

Banana

Bananas are a long, thick-skinned fruit. They have a peel which comes off easily. Bananas ripen after they have been picked. They are ripe when the skin is yellow. Avoid bananas with brown spots that seem very soft.

Bananas are fruit which grow in hanging clusters on plants which look like — but are not — trees.

Bananas originally came from the Malaysian area in Southeast Asia.

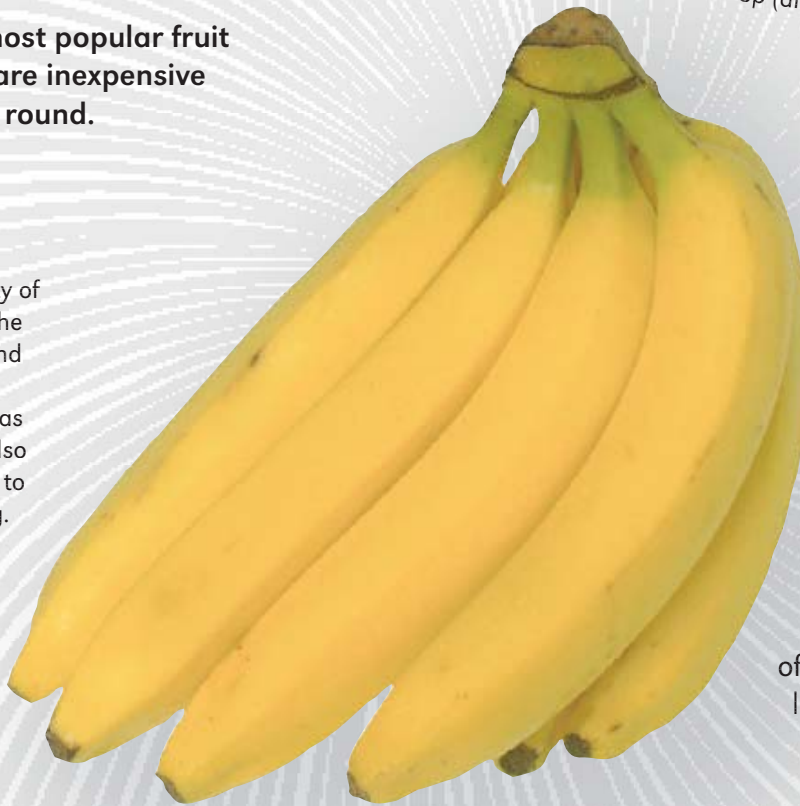
Grown in many tropical regions, bananas are the fourth most important food crop (after rice, wheat and corn).

Bananas are the most popular fruit in the world. They are inexpensive and available year round.

VARIETIES

The most popular variety of banana, Cavendish, is the familiar yellow type found in most grocery stores. Plantains, Finger Bananas and Red Bananas are also popular. Plantains need to be cooked before eating.

Although some wild varieties have hard seeds, almost all bananas people eat are seedless.



NUTRITION FACTS

- Fat free
- Cholesterol free
- Sodium free
- High in potassium
- High in vitamin C
- High in vitamin A

USES

Bananas are delicious eaten after peeling off the skin. Enjoy a banana for lunch or as a snack. Eat sliced bananas in cereal, yogurt or on a peanut butter sandwich. Banana bread and muffins are very popular.



Chocolate Banana Smoothie
Preparation time: 5 minutes
Number of servings: 4
Cups of fruits or vegetables per serving: 0.25



2 c. skim milk
2 bananas, peeled
1 (3.9 oz.) pkg. instant chocolate pudding mix
2 c. ice cubes

1. In a blender, combine all ingredients and blend until smooth.

Nutrition Information per Serving: Calories 190, Total Fat 0.5 g (1% DV), Saturated Fat 0 g (0% DV), Cholesterol 0 mg (0% DV), Sodium 420 mg (18% DV), Total Carbohydrate 42 g (14% DV), Dietary Fiber 2 g (8% DV), Sugars 26 g, Protein 6 g, Vitamin A 6%, Vitamin C 10%, Calcium 15%, Iron 2%.

Perfect Parfaits
Preparation time: 45 minutes
Number of servings: 6
Cups of fruits or vegetables per serving: 0.5



2 c. strawberries, sliced	1 c. pineapple, fresh or canned, cubed
1 banana, sliced	¼ c. orange juice
1 orange, peeled and sliced or 1 (11 oz.) can mandarin oranges	1 c. non-fat vanilla or lemon yogurt
	¼ c. crunchy nugget cereal

1. In a medium bowl, mix strawberries, banana, orange, and pineapple.
2. Pour orange juice over the fruit and stir gently.
3. Refrigerate until chilled, 15-30 minutes.
4. Divide one half of the fruit mixture into 6 glasses.
5. Top fruit mixture with a heaping tablespoon of yogurt.
6. Add remaining fruit mixture to each glass. Top fruit mixture with remaining yogurt.
7. Sprinkle each parfait with crunchy nugget cereal.

Nutrition Information per Serving: Calories 130, Total Fat 0 g (0% DV), Saturated Fat 0 g (0% DV), Cholesterol 0 mg (0% DV), Sodium 60 mg (3% DV), Total Carbohydrate 29 g (10% DV), Dietary Fiber 3 g (12% DV), Sugars 21 g, Protein 4 g, Vitamin A 4%, Vitamin C 100%, Calcium 10%, Iron 10%.