

Healthy

Retail

Toolkit

Step — by — Step

guide for food outlet
staff and managers

This toolkit will guide you through the steps for success to roll out the Healthy choices guidelines in your food outlet, providing customers, staff and managers with a unique food offering.



An introduction

This Toolkit is a Nourish Network collaboration, which is intended for use in public health and university settings. It is not intended for commercial use and is not to be modified without the express written permission of the Nourish Network Advisory Committee.

For feedback or permission to adapt contact

health-transformation@deakin.edu.au

Authors

Margaret Rozman, Kirsten Johnson and Brigitte Annois (Healthy Eating Advisory Service*), Chris Livaditis, Miranda Blake, Tara Boelsen-Robinson and Victoria Hobbs (Deakin University), John Hedley (Western District Health Service) and Emalie Rosewarne (The George Institute for Global Health)

*The Healthy Eating Advisory Service is delivered by Nutrition Australia – Vic Division and supported by the Victorian Government.

The authors are grateful for the support received from the Nourish Network in the development of this Healthy Retail Toolkit.

Cite this report as: Rozman M, Annois B, Johnson K, Livaditis C, Blake MR, Boelsen-Robinson T, Hedley J, Rosewarne E, Hobbs V. Healthy Retail Toolkit, February 2023. Nourish Network: Melbourne, 2023



<https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/BUA8Y>

This work (Healthy Retail Toolkit) is licensed under a Creative Commons licence ([CC BY-NC](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/)). You are free to re-use the work under that licence, on the condition that you credit the Nourish Network and indicate if any changes were made and comply with licence terms. You may not use the work for commercial purposes.



Let's get started



You have an important role to play in improving your customers' health while maintaining a successful and profitable business.

Why offer healthier foods and drinks in your retail outlet?



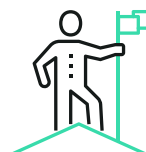
Meet consumer demand and attract new customers



Increase revenue and improve business



Improve the health of your customers



Be an industry leader

Meet contractual obligations and government guidelines, for example:

Healthy choices guidelines

or

Healthy choices: policy directive for Victorian public health services

This toolkit

- Can be used by any food provider wanting to offer healthier foods and drinks to customers.
- Provides evidence-based, tried and tested strategies, tips, business management considerations and troubleshooting for known challenges.

You'll need

- Staff time
- A computer
- Product lists and recipes

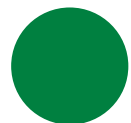
What you need

to know

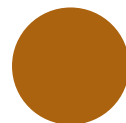
about the Healthy choices guidelines



The Victorian Government's Healthy choices guidelines use a 'traffic light system' to categorise foods and drinks into three groups:



► **GREEN**
Best
choices



► **AMBER**
Choose
carefully



► **RED**
Limit

There are specific policies and guidelines depending on the setting of your retail outlet:

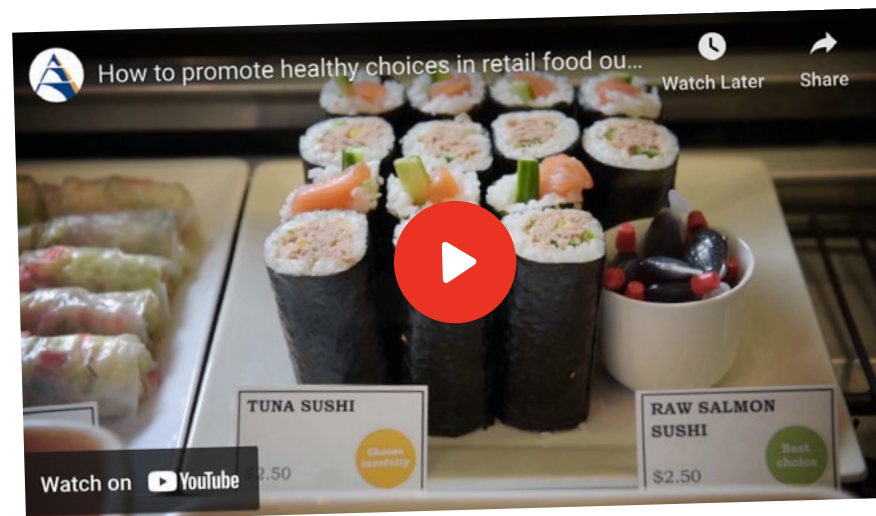
Healthy choices: policy directive
for Victorian public health services



Healthy choices: policy guidelines
for sport and recreation centres



Watch this [video](#) or click the image below for an overview of the guidelines and the changes retail outlets can make.



