



Prepare a packed lunch

Get creative and power up your day with a delicious, healthy and satisfying lunch.

A new school year is a great time to kick-start a fresh routine or try new things. What you eat is important and really affects how you feel. Lunch should be tasty but it is also fuel to power you through the day. When you're hungry it can be hard to concentrate but a well balanced and satisfying midday meal should keep you raring to go until dinner time.

If you take a packed lunch to school, it's best to prepare it the night before. That means you don't have to rush the next morning and you can concentrate instead on eating a good breakfast. Aim for a meal that you enjoy but is also healthy, filling and fun. Try some of these tips on preparing the perfect packed lunch. Get creative – it's a good idea to keep changing what you eat, so you don't get bored with munching on the same things.



WARNING!

Check with your school if there are any rules about what you can have in your packed lunch.



Choose your main dish

Build your packed lunch around a filling main. Foods that will give you energy include bread, pasta, potatoes or rice. Wholegrains keep you full for longer – so use wholemeal bread instead of white, and brown pasta rather than white. Add a food that contains protein, such as beans, cheese, eggs, fish, meat or tofu. A cheese and salad wholemeal sandwich or a tuna and bean pasta salad are great options.

Eat the rainbow

Fruit and vegetables contain vitamins and minerals you need to stay healthy. The NHS says people should have at least five portions of fruit and veg per day. A portion depends on your age and size but according to the NHS, a child's portion is roughly what you can fit into the palm of your hand. Try to "eat the rainbow": fruit and veg of different colours, including red, green, yellow, orange and purple.



Make it fun

You'll get bored with packed lunches if you have the same sandwich and snack every day. Make your lunch box enticing: you could use wooden skewers to make colourful fruit kebabs or add tasty dips to have with fruit or vegetables. Try carrot sticks with hummus, sliced apple with peanut butter or celery with cream cheese. You could add a treat sometimes too, such as popcorn or a biscuit.

Pack it right

Make sure your lunch is packed well to keep it cool and stop it leaking in your school bag. You can use small lidded containers for things like fruit or pasta salads. Don't forget to take a drink. If you take your own bottle you can refill it with water at school. In hot weather, you might want to add an icepack to your packed lunch to keep it cool and fresh until it's ready to eat.



Head to theweekjunior.co.uk/activityhub for more ideas and recipes.



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