

## High Energy Food Bars

Many shop-bought muesli bars are high in sugar to extend their shelf life. These recipes provide low-in GI, slow-release energy so they're perfect for eating before the gym. They're also filling, high in fibre and contain beneficial fats from the seeds, and no added fat or sugar. Fruit is packed with vitamins and minerals, such as potassium, iron and beta-carotene. Oats are a great source of manganese and selenium.

The method is the same for all these bars. Potassium-rich bananas are the key ingredient, and should be thoroughly mashed into a cream to bind the whole mixture. You can use most fruits or juices and try adding different spices, nuts or seeds.

The 'cup' method of measuring ingredients is popular in the US and makes everything really simple. For these recipes or anything requiring a cup, using a standard-sized mug will give you the right proportions. Each recipe makes about 12 bars.

Store the bars in the fridge and they'll keep for a week; you can also freeze them. Delicious warm or cold, they also taste fabulous reheated.

### Apricot And Apple

#### Ingredients

2 bananas	1 cup of apple juice	1 tablespoon pumpkin seeds
1 unpeeled apple roughly chopped into cubes	½ cup of mixed dried fruit	1 tablespoon linseeds
2 cups of rolled oats	½ cup chopped apricots	
	1 tablespoon sunflower seeds	

#### Method

Mash two bananas and mix with an unpeeled apple roughly chopped into cubes, two cups of rolled oats, one cup of apple juice, half a cup of mixed dried fruit, half a cup chopped apricots and one tablespoon each of sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds and linseeds. Spread the mixture out on a baking sheet so it's 2cm thick. Press a few whole apricots into the top. Bake for 15–20 minutes in a medium oven, 180°C/gas mark 4. Allow it to cool a little, then cut into bars and serve.

### Cinnamon And Raisin

#### Ingredients

2 bananas	2 cups of rolled oats	3 tablespoons sunflower seeds
1 unpeeled apple roughly chopped into cubes	1 cup of apple juice	2 teaspoons of ground cinnamon
	1 cup of raisins	

#### Method

Mash two bananas and mix with a chopped apple, two cups of rolled oats, one cup of apple juice, one cup of raisins, three tablespoons of sunflower seeds and two teaspoons of ground cinnamon. Spread out 2cm-thick on a baking sheet; bake as before.

## Cranberry And Almond

### Ingredients

2 bananas	2 cups of rolled oats	½ cup dried cranberries
1 unpeeled pear roughly chopped into cubes	1 cup of cranberry juice ½ cup of raisins	1 cup of flaked almonds

### Method

Mash two bananas and mix with an unpeeled pear roughly chopped into cubes, two cups of rolled oats, one cup of cranberry juice, half a cup of raisins, half a cup of dried cranberries and one cup of flaked almonds. Spread out 2cm-thick on a baking sheet and bake as before.

## Banana And Chocolate Chip

### Ingredients

2 bananas	2 cups of rolled oats	½ cup dark chocolate chips
1 banana roughly chopped into cubes	1 cup of apple juice ½ cup of raisins	3 tablespoons sunflower seeds

### Method

Mash two bananas and mix together with a chopped banana, two cups of rolled oats, one cup of apple juice, one cup of raisins, half a cup of dark chocolate chips and three tablespoons of sunflower seeds. Spread out 2cm-thick on a baking sheet then bake as before.

## Lemon And Ginger

### Ingredients

2 bananas	2 cups of rolled oats	3 tablespoons pumpkin seeds
1 unpeeled apple roughly chopped into cubes	½ cup of apple juice ½ cup of lemon juice 1 cup of sultanas	1 teaspoon ground ginger grated zest of 1 lemon

### Method

Mash two bananas and mix with a chopped apple, two cups of rolled oats, half a cup of apple juice, half a cup of lemon juice, one cup of sultanas, three tablespoons of pumpkin seeds, the grated zest of one lemon and one teaspoon of ground ginger. Spread out 2cm-thick on a baking sheet, then bake as before.

Oats have been proven to lower cholesterol, and are soothing to the gut and are also a natural antidepressant.