Steps for Success

Follow these six steps to guide you to make changes in your retail outlet:



NOTE

The process can be continuously improved by learning and adapting

Get your staff on board



Your team will be an important part of making changes a success. It's important to involve them from the start!



- **Create a vision** of what you want to achieve
 - › This may be a simple plan or a strategy.
- **Communicate**
 - › What changes staff can expect.
 - › When changes are planned.
 - › Staff roles and responsibilities.
- **Provide training:**
 - › Healthy choices guidelines training for staff helps to ensure they get the essential skills and knowledge required to make and promote the changes.
 - › Allocate staff time to complete training during work hours and communicate this expectation. Allow 20 minutes for front of house staff and 45 minutes for chefs, cooks and managers to complete training. This training is available [here](#).
 - › Once each staff member has completed the training, they will be able to access a certificate.
 - › Check in with staff who have completed training to discuss and answer any questions.



Tip:



- Keep communicating with staff and involve them in the process.
- Emphasise that this change can mean meeting customer expectations, and does not mean taking away all unhealthy items, but instead ensuring there are healthy options for customers to choose from.

Case study:



"Our CEO wanted our health service to lead the community by example. Once the decision was made to transform our retail outlet to be 100% GREEN we communicated it to our food service team, using this change to focus on significantly improving quality of our overall retail experience.

Communication to food service staff included team meetings, regular sub-group meetings for chefs, front of house, management, community chefs/caterers, A4 posters,

presentations, progress reports, positive messaging before and after reflection.

With Chefs – you will always have a champion within your team. We did and we also recruited [for one] therefore with a champion and a new chef, communication and natural momentum occurred, resulting in other chefs adapting and joining the change process."

John Hedley Food Services Manager
Western District Health Service

Assess your menu

This step involves working out what changes you need to make to your retail outlet to meet relevant Government guidelines.

FoodChecker

FoodChecker is a free online tool that assesses menus, recipes and products against Government guidelines. You will receive a report with GREEN, AMBER and RED classifications and recommendations on how to make your menu healthier.

If using FoodChecker:

