



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

HEADQUARTERS, 10th MOUNTAIN DIVISION, (LIGHT INFANTRY) AND FORT DRUM

FORT DRUM, NEW YORK 13602-5000

INSTRUCTION FOR LEADER

Complete outlined tasks in preparation for training. During training, you will read the script directly and complete an AAR. The script includes optional check on learning activities to verify Soldiers understand the lesson.

PREPARATION

1. Print and review this leader guide to ensure subject familiarity.
2. Print enough handouts for number of Soldiers in training.

OBJECTIVE

1. Soldiers will be able to identify the three main components to a balanced plate: carbohydrate, protein, and color. They will be able to choose appropriate portions to support their activity level each day.

SCRIPT TO BE READ DIRECTLY

1. **Introduction to Performance Plate:** The demands of military service, training, and missions are unique, requiring strength and endurance—physical and mental—to succeed. One factor that can enhance your mental and physical performance and contribute to mission success is good nutrition. In addition, feeding your body nutrient-rich foods can contribute to optimal lifelong health.
2. **Balance Your Plate:** For optimal nutrition, choose nutrient-dense foods from the 5 food groups: grains, protein, dairy, fruits, and vegetables. At mealtimes, select items from at least 3 of the food groups—a mixed meal that contains **carbs, protein, and healthy fats**—to maintain energy for strong and effective training sessions. Some combinations include:
 - a. Baked or grilled fish, brown rice, and vegetables
 - b. Whole-grain cereal, low-fat milk, and fruit
 - c. Turkey on whole-grain bread with tomato, lettuce, and onion
 - d. Low-fat Greek yogurt, whole-grain cereal, and fruit
 - e. Vegetable burrito (whole-grain tortilla, beans, vegetables, and cheese)
3. **Eat a variety of Foods:** An assortment of nutritious foods can help maximize your intake of micronutrients such as vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants, which help boost mental



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and physical performance. When eating, **vary your choices** to get the most out of your meals. For example, B vitamins found in a range of foods—including whole grains, lean proteins, dairy, nuts, beans, and leafy greens—support your body's processing of energy. In addition, vitamins A, C, and E act as antioxidants that reduce muscle damage and enhance recovery from exercise. These essential vitamins are found in many foods, including citrus (oranges and grapefruits), kiwi, cantaloupe, sweet potatoes, carrots, nuts, and seeds.

4. **What are Performance Plates:** Performance plates are plates with various amounts of carbohydrates, protein, and color based on training intensity. There are three plates: easy, moderate, and hard training plates. They help Soldiers create balanced meals to ensure Soldiers get enough energy and can recover properly to optimize performance based on their activity level.
 - a. **Components of a Performance Plate:** Carbohydrates, protein, and color (fruits and vegetables) are the three main components of the performance plates. Fat is not one of the main components of the plates. Fat is included in meals, but not given a specific percentage.
 - b. **Easy Training Day:** This plate is made for off days, rehabbing, and light activity days. On a scale of 1 to 10, it's a 1 - 4. Since energy needs are lower, Soldiers do not need quite as many carbohydrates on these days. Instead, focus on adding color through fruits and vegetables to provide fiber, antioxidants, vitamins, minerals, and anti-inflammatory benefits.
 - (1) Easy day Plate Breakdown: Carbohydrates: 25%, Protein: 25%, Color (Fruits and vegetables): 50%, Fat: 1-3 teaspoons
 - c. **Moderate Training Day:** This plate is made for strenuous activity and exercise. On a scale of 1 to 10, it's a 5 or 6. Soldiers need more energy to get through typical training days but not quite as much as on hard days, so you will add more carbohydrates to your plate.
 - (1) Moderate Plate Breakdown: Carbohydrate: 35%, Protein: 25%, Color: 40%, Fat: 1-2 tablespoons
 - d. **Heavy Training Day:** This plate is made for vigorous training or long-lasting moderate training (3 to 4 hours or more). On a scale of 1-10, this is a 7 or higher. Soldiers need to load up on carbohydrates to fuel the muscles and brain in order to train efficiently at a high tempo. On heavy training days stick to foods, you are familiar with and won't cause any distress on your gastrointestinal system.
 - (1) Heavy Plate Breakdown: Carbohydrates: 50%, Protein: 25%, Color: 25%, Fat: 2-3 tablespoons
5. **Performance Plate at the Warrior Restaurant:** G4G labels foods and beverages using a spotlight system—Green, Yellow, and Red—based on nutritional quality to help identify



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your best choices for peak performance. Nutritional quality is evaluated on the following components: saturated fat, fiber, sugar, degree of processing, and total fat. For example, Green-coded menu items are least processed, highest in nutrients, and lowest in added sugar, and the fats they contain are healthy fats. Soldiers should consume Green-coded foods and drinks most often.

