

10 steps to buying the best protein

ESSNA

European
Specialist
Sports Nutrition
Alliance





1. Ask yourself

Do you exercise intensely or often?

Then you may need more protein than the average person.

Complementing your exercise regime and nutritious diet with a protein product is one way to meet a higher protein need and can result in many benefits.

But if you're thinking that protein is a magical supplement that will transform your body overnight without you putting in any effort, think again.

It must be taken proportionately and sensibly, as part of a varied diet, and not at the expense of other foods and nutrients.

2. Do your research

What are the different sources of protein and which one is best for you?



Click below to find out more:

	Complete essential amino acid profile for muscle growth	With functional amino acids for good health	Vegetarian	Vegan	Animal-based
Casein ▶	✓	✓	✓		✓
Collagen ▶		✓			✓
Egg ▶	✓	✓	✓		✓
Hemp ▶		✓	✓	✓	
Milk ▶	✓	✓	✓		✓
Pea & Rice ▶		✓	✓	✓	
Soy ▶	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Whey ▶	✓	✓	✓		✓

3. The blend



A lot of products you buy will be blends, since blending of different proteins will the full range of essential and functional amino acids. Make sure you understand the quality and benefits of the protein mix rather than focusing too much on characteristics of the individual proteins.

4. Your needs

Match the protein to your needs: what do you need it for? The health benefits of protein are well-established, and range from helping to grow muscle mass to contributing to the maintenance of normal bones. Figure out what you want to use protein for and make sure you're buying it for the right reasons.

5. Compare

Make sure you are comparing like for like. Always check serving sizes: one product might claim to have a higher protein content than another, but are the serving sizes the same? If not, then it might just be a clever marketing ploy to make you think you're getting more for your money. Look to compare products by 100g.

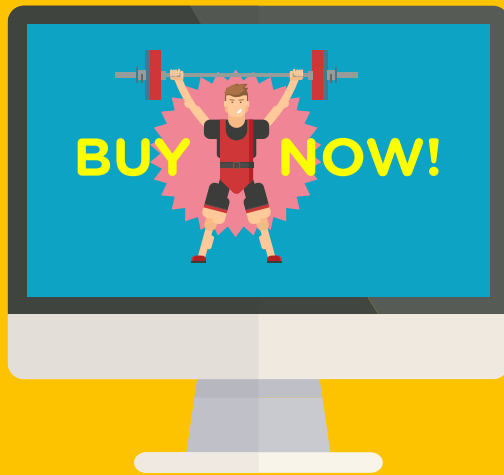
6. Mind your health

Consider any special health and/or nutrient needs you have. Are you a diabetic? Do you have any underlying health issues. Take these into account and do consult with your nutritionist or healthcare practitioner if you're not sure.



7. Looks dodgy?

Avoid dodgy-looking websites and products that make exaggerated claims and promise dramatic results, such as 'gain up to 10kg of muscle mass in one week!'. If a claim sounds too good to be true, it most definitely is - and the company might be breaking the law. Visible results take time to achieve and if a



product says otherwise, it is lying to you. And make sure you report that product to us so we can get it off the market! You can do so via our [website](#) or [Facebook page](#).

8. No steroids

Do not buy any products containing steroids or non-naturally occurring hormones. These are not sports nutrition products and do not work in the same way as legitimate protein products do. You could put your health at serious risk.

9. Reputable?

Only buy your protein from reputable companies. ESSNA members sign up to its strict Code of Conduct which require that they abide by all industry regulations. Look for the **ESSNA kitemark** or check the [members page on the ESSNA website](#) if you're unsure.



10. Read the instructions

Always follow the product's directions for use and take the recommended dosage. If you're unsure how much protein you should take, consult a nutritionist. Protein intake requirements will differ from person to person, dependent on the dietary habits, body weight, age, and exercise routine. Remember why you're taking protein and that your own requirements will be different from others'.

[EU Recommendation](#)

Whey Protein Powder

Nutritional Information

Serving size: 1 scoop (25g)
Servings per container: 40

Typical Values (when mixed with water)	Per 100g	Per 25g serving (1 scoop)	Per 50g serving (2 scoops)
Energy (kJ / kcal)	100	25	50
Fat (g)	2	0.5	1
Of which saturates (g)	1	0.25	0.5
Carbohydrate (g)	11	2.75	5.5
Of which sugars (g)	5	1.25	2.5
Fibre (g)	3	0.75	1.5
Protein (g)	68	17	34
Salt (g)	0.63	0.16	0.32

TYPICAL AMINO ACID PROFILE (per 25g serving)

L-Alanine (mg)	671	L-Lysine* (mg)	1302
L-Arginine (mg)	801	L-Methionine* (mg)	353
L-Aspartic Acid (mg)	1691	L-Phenylalanine* (mg)	723
L-Cysteine (mg)	195	L-Proline (mg)	1079
L-Glutamic Acid (mg)	3728	L-Serine (mg)	827
L-Glycine (mg)	409	L-Threonine* (mg)	800
L-Histidine* (mg)	405	L-Tryptophan* (mg)	186
L-Isoleucine* (BCAA) (mg)	890	L-Tyrosine (mg)	617
L-Leucine* (BCAA) (mg)	1506	L-Valine* (BCAA) (mg)	936

TOTAL BCAAs (per 25g serving)

BCAAs (mg) 3332

*Essential Amino Acids (EAAs)

INGREDIENTS: Premium protein blend (Whey* Protein Concentrate, **Milk** Protein Concentrate (Of which 80% is Micellar Casein), Soya Protein Isolate), Fat reduced Cocoa Powder, Waxy Barley Flour, Golden Brown Flaxseed Powder, Thickeners (Acacia Gum, Guar Gum, Xanthan Gum), Flavouring, Conjugated Linoleic Acid Powder (Contains **Milk** Protein, Soya Lecithin, Vitamin E), Acetyl-L-Carnitine, Green Tea Extract, Sodium Chloride, Sweetener (Sucralose).

Calculated protein, of which, [protein source(s) and respective amount, xg per 100g/100ml and xg per portion] in close proximity but not within the nutrition declaration

Manufactured by: Protein Proteins Ltd. 123 Protein Street, London, E1 1AS, UK

But what does the labelling mean in practice? We've given you a visual guide below to help you navigate the label of a protein product:

Serving size – check what the serving size is. Not all serving sizes will equal 1 scoop and not all scoops will be the same weight. Brush up on your maths and make sure you're buying the right product for you!

Ingredients – this is where you'll find more information on the types of protein inside the product. Ingredients are listed in order by the amount of each ingredient from most used to the least used. If a product hasn't listed its ingredients, including the different proteins in the blend, don't buy it.

Practical tip - look out for the below phrase: **“Calculated protein, of which, [protein source(s) and respective amount, xg per 100g/100ml and xg per portion]”** in close proximity but not within the nutrition declaration.

The industry uses this to alert consumers to how much of the protein declared on the table comes from the source of protein you are looking for. This lack of information is a consequence of a very simplified legal definition of protein. ESSNA is working with the Authorities in order to be able to provide more of the information you are looking for. In the meantime, ESSNA encourages its members to use this statement to ensure you, the consumer, aren't being misinformed. It also means products carrying this statement are less likely to have “fake” protein.

Manufacturer – this is where you'll find information about the manufacturer. Don't be afraid to contact them with questions about the product.



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