

THE UPF DETECTOR

Use this 3-step method to classify any food in under 10 seconds

STEP 0 — Quick Visual Scan (1 second)

Long ingredient list
Unfamiliar or “industrial” words → suspect UPF
Continue to Step 1

STEP 1 — Scan for Cosmetic Additives (4 seconds)

Flavors <i>(natural or artificial)</i>	Stabilizers <i>(sodium citrate, dipotassium phosphate)</i>
Flavor enhancers <i>(MSG, disodium inosinate, disodium guanylate)</i>	Emulsifiers <i>(mono- & diglycerides, soy lecithin)</i>
Sweeteners (non-nutritive) <i>(sucralose, aspartame, acesulfame-K)</i>	Thickeners <i>(pectin, modified food starch, gelatin)</i>
Colors <i>(annatto, Red 40, Yellow 5/6, vegetable juice)</i>	Gums <i>(xanthan/guar/locus bean gum, carrageenan)</i>

If you see any cosmetic additive → UPF
Stop here — no need for Steps 2 or 3

If Step 1 shows *zero* cosmetic additives, proceed to Steps 2 and 3

Steps 2 and 3 provide additional confirmation

STEP 2 — Check Base Ingredients (3 seconds)

Refined flours

(enriched flour, corn flour, wheat flour)

Industrial seed oils

(canola, soybean, corn)

Added sugars & syrups

(maltodextrin, dextrose, corn syrup)

Protein isolates

(whey protein concentrate, soy protein isolate)

STEP 3 — Look at the Structure (2 seconds)

Puffed, extruded, molded shapes

Ultra-soft industrial breads

Bars, nuggets, deli slices

Ice cream with an unusually smooth or uniform texture

Protein bars, shakes or snacks advertised as "high-protein"

(Indicators of industrial processing not reproducible at home)



Simple Rule

Any cosmetic additive = UPF (Step 1 alone)

Otherwise, 2+ YES answers across Steps 2–3 → UPF

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