



# FUELING THE U15 PLAYER (13–15)

FOR PLAYERS AND PARENTS — THE LOAD JUST DOUBLED; THE FUEL MUST TOO

U15 FUELING GUIDE

U15 is where load explodes: four club nights, the high-school season, and for many boys the biggest growth spurt of their lives — all at once. The #1 performance mistake at this age isn't eating badly. **It's not eating enough.** Underfueling shows up as flat legs, plateaued strength, repeat injuries, and lost love for the game. This guide scales everything up.

## 1 • FUEL, DON'T DIET

No weight talk, no restriction, no calorie counting — at any age in this club. Appetite that rises with training and growth is the system working.

## 2 • CARBS ARE THE GAS

Soccer runs on carbohydrates — rice, pasta, bread, potatoes, oats, fruit. More on training and game days, a little less on rest days.

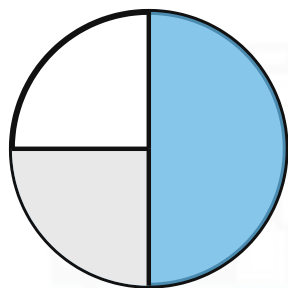
## 3 • PROTEIN BUILDS, EVERY MEAL

A palm-size portion at breakfast, lunch, and dinner — eggs, milk, yogurt, chicken, beef, fish, beans, peanut butter.

## 4 • TIMING BEATS PERFECTION

The 3 hours before and 45 minutes after activity matter most. Nail the timing and the rest is normal family food.

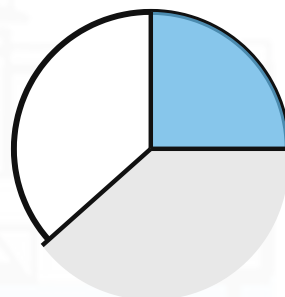
## THE PERFORMANCE PLATE — HOW TO BUILD EVERY MEAL



TRAINING & GAME DAYS

- 1/2 CARBS — rice, pasta, bread, potatoes
- 1/4 PROTEIN — chicken, beef, eggs, beans
- 1/4 COLOR — veggies & fruit

+ milk or yogurt · + water · portions scale with the player



REST DAYS

- 1/3 CARBS
- 1/3 PROTEIN
- 1/3 COLOR — go bigger on veggies

Same foods, shifted portions. Nothing is “banned.”

## THE HOUSE RULES (POST THESE ON THE FRIDGE)

- ✓ Breakfast every single day — non-negotiable for growing athletes
- ✓ Chocolate milk (or yogurt + fruit) within 45 min of every practice & game
- ✗ No energy drinks ever; no caffeine before 16, and none after noon at any age here
- ✗ Nothing fried or brand-new to the stomach on game day
- ✓ A full water bottle at every meal, at school, and at practice
- ✓ Three dairy/calcium servings a day — bones are banking now
- ✗ No soda on training or game days — it's an occasional treat, not a drink
- ✓ Dessert is dessert — never a reward or a punishment



