

# Activity Mission X: Astronaut Menu



TIME NEEDED **30** minutes

This activity can be completed as part of requirement 5

## DID YOU KNOW?

Spaceflight food is very different today from the food taken on the first space missions. Food on early missions included bite-sized cubes, freeze dried powders and semi-liquid foods in aluminium tubes.

Today there is still little fresh food however, astronauts help plan their own menus with assistance from dietitians who are experts in good nutrition.

It is important for astronauts living and working on the International Space Station to eat well. They need to consume sufficient energy (calories) to work effectively and maintain good health. Calcium and vitamin D are important to maintain good bone health – exercise for good bone health is important for astronauts to perform tasks such as space walks.



Tim Peake's exhilarating spacewalk (15 Jan 2016)  
CREDIT: ESA/NASA

## You will need:

- copies of the Eatwell guide available at [scouts.org.uk/ukspaceagency](http://scouts.org.uk/ukspaceagency)
- paper
- pens/pencils
- online videos (optional)



## Instructions

1. Introduce the topic of spaceflight food with the section. Explain that their challenge is to plan a meal for an astronaut, including a method to prepare it in space.
2. Discuss points they will need to consider, things like the nutrition that the food provides and avoiding crumbs (which could get into equipment or experiments or float into astronaut's eyes). For preparing the meal, they will need to think about what equipment or cutlery they will include, and how to stop items floating away.
3. Divide Scouts into Patrols or small groups to plan their meal. Provide copies of the Eatwell guide as a prompt, to help them create a balanced meal.
4. If Scouts are struggling with ideas for meals, you can give them a tip that tortillas are popular, as they are easy to store and do not produce crumbs. If they need inspiration on preparing the meal in space, you could explain that astronauts use space trays, so cutlery and food packages do not float away.
5. Bring the section back together to share their creations.



Food tray at the International Space Station  
CREDIT: NASA

## Going further

If you're able to share online videos with your section, there are some links to help bring this topic to life at [scouts.org.uk/ukspaceagency](https://scouts.org.uk/ukspaceagency). You can show short video clips of Tim Peake doing everyday activities onboard the International Space Station.