

going veggie...



Everything you need to know about
going, being and staying vegetarian



Contents:

02

Going vegetarian

03

What is a vegetarian?

04

Taking the first steps

07

Nutrition

11

How to eat veggie

13

Doing the 'big shop' as a vegetarian

15

Becoming a savvy vegetarian

17

Some common product misconceptions

19

Our website

The Vegetarian Society
Approved trademark

20

The Cordon Vert
Cookery School

21

Join the Vegetarian
Society



So, you're interested in going vegetarian?

The Vegetarian Society is an educational charity and we're here to help.

Going Veggie is for anyone interested in becoming a vegetarian. The following pages are packed with useful information, tips and advice that will have you well on your way to a vegetarian lifestyle. Towards the back of the booklet you'll also find details of the services the Vegetarian Society offers to help you stay veggie, including websites, leaflets, membership and cookery courses.

Being vegetarian is not only good for the environment, animals and your own health and wellbeing, it's also a fantastic opportunity to try delicious new foods. Making the switch to a meat-free diet is a lot easier than you might think.

This guide aims to give practical advice and guidance that anyone can use. Some people have particular requirements and we can help with that too. If you need support with veggie issues

around pregnancy, bringing up children or teenagers, visit www.vegsoc.org or call 0161 925 2000 to find out how to order or download these resources for free.

Going vegetarian is a journey and you'll learn more about food labels, ingredients and other aspects of vegetarianism as time passes, but this booklet is a great start. It will give you all the basic knowledge you need to get on the right track to a meat-free lifestyle.

What is a vegetarian?



A vegetarian is someone who doesn't eat:

- Meat
- Poultry, like chicken or turkey
- Game (wild animals)
- Fish and shellfish
- Slaughterhouse by-products such as gelatine, animal rennet and animal fats (we'll get onto those later in the booklet)

Vegetarians enjoy a hugely varied diet, and do eat:

- Every kind of world cuisine you can think of, including Greek, Mexican, Italian, Spanish, Indian and African amongst others.
- Hearty classics such as roast dinners, barbecues, fry-ups, pies and chillies.
- Everyday foods for every taste, from burgers, quiches and salads to curries, bakes and stews.
- Mouth-watering desserts and tempting treats like cheesecake, brownies, fruit crumble, apple pie, ice cream, banoffee pie, trifle and custard, not to mention a huge range of veggie-friendly sweets and chocolates.

In short, a vegetarian diet can be every bit as varied and interesting as one that includes meat. Many believe veggies have a more diverse diet actually, due to breaking free from the traditional meal foundation of 'meat and two veg'!

Everyone has different tastes and everyone has different cooking skills. Vegetarian cuisine can be as simple or as gourmet as you like.

Taking the first steps

Going vegetarian isn't as daunting or as difficult as you might think. Follow the ten steps below and you'll be on your way to a healthy and exciting new lifestyle.

01

A fresh start

Go through your cupboards, fridge and freezer and remove any products that are not suitable for vegetarians. If you have a lot, why not give them to a neighbour, friend or family member? Some products may look suitable but if the packaging doesn't carry the Vegetarian Society Approved trademark, say "Suitable for vegetarians" or display a 'V' symbol, they may well contain animal ingredients (see pages 17-19 for more on this or find out more by visiting www.vegsoc.org/veggieaware and www.vegsocapproved.com).

02

Give yourself a break

Although it's not difficult, every new veggie will have a few things to learn when they're starting out. Do yourself a favour by buying in some food that you don't need to make from scratch. Veggie burgers and sausages, frozen veggie products and ready meals can be served with simple sides such as boiled potatoes, vegetables or couscous and provide a reliable mealtime option whilst you're getting to grips with the more complex and exotic flavours you can create with veggie cuisine.

03

Get the balance right

Getting the correct nutrients as a vegetarian is very easy, but, as with any big change, you should make sure you're on the right track. More detail on page 7.