Green = High-performance fuel for the Warfighter's mind and body

Yellow = Moderate-performance fuel for the Warfighter's mind and body

Red = Low-performance fuel for the Warfighter's mind and body

G4G also labels foods with Low, Moderate, or High sodium symbols to point out sodium content. Sodium codes are independent of their color code; for example, not all Green-coded foods are low in sodium. Soldiers have different sodium needs based on their medical conditions, activities, and environments. If you're training or working intensely or for extended periods of time in a hot and humid environment, include some High-sodium items on your plate to ensure you're replenishing sodium lost through sweat.

6. Summary

- a. Choose portion sizes to support your activity level.
 - (1) If your activity will be longer in duration, higher in intensity, or you'll have multiple training sessions, you'll need more carbohydrates and calories to fuel your activity and support your recovery (Moderate or Heavy Training Day).
 - (2) Your activity might change daily, so adjust your plate as needed.
- b. Balance your food groups using the plate as a guide.
 - (1) No matter your activity level, a balanced plate helps provide a variety of nutrients you need for optimal performance and recovery.
 - (2) Aim for fruits and veggies, lean protein, carbohydrates, and healthy fats at all meals.



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OPTIONAL CHECK ON LEARNING

1. **Group Discussion:** Discuss examples of performance plates for easy training, moderate training, and heavy training days.
2. **Practical Exercise:** Eat together at the Warrior Restaurant and build a performance plate based on individual needs and activity level.

AAR

1. What were the pros and cons of this training?
2. Did they like eating together in the Warrior Restaurant?
3. What, if any, barriers are there to building performance plates? How can they be overcome?

SUPPORTING RESOURCES

1. Warfighter Nutrition Guide Chapter 1, 2, and 6. [Warfighter Nutrition Guide | HPRC \(hprc-online.org\)](http://hprc-online.org)
2. FM 7-22 Chapter 8, 8-4 through 8-16, 8-37 through 8-45
3. H2F Nutrition Team and Dietitians at Guthrie

EASY TRAINING DAY

Build your plate with 1-2-3

- 1 Choose your activity level.
- 2 Balance your food groups.
- 3 Check your performance impact with Go for Green®.

Carbs (grains & starchy veggies)

- Whole-grain bread and pasta
- Oats
- Brown rice
- Beans/lentils
- Potatoes
- Corn