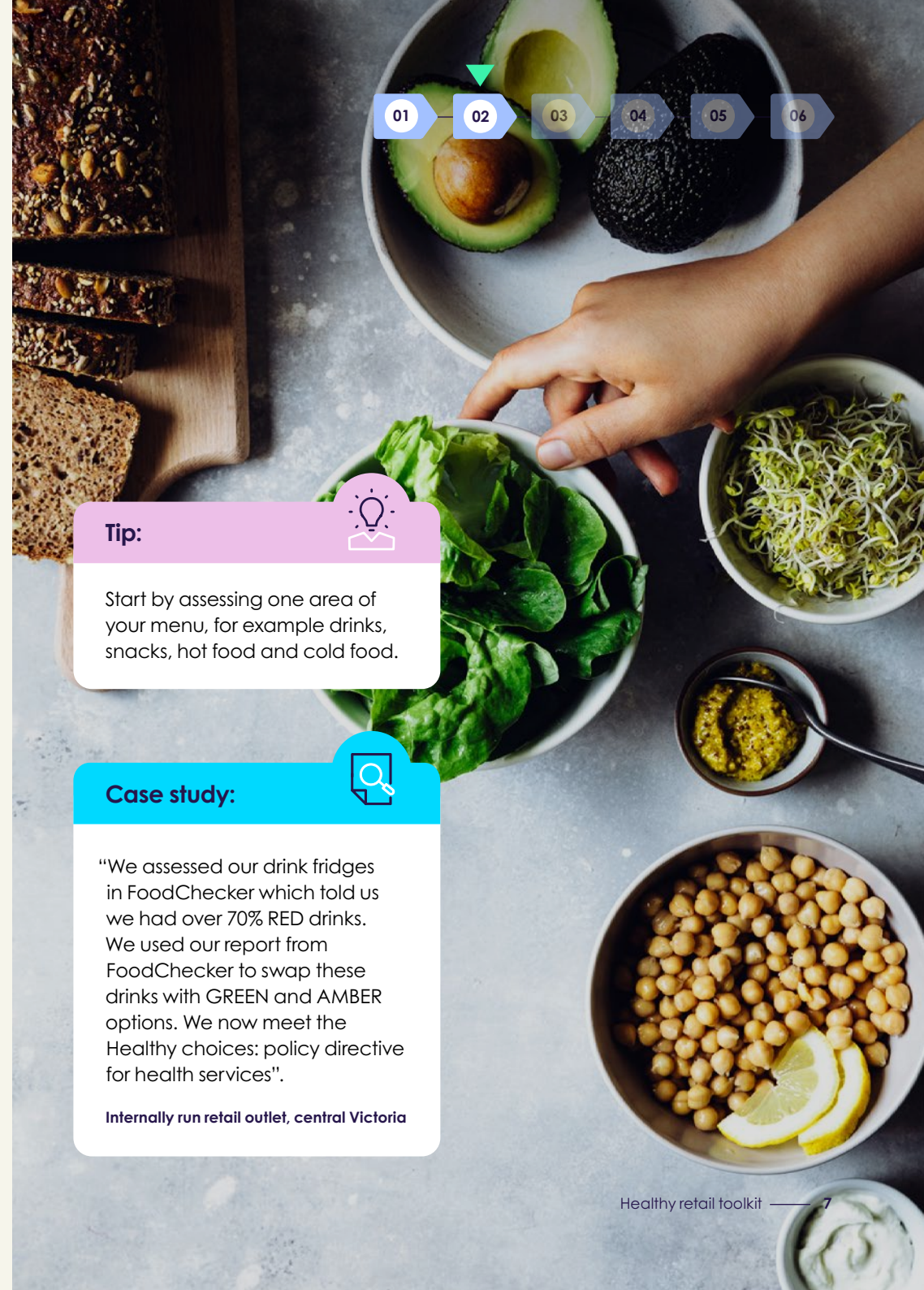
- Allocate a staff member and a computer to enter recipe and product information.
- Gather recipes and information for each item on your menu before you start - you can do this gradually as your menu rotates.

You can assess your retail outlet menu with FoodChecker or use the checklist in the Appendix.

For help using FoodChecker contact the Healthy Eating Advisory Service on 1300 22 52 88 or heas@nutritionaustralia.org.au

You can get support with this process from a health promotion officer in your organisation.

Additionally, you can also use the checklist (Appendix 1) for an overview of your retail outlet and to identify changes to prioritise.



Tip:



Start by assessing one area of your menu, for example drinks, snacks, hot food and cold food.

Case study:



"We assessed our drink fridges in FoodChecker which told us we had over 70% RED drinks. We used our report from FoodChecker to swap these drinks with GREEN and AMBER options. We now meet the Healthy choices: policy directive for health services".

Internally run retail outlet, central Victoria

Plan and action

food and drink changes

Now you have your FoodChecker report or checklist results it's time to plan and action some changes. Work out your staff resourcing and then prioritise the changes you will make.

To plan and action your changes:

1. Start with small and easy changes recommended in the checklist or your FoodChecker report.

For example:
 - ✓ rearrange the drinks fridge so GREEN items are most prominent
 - ✓ swap to reduced fat milk, cheese, yoghurt, cream, mayonnaise, salad dressings, coconut milk
 - ✓ add vegetables to sandwiches and hot meals
 - ✓ use salt reduced sauces and stocks in your recipes
 - ✓ offer less RED packaged items
 - ✓ swap deep fried for oven baked options.
2. Gradually reduce unhealthy slower selling items.
3. Seek customer feedback. You can use the survey in Appendix 2.
4. Action staff feedback and suggestions.
5. Review your progress and update changes in FoodChecker.
6. Plan how you will report your progress to management.

Tip:

Find a local health promotion officer to help you.