Taking the first steps

(continued)

04

Look
around
you

Local restaurants and cafes may offer excellent veggie options but you might not have noticed them before. Take a fresh look at the menu and check out www.vegsocapproved.com to find the eateries near you that meet the Vegetarian Society's strict criteria. If you're eating out and there doesn't seem to be much veggie choice on the menu, just have a word with the waiter and see if they can make you something else – you'll be surprised how often they can.

05

Try
something
new...

Going vegetarian can open your eyes to a whole new world of ingredients, cooking styles and cuisine – explore it! Go Indian by creating a curry using paneer cheese or Chinese by whipping up a quick and tasty stir-fry with marinated tofu. You'll find tons of recipes and inspiration at www.vegsoc.org/recipes.

06

...or keep it
traditional

Your diet may have changed but your favourite food doesn't have to. Replacing meat with meat substitutes (such as soya mince), pulses or vegetables means dishes like lasagne, sausage and mash and shepherd's pie can still be on the menu. Look out in the supermarkets for veggie versions of hot dogs, nuggets and much more.

07

Don't
worry if you
accidentally
slip-up

If you buy or eat something that isn't vegetarian without realising, it's not a big deal. It takes time to get used to being meat-free and everyone makes the odd mistake when they first go veggie. Join the Vegetarian Society as a member and you can sign up for our mentor scheme at www.vegsoc.org and chat by email with your own veggie guide.



08 Improve your cookery skills

The Vegetarian Society's Cordon Vert Cookery School boasts a varied range of courses, whether you're just starting in the kitchen or already know a thing or two about cooking. See www.cordonvert.co.uk or the info towards the back of this booklet for more details.

09 Connect with others

Become a member of the Vegetarian Society or sign up to our website to see your nearest veggie group and chat with others on our forums. Why not start a discussion about the veggie offerings in your town or talk about how you're finding the transition to vegetarianism?



Twitter: @vegsoc



Facebook: /thevegetariansociety

10 Be proud of your choice

Some friends and family might poke fun at you or make jokes that only they find funny. It's sometimes best to have a laugh with them and join in the banter, but be proud of what you've done and stick by your decision.

Nutrition

This plate shows what vegetarians should eat for a balanced and healthy diet. A portion is an average serving, for example a slice of bread or two tablespoons of baked beans.

Fruit and vegetables

Fresh, frozen, juiced, canned or dried fruit and vegetables, for vitamins, minerals and fibre.

5
or more
portions
a day

Alternatives to meat and fish, including eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein

Include a variety of pulses, nuts, seeds, eggs, soya, Quorn™ & other proteins like wheat in your diet to ensure adequate intakes of protein, minerals & vitamins.

2-3
portions
a day





5
portions
a day

Bread, rice, potatoes, pasta and other starchy foods

Make these starchy foods the basis of most meals. Try to include wholemeal or wholegrain versions when possible. These supply carbohydrates, fibre, protein and some vitamins and minerals.

2-3
portions
a day

Milk, dairy and alternatives

Good sources of calcium, protein and some vitamins. If you don't eat dairy products, choose fortified soya, rice or oat drinks or make sure you eat other foods high in calcium.


0-3
portions
a day

Food and drink high in fat and/or sugar


Although you need some fat, eat these foods sparingly and look out for low fat alternatives.

Nutrition

(continued)



There are many people out there who believe vegetarians have trouble getting protein, iron, B vitamins and other essential nutrients. Thankfully, they're wrong! Vegetarians don't find it difficult at all to get the same full range of nutrients as meat-eaters - they just get them from different sources.



After reading this section you'll realise it's easy to tick all the nutritional boxes when eating a healthy and varied veggie diet.

We're here to help

The Vegetarian Society is very happy to offer advice on specific areas of vegetarian nutrition, whether you're pregnant, bringing up children, suffer from allergies or want to know more about particular nutrients.