# THE SCHOOL-DAY FUELING CLOCK

PRACTICE NIGHTS (4 CLUB NIGHTS + HS SEASON IN SPRING) · SESSIONS 90–105 MIN

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|                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6:45–7:15 AM        | <b>BREAKFAST — the day's foundation.</b> Carb + protein + fruit, every day. Rotate: oatmeal with berries & milk · eggs + toast + OJ · Greek yogurt parfait · cereal + milk + banana · bagel with peanut butter. “Not hungry” players start with a smoothie (milk + banana + frozen berries + spoon of PB). |
| 11:30–12:30         | <b>SCHOOL LUNCH.</b> Packed: sandwich or wrap + fruit + pretzels or crackers + milk or water. Buying: pick the grilled option over the fried one, always take the fruit, always take the milk. Lunch is fuel for practice — skipping or trading it shows up tonight.                                       |
| 3:30–4:30 PM        | <b>PRE-PRACTICE SNACK — the most important snack of the day.</b> Carb-forward, easy on the stomach: banana + peanut butter crackers · yogurt + granola · half a PB&J · applesauce + cheese stick · trail mix + apple. Plus a full bottle of water between now and practice.                                |
| 30–60 MIN BEFORE    | <b>TOP-OFF (only if the snack was early or missed):</b> a banana, an applesauce pouch, or a granola bar. Nothing heavy inside the last hour.                                                                                                                                                               |
| 6:30–8:15 PM        | <b>PRACTICE.</b> Water baseline; a sports drink earns its place in 90+ minute sessions, double-session days, and SC heat. Still never instead of water. The bottle arrives full and comes home empty.                                                                                                      |
| WITHIN 45 MIN AFTER | <b>RECOVERY SNACK — the golden window.</b> Carb + protein starts repair before dinner: <b>chocolate milk is the club's official recovery drink</b> — or a yogurt tube + banana, or half a PB&J in the car.                                                                                                 |
| 8:30–9:00 PM        | <b>DINNER — the training plate.</b> Half the plate carbs on practice nights; big portions on hard nights are correct, not a problem. Late dinners are the U15 reality — prep ahead, and never skip it because it's late. A big bowl beats a bag of chips at 9 PM.                                          |
| by 10:00 PM         | <b>SLEEP — 8–10 hours at this age.</b> The best recovery tool that exists at any level of the game. Genuinely hungry before bed: milk, yogurt, or a banana.                                                                                                                                                |

## NON-PRACTICE DAYS

Same clock, minus the top-off and recovery snack. After-school snack becomes fruit + a protein. Dinner uses the rest-day plate.

## DOUBLE-DAY RULES (CLUB + HIGH SCHOOL)

On days with two sessions or school PE + practice: add a **second lunch** (extra sandwich eaten mid-afternoon), double the recovery snack, and treat the day-after like a match recovery day. Total weekly load is tracked by the club (your combined minutes matter) — total weekly fuel is tracked at home. They must rise together.

## LIFTING & GYM DAYS

LIFTING DAYS: the gym block (4.14) adds a protein bookend — normal meal 1–2h before, and the recovery snack within 45 min after, same as pitch sessions. Food covers it; powders don't add anything at this age.



# GAME DAY

80-MINUTE MATCHES — NOTHING NEW, NOTHING FRIED, NOTHING RUSHED

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## MORNING KICKOFF (e.g., 9:00 AM)

**3h before · Breakfast:** pancakes or oatmeal + scrambled eggs + banana + milk/OJ. Familiar and carb-forward.

**60–75 min before · Top-off:** banana or granola bar + water in the car.

**Warm-up onward:** water only.

## AFTERNOON KICKOFF (e.g., 2:00 PM)

**Normal breakfast** at the usual time.

**3h before · Pre-match meal:** pasta with red sauce, or a turkey sandwich + pretzels + fruit + water. Light on the sauce and cheese.

**60–75 min before · Top-off:** banana / applesauce pouch.

## HALFTIME

Water + carbs at half (orange slices or a few pretzels) — 80-minute matches burn real fuel.

## POST-MATCH — THE SAME GOLDEN WINDOW

**Within 45 minutes:** chocolate milk + a banana or PB crackers (keep a small cooler in the car — it removes every excuse).

**Within 2 hours:** a real meal on the training plate — burrito bowl, chicken + rice, spaghetti, deli sub + milk. Drive-through reality: grilled option + milk + fruit side is a perfectly good recovery meal.

## TOURNAMENT DAYS — EAT BY THE GAP

**Under 1 hour between games:** fruit, applesauce, pretzels, sports-drink sips. Grazing, not eating.

**1–2 hours:** half a turkey or PB&J sandwich + fruit + water.

**2+ hours:** a normal light meal, finished 90 min before the next kickoff.

**Pack the cooler the night before:** sandwiches, bananas, applesauce, pretzels, cheese sticks, chocolate milk, frozen water bottles (they're the ice packs).