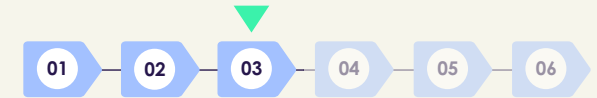
Tips:



- Find other local retailers who are also making changes to get support and ideas.
- Use FoodChecker to search for GREEN and AMBER packaged foods and drinks.
- Take photos of your food and drinks displays before and after making changes.

Plan and action food and drink changes

Continued



Financial outcomes

Hear from a retailer who successfully implemented changes and increased revenue.



Example:

"We started with focussing on our salads. We checked their ratings on FoodChecker. Then we found new recipes which would meet the criteria, sourced ingredients and tested this with customers."

University retailer

Healthy food and drink inspiration:

Western District Health Service GREEN Recipe Book: recipes tailor made for retailers

Hot food ideas

Tips for healthier cooking

Healthy sandwich fillings

Troubleshooting:

- "I'm unsure about making big, permanent changes to my menu."
Start with trials – for example, change your drinks fridge for 4 weeks.
- "Is there a retailer who has made these changes I can get support from?"
Western District Health Service Food Service team provide practical advice to other retailers implementing healthy food and drink changes. They have implemented an entirely GREEN menu, so understand the challenges well. Contact them on hotel.services@wdhs.net.
- "How do I minimise food waste while making changes?"
Gradually reduce stock items of packaged products, trial new offerings in small quantities.
- You could also review the [case studies](#) of other organisations who have made changes and make contact with those of interest or those in your local area.
- Contact the Healthy Eating Advisory Service for any support.

Work with suppliers

Work with your supplier to action changes:

- Discuss the types of products and ingredients you will require and negotiate what they can provide.
- Ask suppliers to remove decals associated with RED foods, drinks or brands. For example, soft drink branding. Suppliers are willing to swap this to water branded decals. For drinks fridges and vending machines, ask for planograms that meet the target percentages of GREEN, AMBER and RED.

Templates are available [here](#) or refer to this example:

| | Position 1 | Position 2 | Position 3 | Position 4 | Position 5 |
|-------|---|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Row 1 | Water (plain, still) | Water (plain, still) | Water (plain, still) | Water (plain, sparkling) | Water (plain, sparkling) |
| Row 2 | Water (natural flavours) | Water (natural flavours) | Water (natural flavours) | Reduced fat strawberry milk 250ml | Reduced fat strawberry milk 250ml |
| Row 3 | Reduced fat chocolate milk 250ml | Reduced fat iced coffee 250ml | Reduced fat vanilla milk 250ml | Reduced fat chocolate milk 500ml | Reduced fat iced coffee 500ml |
| Row 4 | Full fat honeycomb flavoured milk 300ml | Full fat strawberry flavoured milk 300ml | 100% fruit juice 250ml | 100% fruit juice 250ml | 100% fruit juice 250ml |
| Row 5 | Diet soft drink 375ml | Diet soft drink 375ml | Regular soft drink 375ml | Regular soft drink 375ml | Regular soft drink 375ml |

● **GREEN** Best choices
 ● **AMBER** Choose carefully
 ● **RED** Limit

If your supplier would like more information on the Healthy choices guidelines or stocking healthier items, encourage them to contact [HEAS](#).

01 02 03 04 05 06

Tip:



Maintain the relationship with your supplier.

- Let them know early why these changes are needed.
- Ask them to notify you of product changes as these may impact the classifications of your menu and may affect obligations with management.

If your current supplier is unable to provide the ingredients or products required:

- Consider a different menu change you could prioritise.
- Review any contracts or obligations to see if there is flexibility to use another supplier.

Case study:



"We had drinks fridges that had soft drink branding. We asked the supplier if they could swap the decals and they did this without any additional cost- it was much easier than we thought."

Sport and recreation facility cafe manager

Promote to customers

Promote your new offering to customers using the 4 P's of marketing: This is also a great time to review the overall aesthetic of your outlet and determine if any changes could be made to improve the look and feel of your outlet.