Just call us or visit www.vegsoc.org/info. Don't forget that members of the Vegetarian Society have access to exclusive benefits to help you go and stay veggie. And you don't have to be vegetarian to join, our Associate membership is for anyone who is interested in cutting down their meat consumption.



beans
are high in protein



**wholemeal
bread**
is a good source of iron



eggs
are a natural source of B12



rapeseed oil
contains Omega 3



vitamin D

Protein

Protein is essential for the body's growth and repair. It's easy to get as almost all foods contain some protein, though both quantity and quality do vary. Nuts, pulses, beans, chickpeas, eggs, dairy, tofu and most meat substitutes are all high in protein. Eating these foods with rice, grains, pasta or bread, which contain different kinds of protein, is an easy way to reach your recommended daily intake. One quick and simple combination is beans on toast!

Iron

It's important to maintain a good level of iron in the body as it helps with your energy levels and nerve function. Fortified breakfast cereals and wholemeal bread, green leafy vegetables, nuts, pulses, grains, dried fruit and tofu are great sources of iron. You can increase the level of iron absorbed by your body by up to three times if you eat iron-rich foods and foods high in vitamin C at the same time. Try drinking a glass of fresh orange juice with your food.

Vitamin B12

B12 is important for healthy blood and growth and also helps to keep the eyes, brain and nervous system functioning normally. Dairy products and eggs are natural sources of vitamin B12, while many margarines, yeast extracts, breakfast cereals, soya milks and yoghurts are useful sources because they are fortified, so have a good look at the label.

Fatty acids

Omega 3 essential fatty acids are needed for a healthy nervous system and brain function. They are found in rapeseed oil, flax seeds and walnuts, and are added to some margarines and spreads, but make sure the products don't contain fish oils.

Vitamin D

Vitamin D is essential for bone health. Eggs, dairy products, fortified spreads and breakfast cereals are all good dietary sources. Exposure to sunlight also increases levels of vitamin D.

How to eat veggie

Making your meals vegetarian is effortless, but that doesn't mean that veggie food has to be basic – meat-free food can be seriously gourmet if you're a foodie or a dab hand in the kitchen!

Everyday meals:

You probably already eat meals that can easily be made veggie by replacing an ingredient or two. Swap the meat for meat substitutes, pulses or just different vegetables and it's really simple to carry on enjoying dishes such as spaghetti bolognese, curry, stir-fry, pies, stews and much more.

Vegetarianism isn't a strange or alien way of eating, but because the lifestyle has a name it's easy to think you need to start buying weird ingredients or specialist products. Lots of food that you probably eat already is vegetarian, such as jacket potatoes, scrambled eggs and baked beans, amongst many other simple, everyday foods.

Many cheeses, pizzas, soups, sauces and ready meals are suitable for vegetarians already. Products aimed specifically at vegetarians, such as chicken-style pieces and soya mince, meat-free sausages, burgers and pies, butternut squash roasts, cauliflower cheese, veggie toad in the hole and many, many more add to the list of foods veggies can eat.

Almost any dish that contains meat can be made vegetarian, so it's up to you whether you stick to the classics you know and love, or venture off into new and undiscovered culinary territory!



You'll find
hundreds of
recipes at
[www.vegsoc.org/
recipes](http://www.vegsoc.org/recipes)





Eating out:

Restaurants and cafes usually offer at least one or two veggie options, but some are better than others. Chain restaurants and pubs are often aware of the need to cater for vegetarians and sometimes provide excellent dishes.

Be careful though, as some eateries list Parmesan (see page 18) and even fish in 'vegetarian' dishes. If you see something that doesn't seem right, don't be shy of saying so. The Vegetarian Society works hard to improve standards and you can find places that serve Vegetarian Society Approved dishes at www.vegsocapproved.com.

Chefs at eateries can often make something vegetarian that isn't on the menu, so it's worth asking staff if there isn't much choice.



Doing the 'big shop' as a vegetarian

Some people plan what they will eat each week and some prefer not to stick to a schedule.

Veggies doing the big shop probably buy some similar items regardless of how they plan their meals, such as lots of fresh fruit and veg.

The lists below don't necessarily form a shopping list that can make whole meals – but they do give you a rough guide to what a typical veggie might buy at the supermarket.

