk, Yogurts & Alternatives 	Soya milk and yogurt alternatives, and yogurt and shot drinks with added stanols or sterols.	Low and zero fat dairy and unsweetened fortified plant-based options.	Full-fat milk and yogurts and all coconut-based alternatives.	Long-life (UHT) varieties also count and cost less!
Cheeses 		Quark, low fat cottage cheese, and cheeses labelled 'Low Fat' or 'Light'.	Large servings of full-fat cheeses and vegan hard cheeses.	Grated and stronger cheeses can help you use less. IN MODERATION 'Lower Fat', 'Lighter', 'Reduced Fat'.
Spreads & Fats 	With added plant stanols or sterols.	Spreads high in unsaturated fats, such as olive and sunflower.	Butter and other animal fats, vegan butter and shea butter.	See oils aisle for cooking oils.
Ready Meals (Chilled & Frozen) 	Add extra veg and beans to your ready meals.	Use front-of-pack traffic lights to compare saturated fat, salt, and sugars. Go for green and amber lights.	Red traffic lights for saturated fat and salt.	Veggie or vegan does not mean healthy! Compare front of pack and go for those with more green lights.
Beans & Lentils 	Any bean, any lentil!	Canned in water or dried. Half a large can or 3 spoons is a serving.	Cooking with animal or coconut fat, or added salt.	Aim for four servings a week. Add to your usual salads, stews, soups and meat dishes.
Rice & Pasta 	All wholegrains!	Brown, red, black, or wild rice; wholegrain pasta; pastas made from pulses such as lentils or chick peas.	Pasta and rice ready-made dishes with creamy or butter sauces.	Start gradually by mixing 50/50 white and wholegrain. Try a different rice, such as red or wild, for added flavour and texture.
Other Grains 	Pearl barley	Go wholegrain: bulgur wheat, quinoa, buckwheat, millet, popcorn.	Adding butter, coconut fat or salt. Serving with creamy sauces.	Experiment with new grains, and add to salads, or use in place of rice or pasta.
Oils 	Replace coconut and palm oils with other vegetable, seed or nut oils.	Polyunsaturated or monounsaturated oils such as olive, rapeseed, vegetable, corn, sunflower, avocado, and groundnut.	Coconut and palm oil.	All fats are high in calories – use oils sparingly. Standard oils work as well as cold-pressed.
Breakfast Cereals 	Porridge oats, oat flakes, and oat breakfast biscuits.	Wholegrain options low in sugar such as bran flakes, whole wheat biscuits, malt wheats, and no added sugar muesli.	Refined breakfast cereals and granolas with added sugars, coconut flesh or oil, chocolate, honey and syrups.	Boost cereals with some nuts and sliced banana or berries. Serve with low fat milk or plant drinks.
Nuts, Seeds & Dried Fruit 	All unsalted and unsweetened nuts and peanuts.	All seeds, such as chia, flaxseeds, hemp, sesame, and pumpkin, plus dried fruit without added sugars, and unsalted nut butters without palm oil.	Sugar, honey, chocolate, yogurt or salted varieties.	Sprinkle over cereals, add to stir fries, stews, salads, or enjoy as snacks.
Bakery 		Wholemeal, seeded, or 50/50 breads, rolls, pittas, English muffins and wraps.	Enriched breads such as brioche, cholla, naan, and croissants.	Use vegetable or stanol/sterol spreads; choose low fat fillings like egg or chicken salad, falafel, or hummous.
Sweet Bakery Treats 	Satisfy sweet cravings with fruit.	Currant or hot cross buns, tea cakes and malted loaves.	Sweet pastries, muffins, cakes, chilled desserts on a daily basis.	Fresh fruit, fruit with low fat natural yogurt, sugar-free jellies, or fat-free and sugar-free fruit yogurts.
Snacks 	Low salt oatcakes.	Unsalted popcorn and nuts, wholegrain and rye crackers, wholegrain rice cakes. IN MODERATION Rich tea, jaffa cakes, garibaldi, and fig rolls.	Shortbread biscuits, cookies and cream-filled, chocolate-coated or coconut biscuits.	Fruit, no added sugar and fat-free fruit yogurts, dried fruit, seeds and unsalted nuts.

As brands can vary, check the label for saturated fats, sugars and salt (there's no need to focus on total fat).

● GREEN = Go! ● AMBER = Occasionally ● RED = Avoid

Find out more about food labels www.heartuk.org.uk/cholesterol-smart/food-labels



Easy Ways to Shop SMART



Weekly Meal Plan

Write a weekly meal plan and use this to make a shopping list – it saves money and helps reduce food waste.



Always Make a Shopping List

And keep to it! Helps prevent impulse buys and keeps costs down.



Check Your Fridge & Cupboards

Before planning your meals: see if you have any ingredients that need using up.
Before going shopping: check what you have against your list to avoid duplicates.



Never Shop Hungry

Have a healthy snack before you go – it reduces impulse buying!



Be Deal-Wise

Multi-buys aren't always healthier or cheaper!
Compare the price and nutrition information per 100g.
Check the use by date – will you use it in time?



Avoid 'Unhealthy' Aisles

Avoid going down the sweet bakery, cakes, biscuits and confectionary aisles. Keep temptation at bay!



SMART Plant Proteins

Beans, lentils, and quinoa are great affordable protein options.
Seeds: just a spoonful a day, goes a long way.
Unsalted/unsweetened peanuts are a great affordable nut option.



Buy Loose Where You Can

It reduces packaging and helps you buy only what you need.



Bulk Cook & Batch Freeze

Buying in bigger packs can save money – cook and freeze in portions to reduce waste.



Switch to Own 'Essentials' Brands

Many supermarket own brands offer similar nutrition at lower prices – especially for staples.



Value Doesn't Mean Less Healthy

Beans, oats, tinned fish and own-brand frozen veg all pack a punch and are super affordable.



HEART UK
THE CHOLESTEROL CHARITY

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Must-Haves

Try and include as many of the following in your shopping list:

- ✓ Oats or oat-based breakfast cereals.
- ✓ Beans or lentils – dried or canned in water.
- ✓ Polyunsaturated or olive spread, or fat spread with added plant stanols or sterols.
- ✓ Healthy oils made from nuts, seeds or vegetables (**coconut and palm oil don't count**).
- ✓ Unsalted nuts, including peanuts.
- ✓ Fruit – fresh, frozen, dried, or canned in juice or water.
- ✓ Vegetables – fresh, frozen or canned in water and keep it colourful.
- ✓ Wholemeal bread, rolls, and wraps.
- ✓ Whole grains – quinoa, brown, black, red or wild rice and wholegrain pasta.
- ✓ A daily yogurt or drink "shot" with added plant stanols or sterols.
- ✓ Oily fish – such as salmon, pilchards, sardines and trout – canned, fresh or frozen.

Find Out More

Cholesterol SMART® - step-by-step healthy eating and lifestyle plan
www.heartuk.org.uk/cholesterol-smart

Shopping SMART on a budget
www.heartuk.org.uk/cholesterol-smart-budget

Understanding food labels
www.heartuk.org.uk/cholesterol-smart/food-labels