## GAME-DAY DON'TS

❌ Nothing fried or greasy before kickoff (biscuits, sausage, fries, fast-food breakfast)

❌ No soda, no energy drinks — and concession-stand candy waits until after the last game

❌ No new foods, new bars, or new drinks on a game day — test everything on a practice day first

❌ Don't skip the post-match snack because lunch is "soon" — the window matters most on multi-game days



# THE WEEKLY PLAN

ONE WEEK, ON REPEAT — SWAP FREELY WITHIN ANY COLUMN

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|                                    | BREAKFAST                                  | LUNCH (PACK OR PICK)                             | AFTER-SCHOOL / PRE-PRACTICE                              | DINNER                                                                           |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>MONDAY</b><br>LIGHTER DAY       | Oatmeal + berries + milk                   | Turkey & cheese sandwich, apple, pretzels, water | Apple + cheese stick                                     | Chicken, rice & broccoli + milk                                                  |
| <b>TUESDAY</b><br>PRACTICE         | Scrambled eggs + toast + OJ                | School lunch: grilled pick + fruit + milk        | Banana + PB crackers · recovery: chocolate milk          | Spaghetti & meat sauce + salad + garlic bread                                    |
| <b>WEDNESDAY</b><br>PRACTICE       | Greek yogurt + granola + banana            | Ham & cheese wrap, carrots + ranch, fruit cup    | Yogurt + granola · recovery: chocolate milk              | Turkey tacos + beans + rice + toppings                                           |
| <b>THURSDAY</b><br>PRACTICE        | Whole-grain cereal + milk + banana         | Leftover taco quesadilla + apple + water         | Half PB&J + banana · recovery: chocolate milk            | Baked fish (or rotisserie chicken) + mashed potatoes + green beans               |
| <b>FRIDAY</b><br>NIGHT BEFORE GAME | Bagel + peanut butter + fruit              | Turkey sandwich, pretzels, grapes, milk          | Smoothie (milk, banana, frozen berries, PB)              | PASTA NIGHT: chicken + pasta (red sauce) + bread + salad — carbs up, early night |
| <b>SATURDAY</b><br>GAME DAY        | Per the Game Day page (by kickoff time)    | Post-match meal within 2 hours                   | Cooler: chocolate milk, bananas, PB crackers, applesauce | Burrito bowls (rice, beans, chicken, cheese) + milk                              |
| <b>SUNDAY</b><br>REST & RESET      | Pancakes + eggs + fruit (family breakfast) | Family meal — rest-day plate (1/3 each)          | Popcorn + fruit · prep snack drawer for the week         | Roast chicken + potatoes + veg — cook once, use leftovers Mon/Tue lunches        |

## THE SNACK DRAWER + FRUIT BOWL SYSTEM

Stock one drawer and one bowl on Sunday; players self-serve all week: bananas, apples, grapes · PB crackers · pretzels · granola bars · trail mix · applesauce pouches. Fridge zone: yogurt tubes, cheese sticks, chocolate milk boxes, baby carrots + hummus.

## SWAP FREELY — THE COLUMNS ARE THE RULE, NOT THE MENU

Any breakfast for any breakfast, any dinner for any dinner. Portions scale with the player — a U15 in a growth phase eating seconds is the plan working. Budget week? Eggs, beans, rice, frozen veg, and store brands hit every target.

Halal/kosher/vegetarian: swap the protein 1-for-1 — the plate stays the same.



# THE ONE-TRIP GROCERY LIST

EVERYTHING ON PAGES 1-4, ONE CART, ANY SUPERMARKET

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## PRODUCE

- ☐ Bananas (big bunch — the MVP)
- ☐ Apples
- ☐ Grapes
- ☐ Oranges (halftime slices)
- ☐ Berries (fresh or frozen)
- ☐ Baby carrots
- ☐ Broccoli (fresh or frozen)
- ☐ Green beans (fresh or frozen)
- ☐ Salad kit
- ☐ Potatoes / mashed-ready
- ☐ Lemons or limes (water flavor)

## DAIRY & EGGS

- ☐ Milk (2 gallons)
- ☐ Chocolate milk (jug or lunchbox boxes)
- ☐ Greek yogurt tub + yogurt tubes
- ☐ Cheese sticks
- ☐ Shredded cheese
- ☐ Butter
- ☐ Eggs (18-count)