For the cupboard:

- Gravy granules (check the label as many meat-flavoured varieties are vegetarian)
- Chickpeas, kidney beans and other pulses (readily available in cans and cartons)
- Vegetable stock (great for using in sauces and soups)
- Pasta, rice, noodles and couscous
- Yeast extract (look for fortified options)
- Olive oil (or try flaxseed, hemp or rapeseed oil for good sources of Omega 3)
- Soy sauce
- Baked beans, soups and other tinned, ready-to-heat products
- Tinned tomatoes
- Peanut butter
- Mixed herbs or spices
- Ready-made pasta, stir-fry and curry sauces
- Breakfast cereals (fortified with Vitamin D and iron)
- Dried apricots and other fruit
- Nuts and seeds

Handy tip

Where to find things in the supermarkets:

Chiller: sandwich slices, meatless pieces for salads, tofu

Freezer: mince, chicken-style pieces, pies

Free-from section: dairy-free milk alternatives





For the fridge:

- A nice range of fresh veg such as spinach leaves, peppers, onions, mushrooms, garlic, tomatoes, courgettes, broccoli and carrots
- Free-range eggs
- Milk/dairy-free alternative such as soya milk
- Butter or margarine
- Natural yoghurt
- Hummus
- Vegetarian cheese (check the packet to make sure or look for our Vegetarian Society Approved logo, which you can find on page 19)
- Jars of sun-dried tomatoes & olives
- Vegetarian pesto (regular pesto usually contains Parmesan which is not vegetarian)
- Tofu
- Meat-free sandwich slices
- Ready meals or food that just needs to be served with sides, such as meat-free kiev, sausages or pasties
- Fresh soups
- Condiments such as mayonnaise, tomato ketchup, mustard, hot sauce and salad cream
- Tomato puree
- Fresh orange juice

For the freezer:

- Soya mince, chicken-style pieces and other meat-free products handy for adding to pasta dishes, stir-frys, pies, stews and curries
- Veggie sausages and burgers
- Ready-made pastry
- Pizza bases
- A variety of frozen vegetables
- Ready-made vegetarian products
- Oven chips
- Ice cream

Becoming a savvy vegetarian

As you make the transition to vegetarian food you'll find yourself more aware of products and ingredients that are not suitable for a meat-free lifestyle.

Buying products that do not contain meat and fish is fairly straightforward, but there are some pesky animal by-products and ingredients that find their way into foods you might think are fine for vegetarians. Most products suitable for vegetarians will say so, often carrying the Vegetarian Society Approved trademark or displaying a 'V' symbol.

If these indicators aren't present it's time to have a quick glance at the ingredients. It may seem like there are quite a few things to keep an eye out for but once you know them they're very easy to spot. When you've read this section check out www.vegsoc.org/veggieaware for more handy information on what to look out for or visit www.vegsocapproved.com to see the companies and products that carry the Vegetarian Society Approved trademark.

Common ingredients that are never vegetarian:

- Gelatine – made from the bones and skin of slaughtered animals (cows, pigs and fish). Gelatine is most commonly found in some spreads, sweets, desserts and yoghurts.
- Animal fat
- Fish oils
- E120 – a red colouring also known as carmine or cochineal, made from crushed insects and sometimes used to colour food.
- E-numbers are additives and there are a few more that are unsuitable for vegetarians. Head to www.vegsoc.org/enumbers for more information.

Eggs and dairy

Vegetarian Society Approved products only use free-range eggs and some supermarkets now exclusively stock free-range eggs. Whilst some dairy cows have access to grazing, intensive dairy farming is on the rise with some cows kept permanently indoors. Look out for organic dairy products or ask manufacturers about welfare standards if you want to avoid supporting "zero grazing" systems.



Most vegetarians avoid eggs which come from caged hens because they object to the intensive farming and treatment of the hens. Vegetarians usually choose free-range and/or organic (such as Soil Association Approved) higher welfare eggs.

