

# Gorilla Grub

Lincoln Park Zoo is home to almost 200 different kinds of animals, from Jamaican iguanas to western lowland gorillas. Caring for these animals takes hard work and patience. At Lincoln Park Zoo, **nutrition** is an important part of animal care.

## Nutrition



Each animal at Lincoln Park Zoo receives a diet made just for them. When creating a diet, the nutrition staff looks at an animal's age, weight, body features, and health. The staff works hard to learn each animal's favorite foods and which foods are healthiest for the animal.

If an animal is not eating or is showing signs of allergies or illness, their diet will be reviewed. Sometimes, staff put on their chef hat and create new recipes. “Yummy Bars” are an official Lincoln Park Zoo recipe for primates. These bars are made of oat bran, whole wheat flour, salt, raisins, dried cherries, dried blueberries, dried apricots, tofu, apple juice, dark brown sugar, eggs, and peanut butter!

## What's on the menu?

Different species eat and enjoy different foods. Many of the animals at Lincoln Park Zoo enjoy eating **browse**—fresh leaves and other plant parts gathered from the plants on zoo grounds. Chimpanzees and gorillas enjoy mulberry leaves and willow branches. Red-footed tortoises happily munch on hibiscus flowers. Alpacas and camels will eat pretty much anything!

Animals that prefer plants are known as **herbivores**. Other animals, like lions and polar bears, eat meat. They're called **carnivores**. Animals that eat both plants and meat, like humans, are called **omnivores**. Here are a few unique diets in the animal world:

- **Frugivore:** An animal that eats mostly fruits, like the Egyptian fruit bat.
- **Granivore:** An animal that eats mostly seeds, like cactus mice.
- **Insectivore:** An animal that prefers to eat bugs, like hedgehogs.
- **Nectarivore:** An animal that enjoys nectar, like hummingbirds.
- **Piscivore:** An animal that eats mostly fish, like African penguins.

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Western lowland gorillas are true **herbivores**. They only eat plant parts, such as leaves, stems, bark, fruits, and seeds. At Lincoln Park Zoo, zookeepers feed leafy greens, vegetables, fruit, and **browse**. This diet is important to rainforest growth. When gorillas eat seeds, the seeds pass through their digestive system and are dropped on the forest floor as fertilized seed-packets. Gorilla feces is an excellent fertilizer! These droppings help seeds grow in new and different spots, allowing more forest plants to grow.

Lincoln Park Zoo is home to a family troop of 9 gorillas. The troop is made up of 6 female gorillas and 3 male gorillas. They range in age from just over 1-year-old to 31-years-old.

<b>Directions:</b> Using the chart below, calculate each gorilla's age in years. Then, sort each gorilla into "adult," "juvenile," or "infant."		
Name	Birthdate	Age in Years
Bahati	September 20, 1990	
Bana	March 6, 1995	
Bella	February 24, 2015	
Djeke	June 12, 2019	
Kwan	March 1, 1989	
Mondika	May 12, 2019	
Nayembi	November 16, 2012	
Patty	October 11, 2012	
Rollie	October 3, 1996	
Adult (13-years-old & up)	Juvenile (6- to 12-years-old)	Infant (Birth to 5-years-old)

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A gorilla's diet depends on its age and stage in life. The bigger the gorilla, the more they need to eat! The male silverback, Kwan, eats much more than the adult females. The younger gorillas eat much smaller amounts of food. Diets also depend on each gorilla's overall health. A younger gorilla might need more calcium in its diet to help with bone growth.

The chart below shows the amount of food zookeepers prepare for the gorilla troop each day. The amounts are measured in kilograms and are different for each gorilla. "Biscuits" refer to food created specifically for animals in human care. These biscuits are full of vitamins and nutrients, and are similar to the food you feed your dog or cat!

<b>Directions:</b> Calculate the total amount of food for each gorilla. Remember to show your work!						
Name	Veggies	Leafy Greens	Fruits	Growth Biscuits	Primate Biscuits	Total (per day)
Kwan	6.50	16.10	0.20	0.00	0.64	
Bahati	2.20	5.40	0.04	0.00	0.29	
Rollie	2.20	5.40	0.04	0.00	0.35	
Bana	2.20	5.40	0.05	0.00	0.39	
Patty	2.00	4.60	0.04	0.00	0.30	
Nayembi	2.00	4.60	0.04	0.00	0.30	
Bella	1.70	3.60	0.04	0.00	0.25	
Mondika	0.50	0.73	0.02	0.05	0.07	
Djeke	0.50	0.73	0.02	0.05	0.07	

➡ **Challenge Question:** What is the total amount of food fed to the adult gorillas?

**Answer:** \_\_\_\_\_ kilograms

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Work Space

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## Answer Key

Name	Birthdate	Age in Years
Bahati	September 20, 1990	30
Bana	March 6, 1995	25
Bella	February 24, 2015	5
Djeke	June 12, 2019	1
Kwan	March 1, 1989	31
Mondika	May 12, 2019	1
Nayembi	November 16, 2012	8
Patty	October 11, 2012	8
Rollie	October 3, 1996	24
Adult (13-years-old & up)	Juvenile (6- to 12-years-old)	Infant (Birth to 5-years-old)
Bahati Bana Kwan Rollie	Nayembi Patty	Bella Djeke Mondika

Name	Veggies	Leafy Greens	Fruits	Growth Biscuits	Primate Biscuits	Total
Kwan	6.50	16.10	0.20	0.00	0.64	23.44
Bahati	2.20	5.40	0.04	0.00	0.29	7.93
Rollie	2.20	5.40	0.04	0.00	0.35	7.99
Bana	2.20	5.40	0.05	0.00	0.39	8.04
Patty	2.00	4.60	0.04	0.00	0.30	6.94
Nayembi	2.00	4.60	0.04	0.00	0.30	6.94
Bella	1.70	3.60	0.04	0.00	0.25	5.59
Mondika	0.50	0.73	0.02	0.05	0.07	1.37
Djeke	0.50	0.73	0.02	0.05	0.07	1.37

➡ **Challenge Question:** 47.4 kilograms

**Explanation:** Determine which gorillas are adults, then solve.