Fruits & veggies

- Eat a variety of colors
- Choose fresh or frozen
- Enjoy raw and cooked

Healthy fats

- Olive oil
- Nuts/seeds
- Avocado

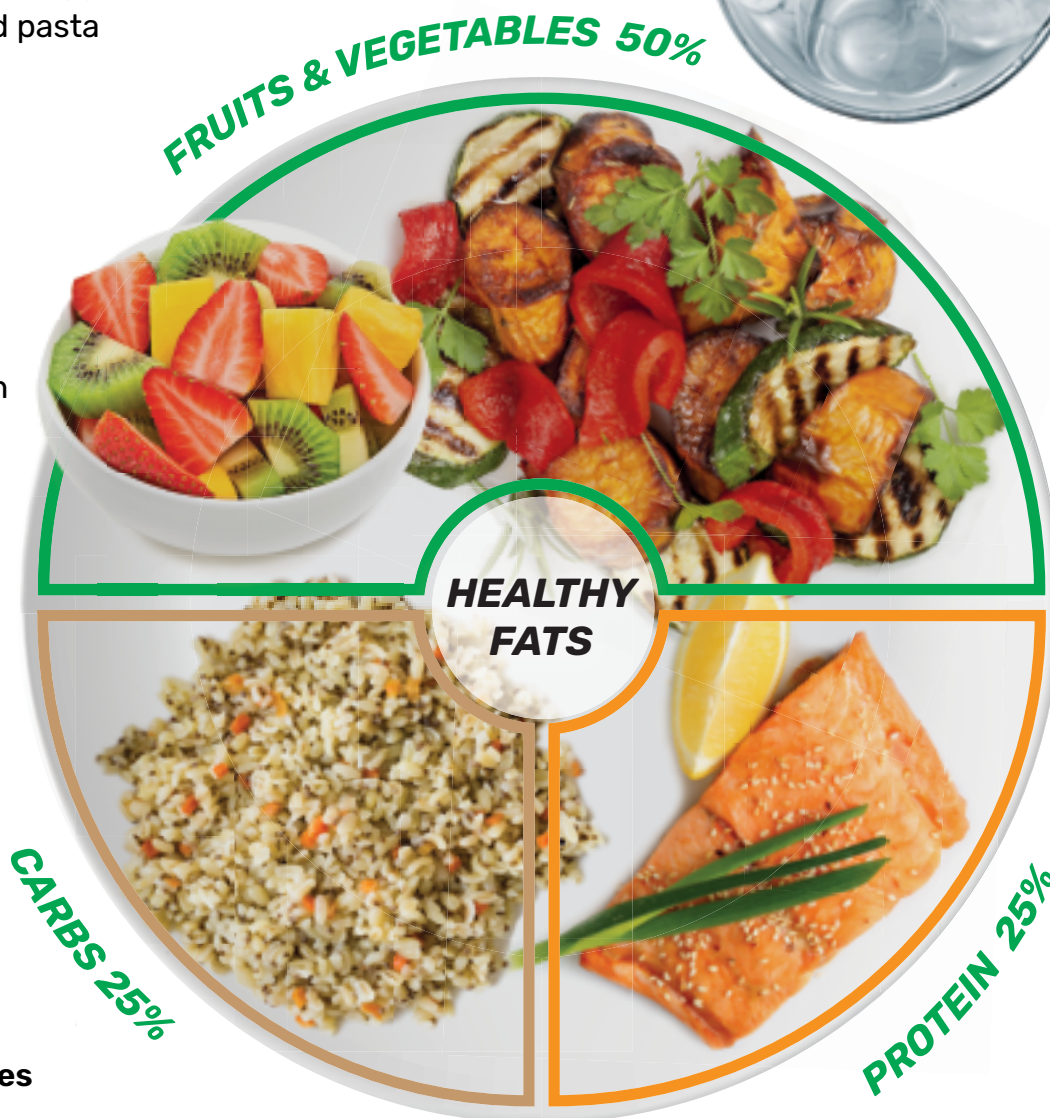
Lean protein

- Beef/pork
- Chicken/turkey
- Fish
- Dairy
- Eggs
- Soy/tofu
- Beans/lentils
- Nuts/seeds

Unsweetened beverages

- Water
- Milk/milk alternatives
- Coffee/tea

This is a guide on how to balance your plate and fuel your performance. Always tune in to your body's cues for hunger and fullness.



MODERATE TRAINING DAY

Build your plate with 1-2-3

- 1 Choose your activity level.
- 2 Balance your food groups.
- 3 Check your performance impact with Go for Green®.

Carbs (grains & starchy veggies)

- Whole-grain bread and pasta
- Oats
- Brown rice
- Beans/lentils
- Potatoes
- Corn

Fruits & veggies

- Eat a variety of colors
- Choose fresh or frozen
- Enjoy raw and cooked

Healthy fats

- Olive oil
- Nuts/seeds
- Avocado

Lean protein

- Beef/pork
- Chicken/turkey
- Fish
- Dairy
- Eggs
- Soy/tofu
- Beans/lentils
- Nuts/seeds

Unsweetened beverages

- Water
- Milk/milk alternatives
- Coffee/tea



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HEAVY TRAINING DAY

Build your plate with 1-2-3

- 1 Choose your activity level.
- 2 Balance your food groups.
- 3 Check your performance impact with Go for Green®.