Some common product misconceptions



There are a few food and drink items you might think are perfectly suitable for a vegetarian diet that actually have some non-veggie ingredients. Check out the food basket for some examples and remember to keep an eye out in the supermarket. If you want to be sure something is completely suitable for vegetarians, choose products carrying the Vegetarian Society Approved trademark on their packaging!



caesar salad dressing

Cheese

Some cheese contains animal rennet so check the packaging for indications that the product is suitable. Parmesan is never vegetarian as it must be made with calf rennet to carry that name. You can find out more about rennet and cheese by going to www.vegsoc.org/cheeseproduction.

Pesto

A key ingredient of pesto is cheese and it's often made with Parmesan. Some versions of pesto are vegetarian though, so a quick check of the jar is recommended.

Worcestershire sauce

Most brands of Worcestershire sauce are unsuitable for veggies as they contain anchovies. Check www.vegsocapproved.com for vegetarian versions.

Gummy sweets

Sweets with a gummy and chewy consistency will almost always use gelatine. If you love gummy sweets check your local health food store or supermarket as some do stock vegetarian versions.

Caesar salad dressing

Pre-made Caesar salad dressing available at supermarkets uses anchovies more often than not, and vegetarians never eat fish.

Non free-range eggs

Given that vegetarians prefer free-range, organic or higher welfare eggs, be aware that when you see egg as an ingredient it's often from a caged hen.

pesto

Visit us online at
www.vegsoc.org



The Vegetarian Society website is a fantastic resource for vegetarians and non-vegetarians alike. Visit our website and register for free to get access to:

- Hundreds of tempting recipes, from everyday to gourmet
- Information and advice on health and nutrition
- The latest updates on Vegetarian Society campaigns and vegetarianism in the news
- Free resources to order or download: campaign resources, recipe booklets, posters and much more
- Our Online Community where you can chat and interact with others in the forums

The Vegetarian Society Approved trademark



If you are unsure whether a product is really suitable for vegetarians, look out for our approved trademark.

Proudly displayed on over 11,000 products and menus, the Vegetarian Society Approved trademark ensures that a product or menu item is:

- Free from animal flesh (meat, fowl, fish or shellfish) or any other product resulting from slaughter
- Any eggs are free range
- GMO free
- Cruelty free – no animal testing on cosmetic and household products
- No cross contamination during the production process

Millions of people rely on the Vegetarian Society Approved trademark because no other symbol can give consumers such reassurance and inspire such trust. For more information on Vegetarian Society Approved products or establishments selling approved products and dishes, go to www.vegsocapproved.com.



The Cordon Vert Cookery School

As you have seen throughout this booklet, the Vegetarian Society is here to support and help you in many ways. One of those ways is the Cordon Vert Cookery School – the home of vegetarian cuisine.

Based at Parkdale in Cheshire, our national headquarters, the Cordon Vert Cookery School is internationally renowned and has an unrivalled reputation for excellence.

Cordon Vert's expert tutors train and inspire vegetarians and non-vegetarians, from the novice to the professional. Everyone is welcome.

Whether you're new to vegetarianism or want to learn the basics from scratch, Cordon Vert offers the perfect interactive workshop - Introduction to Vegetarian Cookery. This two day course is packed with demonstrations and hands-on workshops, as well as advice on a vegetarian diet and an introduction to menu planning.

For further information and to view, book or check availability on our current workshop schedule please visit www.cordonvert.co.uk or call us on 0161 925 2000.

Once you attend a Cordon Vert course you'll be hungry for more. Thankfully there are a varied range of courses and the Cordon Vert workshop schedule is packed with seasonal, sustainable and international flavours to suit all culinary tastes and abilities.

Join the Vegetarian Society today

Our members are building a better future for animals, the environment and themselves. Why not join them?

Whether you are a veteran veggie, thinking about going vegetarian or just love great food, the Vegetarian Society has a wealth of knowledge and advice to make your journey easy, tasty and fun. As an educational charity we need the support of people like you to help us campaign, research and educate, as well as produce booklets like this one.

You can join the Vegetarian Society from only £21 per year with discounts available for concessions, kids and family members.

