

Cereal is also used often in creating delicious snacks. Try these cereal bars for an easy and healthy snack on-the-go!

## Peanut Butter Honey Cereal Bars



Serves: 12

### Ingredients:

- 4 cups toasted oats cereal
- 1 cup dried berries (cranberries, blueberries, etc.)
- ½ cup roasted peanuts
- ½ cup pure honey
- ½ cup creamy peanut butter

### Directions:

1. Lightly grease an 8-inch square pan and set aside.
2. In a large bowl, combine cereal, dried berries, and peanuts. Mix well.
3. In a pot, heat honey and peanut butter until completely smooth and fully incorporated, stirring constantly. Remove from heat. If it's very hot, let cool a bit.
4. Pour peanut butter/honey mixture over the dry cereal mixture, tossing to coat well.
5. Press mixture firmly into prepared pan. Allow to cool completely before cutting into bars.

Get your bowl and your spoon ready, as today is National Cereal Day! This holiday originated to commemorate the anniversary of the invention of cornflakes by William and John Kellogg in the late 19th century. Cereal was first marketed as a health food before the sugary varieties came along. Cereal originally came about during the Civil War to help combat gastrointestinal issues of the battlefield's meat-based diet. By 1939, breakfast cereals started to take on another image, a sweetened product that appealed to children with cartoon characters appearing on the box. Cereal is still as popular today as it was back then, with more than 49% of Americans starting their day with a bowl of cereal. There are 2.7 billion boxes of cereal sold every year, enough to wrap around the earth 13 times! Now, not only is cereal eaten for breakfast, it has become a popular bedtime snack, and some people even have a bowl as an evening meal.

Cereal sometimes gets a bad rap for being loaded with sugar and lacking nutritional value, but there are many healthy options that can be part of a balanced breakfast. When choosing a healthier cereal here are few things to keep in mind:

1. Limit the sugar. Stick to cereals with less than 10 grams of sugar per serving. High amounts of sugar at breakfast time can lead to a headache and irritability later in the day.
2. Fill up on fiber. Look for at least 3 grams of fiber per serving. A diet high in fiber aids in digestion, and can also reduce cholesterol levels, and keep blood sugar levels steady.
3. Focus on whole grains. The first ingredient should be a type of whole grain, whether it's whole wheat, whole oats, or whole barley.
4. Power up with protein. Eating protein at breakfast can help deter you from overeating later in the day. Look for cereals with more than 5 grams of protein per serving.
5. Portions, portions, portions. It's important to look at the suggested serving size, and also sometimes measure it out to see if we are actually getting the recommended amount, which may be a lot smaller than what we are pouring straight from the box. If the suggested serving is not enough for a satisfying breakfast, add fruit or chopped nuts for a more filling meal.