The Four P's of Marketing



Product



Placement



Pricing



Promotion



Promote to customers

The Four P's of Marketing ▼



Product



Placement



Pricing



Promotion



Product



- Have GREEN items available at all times, and in each area of your outlet (i.e. drinks, hot food, cold food, snacks).
- Have a variety of tasty and appealing products.



Case study:



"In our university retail outlet we reduced the number of fried food options and introduced a range of fresh hot food – the chicken and veg stirfry and rice is popular. We also added salads and wraps. The customers love the new options and have provided great feedback."

Promote to customers

The Four P's of Marketing ▼



Product



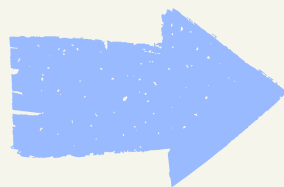
Placement



Pricing



Promotion



Placement

Customers will choose the items they see most of.

Place GREEN items in prominent areas, for example:

- At eye level on shelves and in fridges.
- At the front of cabinets and bain maries.
- In high traffic areas (e.g. entrances and exits of food outlets, beside cash registers, in dining areas).

Avoid placing RED items in prominent areas, for example place RED items:

- At the bottom of shelves and in fridges.
- At the back of cabinets and bain maries.
- In the least frequented area of your outlet.

Display AMBER items more prominently than RED.



Promote to customers

The Four P's of Marketing ▼



Product



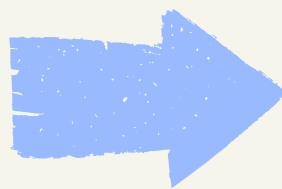
Placement



Pricing



Promotion



Pricing



The price you charge for foods and drinks will impact a customer's choice.

- Ensure GREEN and AMBER items are affordable.
- Make GREEN items a similar price or cheaper than RED products in the same category (e.g. make a bottle of water a similar price or cheaper than a can of soft drink).
- Check the price of items in other local outlets to be aware of the competition.

Tip:



- If GREEN items are more expensive, consider slightly increasing the price of similar RED items and decreasing the price of GREEN items, so the price of the healthier option is comparable.
- Ask your organisation to contact HEAS to organise marketing material to promote your changes and commitment.

Promote to customers

The Four P's of Marketing ▼



Product



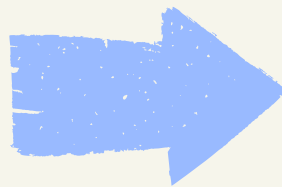
Placement



Pricing



Promotion



Promotion



- Promote GREEN options in the most visible areas of counters, cabinets, fridges.
- Make GREEN options look appealing.
- Include GREEN options in special offers (e.g. meal deals, 'two for one' offers, loyalty cards).
- Avoid marketing RED options or brands, and do not include these in special offers or upsizing promotions.



Troubleshooting:



"Our infrastructure provided by suppliers promotes RED items or brands."

Speak to your supplier as most suppliers will simply swap decal, branding and infrastructure like fridges at no cost.

If they're not willing consider approaching a different supplier for this or budgeting for purchasing or leasing unbranded options.

Keep up the momentum

Congratulations, you're making a difference to your customers health and your business! Heres some top tips to keep up the good work:



Reflect and celebrate progress

Congratulate your staff for their efforts. Ask your organisation to promote your efforts via newsletters, social media, or other promotional opportunities.



Keep reviewing

Your menu on FoodChecker or with the checklist. Integrate with other routine monitoring like OH&S. Revise menu offerings, keep in touch with market trends and continue promoting healthier options.



Get staff and customer feedback

How have the changes gone? Are we meeting customer needs? Do we have the equipment and time required? Could we make any improvements?



Review menu success

Using item sales and wastage data. Note: sales can be affected by many factors including weather, closure periods, school holidays etc. You should compare changes in revenue or profit and healthiness of items sold, over a long period of time (preferably more than 6 months) and should compare to a similar period in the previous year.



Review contractual obligations

(Where relevant) with your organisation and with your suppliers.



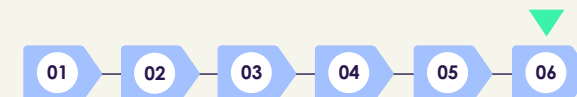
Keep in touch with suppliers

For GREEN and AMBER product updates.



