

SHIFTED PERFORMANCE & LIFESTYLE

CAMP FOOD HACKS

BUILDING MUSCLE THROUGH SMART LUNCH PREP

A practical guide for camp, rig & shift workers who want to add muscle tissue using what's actually available during lunch prep.

- WHOLE FOODS FIRST
- WATCH THE HIDDEN OILS
- WEIGH IT. DON'T GUESS.

Understanding Camp Meal Composition

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Camp kitchens are built to feed a large crew efficiently and consistently, which means many dishes include oil, butter, and sauce as part of standard preparation. This isn't listed on a sign or a label, so it's easy to underestimate. If you're trying to add muscle tissue, the goal is to eat in a controlled surplus of mostly whole, trackable foods, not just "a lot of food." A few informed choices during lunch prep make the difference between a clean, intentional surplus and extra calories you didn't account for.

KEY CONSIDERATION: HIDDEN OIL & SAUCE FAT

Pre-made lunch and dinner trays typically include trace fats from the cooking oil and sauces used in preparation. It doesn't look like much on the plate, but it adds up across a full day of meals. This is a common reason someone can eat well all week and still take in more fat than expected. The solution isn't avoiding lunch prep, it's knowing which stations to build from.

BUILD YOUR PLATE FROM THESE STATIONS

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| OK Bulk rice | OK Bulk potatoes |
| OK Chicken breast (ordered on the paper slips) | OK Greek yogurt |
| OK Bulk mixed vegetables | OK Bulk pasta (plain, no sauce) |
| OK Bulk tuna | OK Bulk eggs & egg whites |
| OK Fish dishes (check the sauce first) | |

Grab these in bulk and mix your own portions once you sit down. Building your plate yourself, instead of taking a pre-made tray, is the single easiest way to control what actually goes into your meal. For fish dishes, check the sauce content first. If it's on the heavier side, pull the fish out and pair it with the bulk carbs instead, or simply enjoy the dish as prepared.

Track your portions as accurately as you can. A food scale is your best friend at camp. It takes the guesswork out of a buffet-style setup and is the only real way to know you're actually hitting your numbers in a growth phase. If you don't have a scale on you, use your hand as a rough backup (palm of protein, fist of carbs, cupped hand of veg), but the scale wins every time.

MENU ITEMS TO LIMIT

LIMIT

Pre-made pasta dishes

These typically carry more oil-based fat in the sauce than expected, and tend to be lower in protein unless additional lean protein is added.

LIMIT

Butter chicken / creamy sauced meals

Similar to pasta dishes, the sauce is usually where most of the added fat comes from.

LIMIT

Chicken legs & wings in the troughs

These are cooked in oil with the skin left on, which adds up in fat calories. Removing the skin before eating is a simple way to bring the fat content down.

LIMIT

Meatloaf

The macronutrient breakdown is nearly impossible to track accurately, and it typically doesn't offer much protein for the calories.

Camp snack tables aren't off limits. A few picks work well for a growth phase as long as you're mindful of a couple of trace-fat sources.

OK

PB & J SANDWICHES

Easy carbs and calories for a growth phase. A solid go-to between meals or stacked onto meal 1.

MOD

TUNA SALAD SANDWICHES

Not terrible, but there's trace mayonnaise in there. Not a lot, but worth being mindful of for added fat/calories. Stack the tuna from 2 to 3 sandwiches into one to hit your protein target without tripling the bread and mayo.

OK

FRUIT

Easy, trackable carbs. Grab it whenever it's available.

MOD

CEREAL

Isn't the worst option, but most camp cereal has added sugar and other stuff that can disrupt digestion. Use in moderation, not as a meal base.

OK

PLAIN BAGELS

An easy, trackable carb source. Good on their own or paired with a protein shake or eggs.

MOD

MUFFINS

A convenient carb option ("be mindful of residual/trace fats, as these can run a little higher on muffins"). Fine to include, just don't build every meal around them.

This is the exact structure I lean on at camp during a growth phase, built entirely from whole-food stations available during lunch prep. Use it as a template and scale the portions to your own numbers with a food scale.

MEAL 1

400g Greek yogurt + PB&J; sandwich

Add extra carbs here (more bread, oats, or fruit on the side) to support a growth phase. This meal sets the tone for the day.

MEAL 2

Chicken breast + rice or potato + veg

Straightforward, trackable, and easy to weigh. Veg is there for fibre and digestion.

MEAL 3

Chicken breast + rice or potato + veg

Repeat of meal 2. Consistency here makes tracking simple across a long shift.

MEAL 4

Tuna + a carb (sandwich bread, potatoes, rice, and/or fruit)

Round the day out with a lean protein and whichever carb source is easiest to grab.

MEAL 5

DIY chicken burger, dinner favourite

Grab two plain grilled chicken breasts from the dinner station (the flatter cuts work well) and a burger bun, then build your own chicken burger. In a calorie surplus for a growth phase, split it into two burgers instead, one chicken breast per bun, to bring your carbohydrates up while keeping the protein high. Add cheese if you have the room, ketchup and mustard, and keep mayo minimal or skip it. Build it out with onion, pickle, tomato, lettuce, or jalapeno for a quick, customizable dinner.

MEAL 6

Whey protein shake + a carb of choice

Mix whey protein with water or milk for a fast, low-prep option when you're short on time between shifts. Pair it with a carb such as one to two bagels, a muffin ("be mindful of trace fats here, as these can run a little higher"), fruit, oatmeal, or a slice of toast.

QUICK REFERENCE

Camp Lunch Prep Cheat Sheet

- Build your own plate, don't grab pre-made trays
- Rice, potatoes, chicken (paper slip), Greek yogurt
- Mixed veg, plain pasta, tuna, eggs & egg whites
- Weigh everything, food scale is non-negotiable
- Skip pre-made pasta & butter chicken (sauce = fat)
- Skip legs/wings unless you peel the skin
- PB&J; and fruit are solid snack picks
- Watch mayo in tuna sandwiches, stack tuna instead

None of this is about eating perfectly at camp. It's about knowing where the hidden calories live so you can keep building muscle without the extra fat riding along with it. Small, consistent choices during lunch prep add up over a full rotation.

COACH MYLES

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Lean and strong on your schedule, not a 9-to-5 template