

Healthy 5-Ingredient Granola Bars



INGREDIENTS

Prep time: 10 mins | Cook time: 5 mins | Total time: 15 mins

Author: Minimalist Baker | Serves: 10 bars

- 1 ¼ heaping cup packed dates, pitted (deglet nour or medjool)*
- 1/4 cup maple syrup, agave nectar, or honey
- 1/4 cup creamy salted peanut butter or almond butter
- 1 cup roasted unsalted almonds, loosely chopped
- 1 1/2 cups rolled oats
- optional additions: chocolate chips, dried fruit, nuts, banana chips, etc.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Process dates in a food processor until only small bits remain (about 1 minute). It should form a "dough" like consistency.
2. Optional step: Toast your oats (and almonds if raw) in a 350 degree F (176 C) oven for 10-15 minutes or until slightly golden brown.
3. Place oats, almonds, dates, and any selected optional ingredients (I used coconut flakes and white chocolate chips) in a large mixing bowl - set aside.
4. Warm honey and peanut butter in a small saucepan over low heat. Stir and pour over oat mixture and mix, breaking up the dates to disperse throughout.
5. Once thoroughly mixed, transfer to an 8x8-inch baking dish or other small pan lined with plastic wrap or parchment paper so they lift out easily. (A loaf pan would also work, but will yield thicker bars.)
6. Press down firmly until uniformly flattened - I use something flat, like a drinking glass, to press down and really pack the bars, which helps them hold together better.
7. Cover with parchment or plastic wrap, and let firm up in fridge or freezer for 15-20 minutes.
8. Remove bars from pan and chop into 10 even bars (or 9 squares). Store in an airtight container for up to 5 days. If you need them to last longer keep them in the freezer.

*Note: Although not ideal, if your dates don't feel sticky and moist, you can soak them in water for 10 minutes then drain before processing. This will help them blend better and hold the bars together better. But ideally, initially select fresh, sticky, moist dates.

Nutrition Information

Serving size: 1 bar Calories: 217 Fat: 8 g Saturated Fat: 1 g Carbohydrates: 31 g Sugar: 19 g Fiber: 4 g Protein: 6 g

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