Integrate processes

To ensure all staff have training and clear responsibilities for maintaining changes.



Additional

support

and useful
resources

How to analyse business finances



Business viability assessment tool



Healthy choices GREEN recipe book



How to set up a profit and loss statement



Pricing and profit calculators



Performance benchmarks for:

Coffee shops



Restaurants



Takeaway food services



For additional support to make healthy food and drink changes in your retail outlet, contact the Healthy Eating Advisory Service on or heas@nutritionaustralia.org.au, 1300 22 52 88 or visit the [website](#).

Healthy
Eating
Advisory
Service



Appendix one

Checklist for healthy changes in food outlets

Follow the simple steps in this checklist to help you get started with making healthy changes in your food outlet.

Remember, changes don't need to happen all at once. You may wish to make simple changes first, and plan for more complex changes in the future.



| Action | Suggested strategies | Complete |
|---|---|----------|
| Provide staff and food/drink suppliers with training about the Healthy choices guidelines | Allocate time for staff to complete training and watch videos about increasing healthy options and promoting these as the best choices | |
| | Include training modules and videos in staff induction procedures | |
| Reduce sugary drinks (e.g. soft drinks) | Stock a variety of healthier drinks e.g. plain still or sparkling water, 100% fruit or vegetable juice (250ml bottles), plain, reduced fat milk, flavoured milk (in small sizes) and artificially sweetened drinks | |
| | Reduce the number of soft drink flavours available. (e.g. do not re-order flavours that don't sell well) | |
| | Reduce the rows of sugary drinks in fridges | |
| | Place sugary drinks on the least visible rows | |
| Reduce confectionery (e.g. chocolate and lollies) | Stock a variety of healthier snacks E.g. diced fruit tubs (in natural juice), unsalted, plain nuts, nut and dried fruit mixes, reduced fat yoghurt, reduced fat cheese and crackers, plain popcorn or lightly salted popcorn, fresh fruit salad, pieces of whole fruit, small muesli bars, sugar free mints or chewing gum | |
| | Reduce the types and flavours of confectionery available (e.g. do not re-order stock that doesn't sell well) | |
| | Reduce the amount of confectionery placed on shelves (e.g. only display one box of chocolate bars instead of multiple boxes) | |
| | Place confectionery in locations which are not prominent or highly visible | |

Continued overleaf →

Appendix one

Checklist for healthy changes in food outlets (continued)

| Action | Suggested strategies | Complete |
|--|--|----------|
| Use reduced fat options | Use reduced fat varieties of milk, cheese, yoghurt, cream, mayonnaise, salad dressings, coconut milk and coconut cream | |
| Include more fruits and vegetables | Try to include fruit or vegetables in all meals and snacks | |
| Use lean meat | Trim visible fat and use lean cuts | |
| | Drain fat from meat after cooking | |
| | Minimise or avoid using processed meat (e.g. salami) | |
| Avoid adding salt to cooking | Substitute added salt with other flavours such as herbs and spices | |
| Avoid deep frying | Instead of deep frying use healthier cooking methods such as oven baking, grilling, steaming and barbecuing | |
| Ensure healthy options are available, promoted and displayed | Promote GREEN foods and drinks in meal deals and specials, instead of RED items | |
| | Offer GREEN foods and drinks during all trading hours | |
| | Place GREEN and AMBER foods and drinks at eye level or in the most prominent position in fridges, cabinets and counter displays | |
| | Avoid upsizing or upselling RED foods and drinks to customers (e.g. two-for-one deals) | |
| | Avoid free refills of sugar sweetened drinks | |
| | Work towards reducing promotional materials featuring RED foods and drinks, or brands that are strongly associated with RED foods or drinks. | |

Adapted with permission from the Healthy Eating Advisory Service
[HEAS-checklist-healthy-changes.pdf](#)

Appendix two

Customer survey

This survey is for use PRIOR TO making any changes. The questions can be adapted to be used after making changes.

