



THE LABEL DECODER

How to read a joint-supplement label in ten seconds — what "proprietary blend" legally allows, why the front of the bottle says 1,500 mg and the back says something

- The ten-second label read, step by step
- The six label tricks, each shown on a real bottle
- Twelve popular joint ingredients, rated on evidence without
- The four that are genuinely worth buying — and the eight

12 INGREDIENTS RATED · 6 LABEL TRICKS · 20 PAGES

READ THIS FIRST

This guide is educational content about food. It is not medical advice, not a diagnosis, and not a treatment for arthritis or any other condition. It does not replace medication, and nothing in it should cause you to stop or change a prescription.

INTERACTIONS THAT MATTER

- Turmeric and ginger can increase the effect of blood thinners such as warfarin. Culinary amounts are not supplement doses, but the interaction is real. Every affected formula in this guide is marked.
- Tart cherry juice carries a meaningful amount of natural sugar. If you manage diabetes, treat it as juice, not as medicine.
- Ginger can lower blood pressure slightly, which matters if you already take something that does the same.
- If you are pregnant, breastfeeding, or preparing for surgery, ask before adding concentrated turmeric of any kind.

WHEN TO STOP READING AND CALL A DOCTOR

- A joint that is hot, red and suddenly swollen.
- Pain that is severe, or clearly worse week after week.
- Fever alongside joint pain.
- A joint that locks, gives way, or will not bear weight.

None of those are a stiff morning, and none of them are a job for a recipe.

WHAT IS IN HERE

The ten-second read

Five steps, in the aisle, on any bottle.

Six label tricks

Each one named and shown.

Twelve ingredients, rated

Evidence stated plainly, including where it is thin.

The four worth buying

Where a bottle genuinely beats the kitchen.

The auto-ship script

Two minutes to cancel.

THE TEN-SECOND READ

FORMULA FACTS		Five steps
Any bottle, in the aisle		
AMOUNT PER SERVING		
1. Turn the bottle over		3 sec
2. Find 'serving size'		2 sec
3. Look for 'proprietary blend'		2 sec
4. Read the order of ingredients		2 sec
5. Divide price by servings		1 sec

What you learn: whether a serving is one capsule or two, whether the amounts are disclosed at all, and what a day actually costs. Most bottles fail step three.

▲ This is buyer education about labels. What you should take is a conversation with your doctor.

SIX LABEL TRICKS

THE BLEND TOTAL

"1,500 mg" on the front is the whole blend, not the ingredient you came for.

SERVING SIZE OF TWO

The daily cost is double the shelf maths if a serving is two capsules.

ORDER OF WEIGHT

Ingredients are listed heaviest first. The one on the label art is often last.

"CLINICALLY STUDIED"

Usually true of one ingredient, at a dose this product may not contain.

FAIRY DUSTING

An ingredient present in an amount too small to do anything, so it can appear on the label.

AUTO-SHIP BY DEFAULT

The subscription box is pre-ticked more often than not.

CURCUMIN / TURMERIC EXTRACT

FORMULA FACTS		Evidence summary
Curcumin / turmeric extract		
AMOUNT PER SERVING		
Evidence strength		Moderate
Sold as	Capsule, powder or blend	
Kitchen equivalent		See verdict
Worth a bottle?		See verdict

The most studied ingredient in the category. Standardised extracts are a genuine product; turmeric powder in a blend at 50 mg is decoration.

VERDICT

Worth buying as a standardised extract, if your doctor agrees.

OMEGA-3 (EPA/DHA)

FORMULA FACTS		Evidence summary
Omega-3 (EPA/DHA)		
AMOUNT PER SERVING		
Evidence strength		Moderate
Sold as		Capsule, powder or blend
Kitchen equivalent		See verdict
Worth a bottle?		See verdict

Reasonable evidence, but dose matters and most joint blends contain a fraction of what was studied.

VERDICT

Cheaper and easier from oily fish twice a week.

TART CHERRY

FORMULA FACTS		Evidence summary
Tart cherry		
AMOUNT PER SERVING		
Evidence strength		Moderate
Sold as		Capsule, powder or blend
Kitchen equivalent		See verdict
Worth a bottle?		See verdict

Best evidence is for exercise-related soreness, not chronic joint disease.

VERDICT

The juice is the product. No capsule needed.

GINGER

FORMULA FACTS		Evidence summary
Ginger		
AMOUNT PER SERVING		
Evidence strength		Limited
Sold as	Capsule, powder or blend	
Kitchen equivalent		See verdict
Worth a bottle?		See verdict

Small studies, modest effects, generally well tolerated.

