Smoothies are a delicious, fast, and nutritious meal or snack – when made correctly. It is important to remember that meals, whether served on a plate or in a glass, should be nutritionally balanced. So, while an all-fruit smoothie may make your taste buds happy, the lack of protein and fat will leave your body unsatisfied.

Luckily making a nutritionally balanced smoothie is simple – just follow these five steps. Amounts below will make 2 servings:

1. **Choose a Base (1/2 cup):**
   - Low fat milk, almond milk, brewed tea, coconut water, coconut milk, rice beverage, soymilk, water, or 100% fruit juice

2. **Choose a Fruit (fresh or frozen) (1 cup):**
   - Apple, banana, blackberries, blueberries, cherries, grapes, kiwi, mango, melon, oranges, papaya, peach, pear, pineapple, raspberries, or strawberries

3. **Choose a Vegetable (1/2 cup):**
   - **Raw:** Arugula, beet greens, celery, chard, collard greens, cucumbers, dandelion greens, kale, or spinach (greens can be raw or cooked). Raw vegetables will require a powerful blender to fully grind them up.
   - **Cooked:** butternut squash, carrots, pumpkin, or sweet potato

4. **Add in Protein, Healthy fats and/or Fiber:**
   - **Protein:**
     - 1/2 cup cottage cheese or Greek yogurt
     - 1/4 cup silken tofu, cooked lentils, or beans
     - 1-2 tablespoons peanut butter, almond butter, or sun butter
   - **Healthy Fat/Fiber:**
     - 1/4 Avocado
     - 1 Tablespoon chia seeds
     - 2 Tablespoons chopped nuts
     - 1 Tablespoon ground flax seeds
     - 1 Tablespoon hemp seeds or hearts
     - 1 Tablespoon wheat germ
Give it a Boost (choose 1):
- 1 Tablespoon cocoa powder
- 1 capsule fish oil, open and squeeze in to smoothie (for omega-3’s)
- 2 drops flavor extracts (vanilla, almond, or mint)
- 1 tsp chopped fresh herbs (mint or basil)
- Pinch of spices (cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, or cayenne)
- 3 cubes ice

Extra Tips:
- If you use frozen fruit, buy varieties with no added sugar.
- Notice the fat content of your liquid base and protein – try to choose low fat varieties of milk and yogurt.
- You can adjust the consistency of the smoothie by adding more liquid or using less dense fruits and vegetables.
- Be creative! This formula makes a nutritionally balanced smoothie – so throw your taste buds some (delicious) curve balls!

Blender Tips: All blenders are not created equal. They vary in size, strength and ease of cleaning.
- Standing Blender: large standing blenders hold 5-8 cups, vary in strength to crush ice and grind vegetables.
- Handheld Immersion Blender: good for making 1-2 servings. Easy to clean.

Sample Recipes:

**Strawberry-Banana Smoothie:** ½ cup plain yogurt, ½ banana, ¼ cup orange juice, ¼ cup water, ½ cup frozen strawberries, ½ cup cooked butternut squash

**Orange Creamsicle:** ½ cup plain yogurt, 1 orange (peeled), ¼ tsp vanilla extract, ¼ cup orange juice, ½ Tbsp chia seeds, ¼ cup water, 3 ice cubes

**Peachy Keen:** ½ cup milk, ¼ cup plain yogurt, 1 cup frozen peaches and strawberries, ¼ of an avocado, pinch powdered ginger or 1 tsp grated fresh ginger

**Peanut Butter Dream:** 1 ripe banana, ½ cup milk, 1 Tbsp creamy peanut butter, ½ Tbsp cocoa powder, ½ cup baby spinach leaves