

HANDS-ON: 10 MIN. // TOTAL: 60 MIN. // MAKES 6 CUPS

easy make-ahead granola

This basic granola recipe uses just a touch of sweetness ($\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of added sugar per serving) and is loaded with the good stuff: nuts, coconut flakes, and dried fruit. Serve with yogurt, sprinkle over a smoothie bowl, or just grab a handful to snack on. Watch the oven time closely—you want the mixture to get toasty and fragrant and the nuts to begin to release their oils. But be careful to not leave it in too long, or the oats and nuts darken and can develop a slightly bitter taste.

1 Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line a large rimmed baking sheet with aluminum foil and lightly coat the foil with cooking spray.

2 Combine the oats, nuts, coconut, and pumpkin seed kernels in a large bowl. Place the maple syrup in a small microwavable bowl. Microwave on HIGH until warm, about 15 seconds. Add the oil, salt, and cinnamon to the syrup; whisk to combine. Pour the syrup mixture over the oat mixture, stirring well to coat. Spread the oat mixture in a single layer on the prepared baking sheet. Sprinkle with the flaxseed.

3 Bake until golden, about 18 minutes, stirring after 12 minutes. Let cool completely, about 30 minutes. Add the dried fruit, if desired; toss to combine. Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 1 week.

(SERVING SIZE: $\frac{1}{4}$ CUP); CALORIES 134; FAT 8G (SAT 2G, UNSAT 6G); PROTEIN 3G; CARB 13G; FIBER 3G; SUGARS 3G (ADDED SUGARS 2G); SODIUM 62MG; CALC 2% DV; POTASSIUM 2% DV

GRAIN-FREE OPTION: Omit the oats, and increase the nuts to 4 cups, the coconut to $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups, and the pumpkin seed kernels to $\frac{3}{4}$ cup. Proceed with the recipe as directed.

flaxseed

Both flaxseed and flax oil are rich in omega-3 fats. Research tells us that getting an adequate amount of these fats in your diet can significantly reduce the risk of heart disease, decrease the risk of dementia and brain diseases, and ease some autoimmune conditions and arthritis. The actual flaxseed—compared to just flax oil—also contains bioactive compounds known as lignans, which may further reduce the risk of heart disease and bone and joint issues, as well as possibly reduce the risk of hormone-related cancers such as breast and ovarian. Whole seeds can pass through the GI tract not fully digested, so it's thought that choosing ground flaxseed is best to get all the seed's benefits. You can also grind whole seeds yourself. Sprinkle flaxseed in yogurt, trail mixes, hot cereals, and the batter for baked goods.



Cooking spray
3 cups uncooked old-fashioned rolled oats
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups chopped unsalted raw nuts (such as almonds, pecans, walnuts, or a mixture)
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup unsweetened flaked coconut
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup raw unsalted pumpkin seed kernels (pepitas)
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup pure maple syrup
2 tablespoons canola or coconut oil
 $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon kosher salt
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground cinnamon
3 tablespoons ground flaxseed
1 cup dried fruit (such as raisins, cherries, blueberries, or cranberries; optional)