## PROTEINS

- ☐ Chicken breasts or thighs
- ☐ Rotisserie chicken (the weeknight cheat code)
- ☐ Ground turkey or lean beef (2 lbs)
- ☐ Deli turkey & ham
- ☐ Fish fillets or fish sticks
- ☐ Canned black beans / refried beans (3 cans)
- ☐ Peanut butter (big jar)
- ☐ Hummus

## GRAINS & BREAD

- ☐ Whole-grain sandwich bread (2 loaves)
- ☐ Bagels
- ☐ Tortillas / wraps
- ☐ Spaghetti + 1 more pasta shape
- ☐ Pasta sauce (2 jars)
- ☐ Rice (big bag)
- ☐ Oatmeal
- ☐ Whole-grain cereal
- ☐ Pancake mix
- ☐ Granola

## SNACK AISLE

- ☐ Peanut butter crackers
- ☐ Pretzels
- ☐ Granola bars (simple ones)
- ☐ Trail mix
- ☐ Applesauce pouches
- ☐ Popcorn
- ☐ Jelly / jam
- ☐ Fruit cups (in juice)

## FREEZER & EXTRAS

- ☐ Frozen berries (smoothies)
- ☐ Frozen veg backup bags
- ☐ Taco kit / taco seasoning
- ☐ Salsa
- ☐ Sports drink (per this guide's rule only)
- ☐ Water bottles or a good refillable
- ☐ NOT on the list: soda, energy drinks

## THE 10-MINUTE SUNDAY SETUP

Roast the chicken · boil eggs · fill the snack drawer and fruit bowl · pack Saturday's cooler list on the fridge door · freeze two water bottles. Ten minutes on Sunday runs the whole week.



# HYDRATION, GROWTH & QUICK ANSWERS

THE U15-SPECIFIC ANSWERS

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## HYDRATION — THE BOTTLE RULE

A full bottle **with every meal**, one **at school**, one **at practice** — the baseline. Game days and SC summer: start the day before; urine should look like pale lemonade, not apple juice. Water baseline; a sports drink earns its place in 90+ minute sessions, double-session days, and SC heat. Still never instead of water.

## GROWING AT 13–15 — AND THE UNDERFUELING TRAP

Boys' peak growth spurt usually lands here — some players need what looks like absurd amounts of food. It isn't absurd; it's the bill for growing and training simultaneously. **Energy in must match training out** — chronic underfueling (in boys AND girls) stalls growth, performance, and mood, and in girls can disrupt cycles: that's a see-the-doctor signal, not a training badge. Calcium x3, iron (girls especially), **sleep 8–10 hours**.

## QUICK ANSWERS

**“Now do they need protein powder?”** Still no. Strength work started this year, but food protein at every meal + chocolate milk after sessions fully covers it. A homemade smoothie is as 'supplemental' as anyone needs.

**“How much bigger should portions be?”** Let appetite lead on the training plate. Seconds on rice/pasta on hard days is the system working. Nobody measures; everybody eats breakfast.

**“Coffee before school?”** We'd rather not before 16, and never after noon or before matches. Energy drinks remain a flat no — they're the fastest route to wrecked sleep, and sleep is the real performance drug.

**“Cutting weight / eating 'clean' — teammate talk?”** Red flag language at this age. The club's line: we fuel, we don't diet. If you hear restriction talk, loop in the coach quietly — we'll handle it with care.

**“Game at 8 PM on a school day?”** Full lunch, big 3:30 snack, light meal at 5:30 (pasta bowl / sandwich + fruit), top-off at 7. Late-night recovery: chocolate milk + real food, even at 10 PM.

## A NOTE ON FOOD TALK — CLUB POLICY

Adults at Soda City FC do not comment on players' bodies or weight, label foods “good” and “bad,” or attach food to punishment or reward — at any age. We talk about fueling, energy, and recovery — full stop. If eating habits ever worry you, the right first call is your pediatrician or a registered dietitian, and the club will support quietly and completely.

## DISCLAIMER

This guide is general fueling guidance for healthy U15 athletes, not medical advice. Food allergies, diabetes, coeliac disease, vegetarian/vegan or religious diets, and any medical condition change the details — your pediatrician or a registered dietitian (eatright.org “Find a Nutrition Expert”) personalizes it. Tell your coach and team manager about allergies so the sideline is safe.