VERDICT

Kitchen ingredient. Do not pay supplement prices.

BOSWELLIA

FORMULA FACTS		Evidence summary
Boswellia		
AMOUNT PER SERVING		
Evidence strength		Limited
Sold as	Capsule, powder or blend	
Kitchen equivalent		See verdict
Worth a bottle?		See verdict

Some promising trials, small and often industry-funded.

VERDICT

One of the four worth a bottle if you are going to buy anything.

GLUCOSAMINE

FORMULA FACTS		Evidence summary
Glucosamine		
AMOUNT PER SERVING		
Evidence strength		Mixed
Sold as		Capsule, powder or blend
Kitchen equivalent		See verdict
Worth a bottle?		See verdict

Enormous trial history, results largely underwhelming and inconsistent.

VERDICT

Widely sold, weakly supported.

CHONDROITIN

FORMULA FACTS		Evidence summary
Chondroitin		
AMOUNT PER SERVING		
Evidence strength		Mixed
Sold as		Capsule, powder or blend
Kitchen equivalent		See verdict
Worth a bottle?		See verdict

Same story as glucosamine, usually sold alongside it.

VERDICT

Weakly supported.

COLLAGEN PEPTIDES

FORMULA FACTS		Evidence summary
Collagen peptides		
AMOUNT PER SERVING		
Evidence strength		Thin
Sold as	Capsule, powder or blend	
Kitchen equivalent		See verdict
Worth a bottle?		See verdict

Popular, heavily marketed, evidence for joint outcomes remains thin.

VERDICT

Broth is cheaper and tastes better.

FORMULA FACTS		Evidence summary
MSM		
AMOUNT PER SERVING		
Evidence strength		Thin
Sold as	Capsule, powder or blend	
Kitchen equivalent		See verdict
Worth a bottle?		See verdict

Small trials, unclear mechanism.

VERDICT

Not worth the shelf price.

VITAMIN D



FORMULA FACTS		Evidence summary
Vitamin D		
AMOUNT PER SERVING		
Evidence strength		Context
Sold as		Capsule, powder or blend
Kitchen equivalent		See verdict
Worth a bottle?		See verdict

Matters if you are deficient, does nothing obvious if you are not.

VERDICT

Get tested rather than guessing.

HYALURONIC ACID (ORAL)

FORMULA FACTS		Evidence summary
Hyaluronic acid (oral)		
AMOUNT PER SERVING		
Evidence strength		Thin
Sold as	Capsule, powder or blend	
Kitchen equivalent		See verdict
Worth a bottle?		See verdict

Injected is a medical procedure; swallowed is a different thing entirely.

VERDICT

Do not confuse the two.

PROPRIETARY JOINT BLENDS

FORMULA FACTS		Evidence summary
Proprietary joint blends		
AMOUNT PER SERVING		
Evidence strength		None
Sold as		Capsule, powder or blend
Kitchen equivalent		See verdict
Worth a bottle?		See verdict

Not an ingredient — a way of not telling you the amounts.

VERDICT

The single clearest reason to put a bottle back.

THE FOUR WORTH BUYING

Where a bottle genuinely beats the kitchen — with the reasoning, and with your doctor consulted first.

A STANDARDISED CURCUMIN EXTRACT

The one case where a supplement clearly delivers more than the spice jar.

FISH OIL, IF YOU DO NOT EAT FISH

Food first. If oily fish twice a week is never happening, this is the substitute.

BOSWELLIA

Small evidence base, but real, and it has no kitchen equivalent.

VITAMIN D, IF YOU ARE DEFICIENT

Test rather than guess — and this is a conversation with your GP, not a shelf decision.

THE AUTO-SHIP SCRIPT

Read this out or paste it in. It works because it is short and gives no opening for a counter-offer.

"I'd like to cancel my subscription and any future shipments, effective today. Please confirm the cancellation by email and confirm that no further payments will be taken. I don't want to pause or change the plan — please cancel it."

BEFORE YOU GO

One change at a time. The most common way this fails is doing all of it in week one and none of it in week three. Pick the single formula that fits your evening and make it until you stop thinking about it — then add the next.

YOUR REFUND, PLAINLY

Sixty days, no questions, no form. Email accesssupport.ai@gmail.com and it is done. You keep the guide.

LEGAL

© 2026 The Joint Kitchen. Educational content about food — not medical advice, not a diagnosis, not a treatment, and not a supplement. This is an independent publication and is not affiliated with, endorsed by or sponsored by any supplement brand. Payments processed by Digistore24. Results vary from person to person. If joint pain is severe or worsening, please see a doctor.