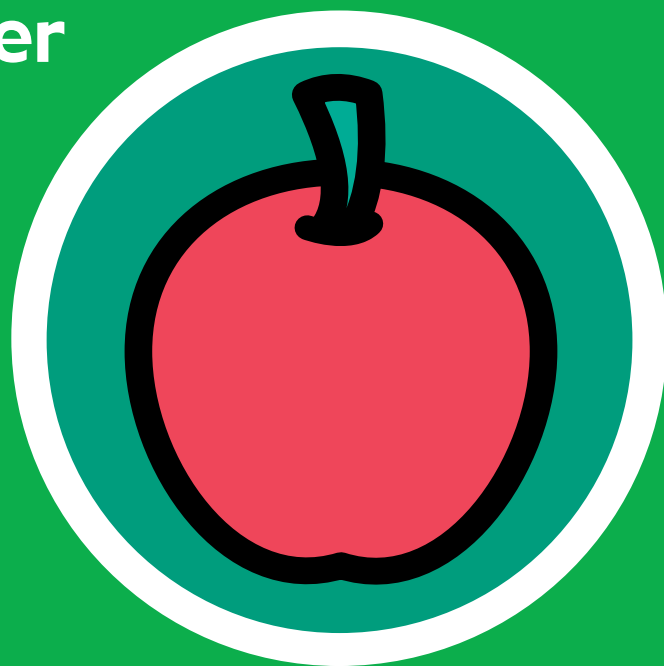


What's for lunch? ● ● ●

a guide to healthier
packed lunches
for your child.



Packed Lunch Checklist

Have you got ...

- ✓ a good portion of starchy food, e.g. thick wholemeal bread, chapatti, pitta pocket, pasta or rice salad?
- ✓ Plenty of fruit and vegetables, e.g. an apple, satsuma, handful of cherry tomatoes or carrot sticks, mini can of fruit chunks in natural juice or small box of raisins?
- ✓ a portion of milk or dairy food, e.g. individual cheese portion or pot of yogurt?
- ✓ a portion of lean meat, fish or alternative, e.g. ham, chicken, beef, tuna, egg, hummous or bean/lentil salad?
- ✓ a drink, e.g. fruit juice, milk or water?

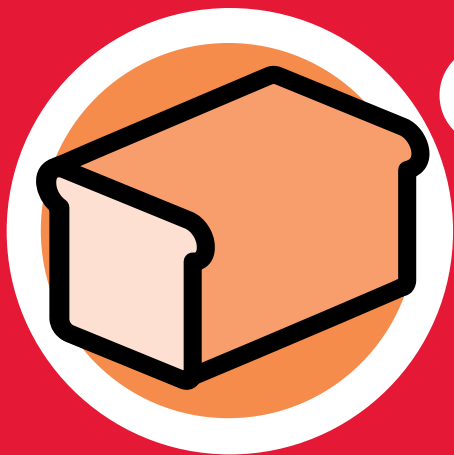
Enjoy your lunch

Lunch is an important meal for everyone, particularly children. But for many people, getting inspiration for what to include in a child's packed lunch can be a difficult task.

This booklet provides you with some helpful suggestions to make your child's packed lunch appetising and healthy.

It also shows that healthy eating does not mean your child missing out on the foods they enjoy.

It is simply a matter of getting a balance and eating a wide variety of foods.



MONDAY's Menu ...

- ham and tomato, sliced wholegrain bread sandwich (or peanut butter*)
- small banana
- low fat fruit fromage frais
- muesli bar or flapjack
- carton of apple or orange juice

Healthy Tips

Introduce variety by using a selection of breads, e.g. sliced, rolls, baguettes, Jamaican hard dough, bagels, tortilla wraps, pitta bread and crispbreads.

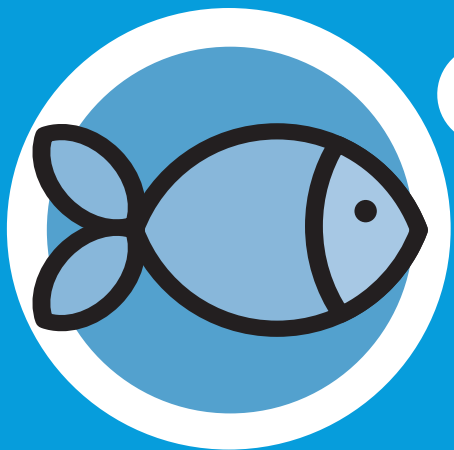
Try making sandwiches with one slice of white and one of whole-meal, or use white bread with added fibre.

Use spread sparingly, e.g. butter, margarine or mayonnaise. If using a sticky filling or cheese you may not need any spread.