Carbs (grains & starchy veggies)

- Whole-grain bread and pasta
- Oats
- Brown rice
- Beans/lentils
- Potatoes
- Corn

Fruits & veggies

- Eat a variety of colors
- Choose fresh or frozen
- Enjoy raw and cooked

Healthy fats

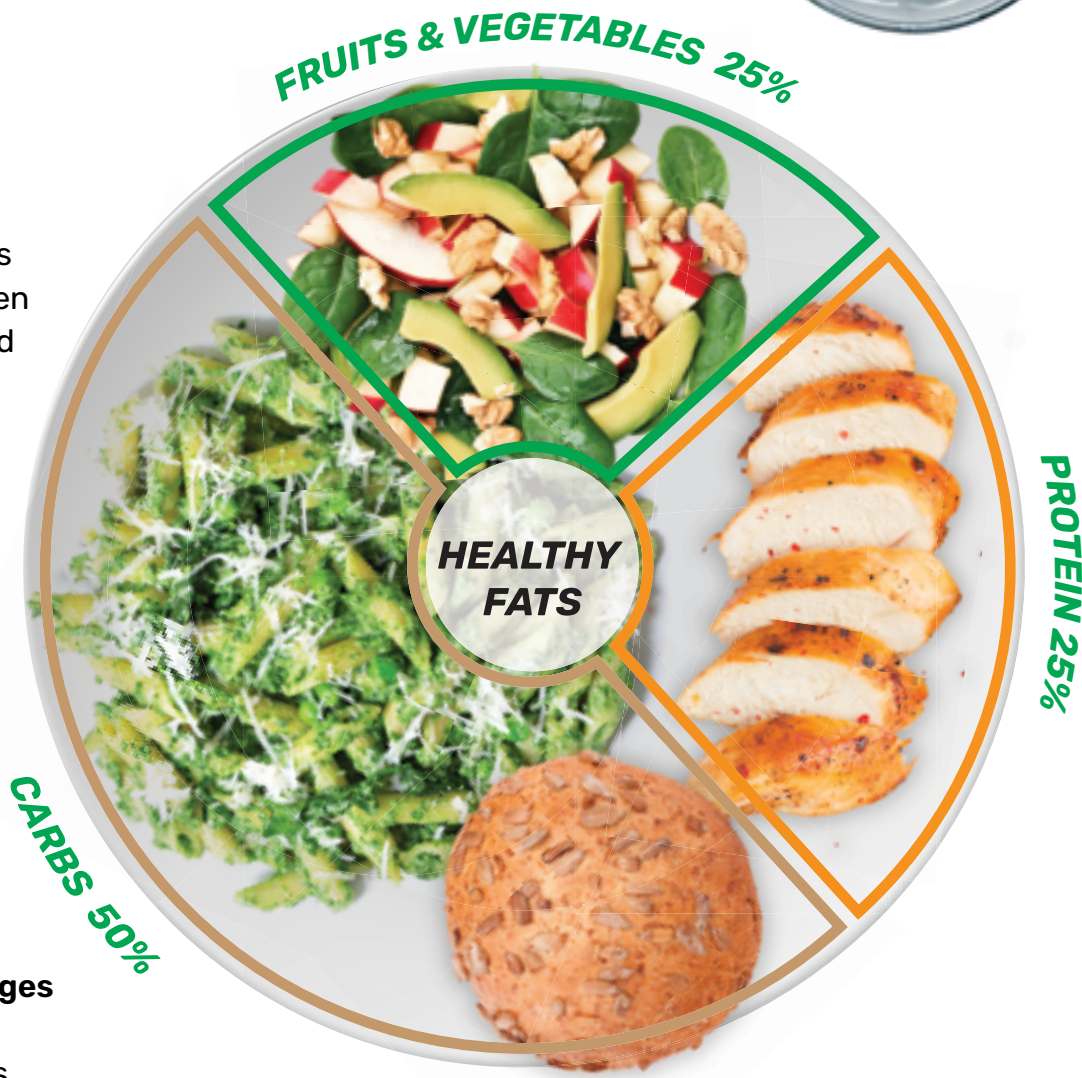
- Olive oil
- Nuts/seeds
- Avocado

Lean protein

- Beef/pork
- Chicken/turkey
- Fish
- Dairy
- Eggs
- Soy/tofu
- Beans/lentils
- Nuts/seeds

Unsweetened beverages

- Water
- Milk/milk alternatives
- Coffee/tea



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