1. Consider piloting this survey with a small number of customers prior to use, or with some internal staff.
2. Adapt the questions below as required according to the organisation and food outlet this survey is being used in (particularly question 4).
3. Do not ask children under the age of 18 years any questions.
4. If the survey is completed verbally do not ask question 10 about gender, surveyor to complete.
5. In the situation where there is the possibility of presenting the findings at a research conference or in a publication consider the need for ethics approval from a relevant organisation prior to completing the surveys.
6. This survey and the Customer survey data analysis template to analyse and report on the results of this survey are also located [here](#).

DELETE THIS PAGE PRIOR TO USING THIS SURVEY



Customer survey



(Insert organisation
or food outlet name)

is considering making changes to the food and drink options
and is keen to hear what customers think about this change.

To have your say, please complete the anonymous survey below (please tick):

1. Which one of the following options best describes your link to this organisation?

- ☐ Staff
- ☐ Visitor
- ☐ Member
- ☐ Patient
- ☐ Other, please specify

2. In the past 6 months, how often have you purchased food or drink from this food outlet? (please tick one)

- ☐ Every day
- ☐ Three or more days a week
- ☐ One or two days a week
- ☐ Less than twice per month

3. How much do you spend per visit on food and drink? (please tick one)

- ☐ Less than \$3
- ☐ \$3 - \$5
- ☐ \$6 - \$10
- ☐ \$11 - \$15
- ☐ \$16 or more

4. What food and/or drink do you usually purchase from this food outlet?

Food/snacks:

- ☐ Lollies, chocolate
- ☐ Cakes, biscuits, muffins
- ☐ Chips (packet)
- ☐ Ice creams or icy poles
- ☐ Sandwiches/rolls/wraps
- ☐ Fruit
- ☐ Sausage rolls, hot chips, fried foods
- ☐ Hot meals
- ☐ Fruit
- ☐ Sushi
- ☐ Other _____

Drinks:

- ☐ Tea, coffee
- ☐ Iced coffee
- ☐ Milkshake/smoothie
- ☐ Hot chocolate
- ☐ Soft drink
- ☐ Diet soft drink
- ☐ Water
- ☐ Juice
- ☐ Sports, energy drinks
- ☐ Flavoured milk
- ☐ Other _____

Please select the most appropriate response for you:

- ☐ I buy whatever foods and drinks are available from this food outlet
- ☐ If this food outlet doesn't have the particular food or drink I want to buy I go elsewhere.

5. Choose 3 of the following factors which are most likely to influence your purchasing at this food outlet.

Please number 1 (most important) to 3 (least important)

- ☐ Cost
- ☐ Convenience
- ☐ Healthiness
- ☐ Taste
- ☐ Child's preference
- ☐ Habit
- ☐ Other _____

6. What other foods or drinks would you like this food outlet to sell?

7. Would you support this food outlet selling healthier foods and drinks?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Why?:

8. Do you have any other feedback you would like to provide about this food outlet?

9. Gender:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

10. Age group:

- ☐ 18–20 years
- ☐ 21–30 years
- ☐ 31–44 years
- ☐ 45–60 years
- ☐ 61+ years

11. What is your postcode? _____

Acknowledgements



The Healthy Retail Food Toolkit was developed by the Nourish Network's Healthy Food Retail Resources action team:

Nutrition Australia

Margaret Rozman, Kirsten Johnson, Brigitte Annois

The George Institute for Global Health

Emalie Rosewarne

Deakin University

Miranda Blake, Victoria Hobbs, Chris Livaditis, Tara Boelsen-Robinson

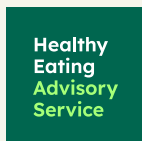
Western District Health Service

John Hedley

The authors are grateful for the support received from the Nourish Network in the development of this Healthy Retail Toolkit.

The authors also wish to acknowledge Bowling, T., Boelsen-Robinson, T., Hobbs, V., Gupta, A., Blake, MR. & Peeters A, from the Institute of Health Transformation (IHT), Deakin University (2022). Accelerating the implementation of healthy food and drink policies in retail outlets, Abridged report for use by Nourish Network Healthy Food Retail Resources Action Team. Department of Health, Melbourne.

The tool benefited from the insights provided in this report.



INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH
TRANSFORMATION