Healthy Hints

Pick lower fat fillings such as ham, turkey, chicken, fish (e.g. tuna or crabsticks), cottage cheese, egg or reduced fat hummous. Serve with slices of tomato, cucumber, sweet-corn and/or shredded lettuce.

* safety tip: Nuts are a good source of protein and other nutrients, but check the school policy first because of the issue of allergy. To reduce risk of choking, ensure that your child eats whole nuts only when sitting down, and not when running around the playground.



TUESDAY's Menu ...

- canned salmon salad (or tuna salad) bagel*
- cherry tomatoes
- individual cheese triangle
- box of raisins
- slice of banana cake
- bottle of water

Healthy Tips

No lunch is complete without a drink.

Keeping hydrated helps children to be alert, improves concentration and keeps skin and hair healthy.

Try a variety of drinks including; bottled water, flavoured water, milk, flavoured milk, cartons of unsweetened fruit juice, diluted sugar free squash and yogurt drinks.

Healthy Hints

* Some foods are naturally high in salt, e.g. smoked fish, foods canned in brine, cured meats and cheese. However, they all provide other important nutrients. To keep the salt content down, limit the frequency of salted savoury snacks, use tuna canned in water and use sauces and pickles sparingly.



WEDNESDAY's Menu ...

- egg (or bacon), lettuce and tomato roll
- bunch of seedless grapes
- small pot of fruit chunks, in natural juice*
- carton of milk or low fat milkshake

Healthy Tips

Use fruit and vegetables from all colours of the rainbow, as they offer a wide range of vitamins and minerals.

Seasonal varieties and those which are easy to peel and eat are a good choice.

Peeling and chopping fruit and vegetables into ready-to-eat-bite-sized pieces makes them more appealing.

Healthy Hints

Add fruit to sandwiches (e.g. cheese and pineapple) or use vegetables as a main ingredient in a pasta salad or as a topping on a pizza.

* Remember, fresh, frozen, canned, dried and juiced fruit and vegetables all count towards 5 A DAY.



THURSDAY's Menu ...

- 2 mini pitta pockets with hummous (or cubes of edam cheese) with sliced red and yellow pepper and lettuce
- fruit scone or sliced malt loaf
- satsuma or pear
- carrot sticks and a small cream-cheese dip
- bottle of sugar free flavoured water

Healthy Tips

For a good supply of calcium, go for dairy food such as:

A pot of low fat yogurt or fromage frais;

Individual cheese portions or a low fat cheese spread;

A carton of semi skimmed milk (flavoured or unflavoured);

Yogurt smoothies or drinking yogurts.

Healthy Hints

For the dairy foods listed, always go for lower fat options where possible.

Being physically active is important for your child's overall health and bone development.

FRIDAY's Menu ...



- chicken pasta twist salad with a mushroom, sweetcorn & tomato sauce
- small vegetable samosa
- pot of rice pudding dessert
- sliced red apple or nectarine
- puffed savoury

Healthy Tips

Make packed lunches bright and colourful, including different tastes and textures:

Healthier choices include: currant buns, rice cakes, slice of malt loaf, unsalted nuts, plain popcorn, breadsticks, unsalted pretzels, cheese scone, vegetable sticks.

Healthy Hints

Foods such as biscuits, cakes, crisps, savoury snacks, pastries, pies, chocolate and carbonated drinks may form part of your child's lunchbox from time to time.

These foods are better eaten as part of their lunch, rather than between meals.

Summary

Keep your child's packed lunch interesting and appetising by varying what you put in each day. A good variety of foods will help to provide all the nutrients children need to grow and be healthy.

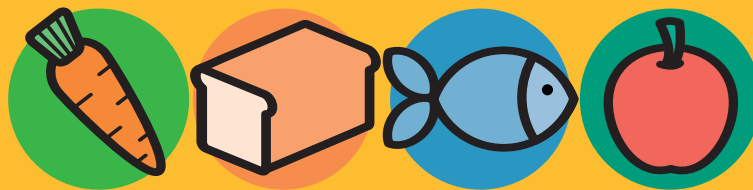
A healthy lunch should be a part of a healthy lifestyle, which includes physical activity and a balanced diet.

Tips to make your packed lunch healthy and safe to eat:

- Use an insulated lunch bag or freezer pack.
- Freeze a carton of fruit juice or bottle of still water the night before. Add this to the lunchbox in the morning. This will act as an ice pack to keep food cold.
- Make the lunchbox the night before and keep it in the fridge overnight.
- Plan ahead if you can to ensure a good variety of foods.
- Involve children in decision making, shopping and preparation of foods where possible.
- Pack food carefully, avoid using glass bottles or jars, and place soft fruit and crushable items at the top.

For more ideas about healthier packed lunches, go to: www.food.gov.uk

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