

## Whole Grain Detective

Investigate the packaged foods you find in your kitchen to see if a food is as nutritious as the packaging leads you to believe!

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**First, Detective, here are the details of the case:** Food packaging makes the food inside seem more nutritious than it actually is. You can investigate the ingredients in packaged foods you find at home to see which have the most nutritious ingredients. If you want a little bit more information on Whole Grains before tackling this case, [check out this guide on “Why Choose Whole Grains?”](#)



**Just so you know, Detective,** it's okay to eat foods with white flour sometimes -- all-purpose flour makes fluffier birthday cakes -- but where possible try to eat foods made with **whole grains** to help your body stay strong and healthy! You might want to think of whole grain foods as “everyday foods” and white flour based foods as “special occasion foods.”

**Next, Detective, you must look for real facts to solve this case.** To find the facts for this case, here's what you need to do:

- ❑ Read the front side of the food packaging. What does it say? Does it lead you to believe that this food is good for you?
- ❑ Then, flip the food package over to look at the ingredient information. The ingredients are listed in order of how much of each ingredient is used to make the food. The first ingredient is always the main ingredient.
- ❑ What are the first three ingredients on your food label? Is one of them a grain? Does the grain say “WHOLE”? If there is a whole grain in the first three ingredients, then the facts are clear, this is a food made with nutritious whole grains! If the word “WHOLE” is not included in the first three ingredients, then this food is not made with a nutritious whole grain.
- ❑ Detective, by taking a look at the ingredient list, you will figure out if the packaged foods you find in your pantry are as nutritious as the front side of the packaging leads you to believe.

**Remember,** white flour has many names: *all-purpose flour, wheat flour, enriched flour* (this means a tiny bit of synthetic vitamins has been added back in) *are all white flour.*

**Now, Detective, you can continue your investigation:** Find some packaged foods in your house that are made with grains such as cereal, crackers, cookies, bread, or granola bars. Do your best to list them in one of the two categories below. (Hint: Is the first ingredient a whole grain flour or a processed flour?)

**WHOLE GRAIN FOODS**  
(healthy, everyday foods)

**PROCESSED/WHITE FLOUR FOODS**  
(special occasion foods)

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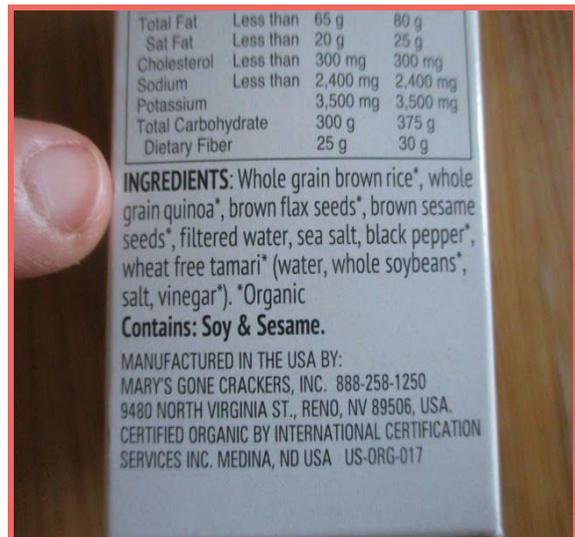
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**Detective, here are some examples of ingredient labels** that you can practice with to help you solve this case. Where do you see the word “Whole”? Where is it missing?

The first two ingredients on this label say “Whole Grain,” so I know that this food is made with nutritious whole grains.



The first three ingredients on this list do not include the words “Whole Grain,” so I know that this food is not made with nutritious whole grains. Way down on the list I see the words “Whole Grain Wheat Flour,” but it is in parentheses and low down on the list, so I know that there is only a tiny bit of Whole Grain Wheat Flour in this food.



None of the ingredients on this list say “Whole Grain,” so I know that this food is not made with nutritious whole grains.