As a member you'll receive:

- Our members' magazine, The Vegetarian, which will be sent to you four times a year. It's packed full of vegetarian news and articles, recipes and lots more.
- Your membership card which entitles you to discounts at hundreds of veggie-friendly establishments across the country, including Holland and Barrett, so you can recoup the cost of your membership in no time.
- Our monthly members' e-newsletter to keep you up-to-date with the latest veggie news, competitions and member discounts.
- Access to our online members' forum to share experiences and discover more about vegetarian living, and if you would like more support, signing up for our Mentor Scheme means you can get dedicated support from another member.

Three easy ways to join:

- Complete and return the form on the next page
- Sign up online at vegsoc.org/join
- Give us a call on 0161 925 2000

Not vegetarian? No problem, you don't have to be vegetarian to be a member and you will still benefit from all the information, discounts, recipes and mentor scheme, as well as receiving the magazine.

Your Details:

Name (Ms/Mrs/Miss/Mr)

Address

Postcode

Date of Birth

Email

Tel No

- ☐ I am vegan
- ☐ I am vegetarian: never eat meat, poultry or fish
- ☐ I am not currently vegetarian
(You will be enrolled as an associate member)

I agree to become a member of the Vegetarian Society UK, a company limited by guarantee. I understand this allows me to vote under the rules of our Articles of Association (if vegetarian & over 18), and makes me liable for up to £1 in the unlikely event the Society should ever wind up.

Membership Categories - please tick:

- ☐ **Individual** £21 per year
- ☐ **Concession** £16 per year
(low-waged, student, over 60 and retired)
- ☐ **Family** £26 per year (up to 4 members,
£6.50 per additional member)

Name (including title)

Date of Birth

Please send names, date of birth & payment for any additional members.

- ☐ **Junior** (Twiggy Club age 10 & under,
Team Veggie 11-15) - £10 per year
- ☐ **Life** (one payment) - £300 / £180 Over 60 & retired
- ☐ Overseas postage - add £7 EU, £10 other

I would like to enclose a donation of

☐ £5 ☐ £10 ☐ £25 ☐ £50 ☐ £ _____

Total: £ _____

The Gift Aid scheme means that if you pay tax in the UK, for every £1 you give, we receive up to an extra 25p from the Inland Revenue, at no extra cost to you.

giftaid it

- ☐ Yes, please treat all my membership fees and donations made in the last 4 years and until further notice as Gift Aid. I confirm I pay an amount of income and/or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax that the Vegetarian Society will reclaim on my donations in the tax year.
- ☐ No, I do not pay income tax and/or capital gains tax in the UK.

Data Protection – we will hold your details confidentially on our system. Please tick if you **do not** wish to receive information about:

- ☐ The Vegetarian Society's range of services ☐ Information from other charities ☐ Special offers from veggie-friendly companies

**Pay by Credit / Debit Card**

Please charge my ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard
☐ Amex ☐ Maestro ☐ Delta ☐ Other
 Card No. _____

Name on card

Valid from

Expiry date

Issue no. (Maestro only)

Security code

Signature

Pay by Cheque / PO

I enclose a cheque / PO for £ _____
 (please make cheques payable to 'the Vegetarian Society')



**Instruction to your bank or building society
to pay by Direct Debit**

Service User Number 7/2/4/3/6/6

Please fill in the whole form and send it to:

**The Vegetarian Society,
Parkdale, Dunham Road, Altrincham, WA14 4QG**

Name and full postal address of your bank or building society

To: The Manager

Bank/building society

Address

Postcode

Name(s) of account holder(s)

Branch sort code

Bank/building society account number

Ref. No. (For office use only)**Instruction to your bank or building society**

Please pay the Vegetarian Society Direct Debits from the account detailed in this Instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this Instruction may remain with the Vegetarian Society and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my bank/building society.

Signature(s)

Date

Banks and building societies may not accept Direct Debit Instructions for some types of account



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Patrons: Rose Elliot MBE, Jerome Flynn, Mary McCartney,
Sir Paul McCartney, Stella McCartney and Wendy Turner Webster.

References for the information in this booklet are available at
www.vegsoc.org/references

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www.vegsoc.org