

# Healthy Lunchbox Guide



Children consume around 30% of their daily food intake at school, which means filling their lunchbox with nutritious foods is very important for their learning, development, and overall health. A healthy lunchbox should consist of wholefoods from the five core food groups. Packaged sweet and savoury snack foods should be limited in lunchboxes. They can lead to excess sugar, fat, salt and energy intake if consumed in large amounts.

## Tips for Packing a Healthy Lunchbox

- Prepare a large platter of cut up fresh fruit and vegetables early in the week
- Encourage children to help prepare their lunchbox, by choosing a selection of fresh fruit and vegetables from the platter. This way they are more likely to enjoy the food in their lunchbox as they were involved in the process
- Prepare lunchboxes the night before
- Consider what lunches you will be preparing throughout the week and buy the necessary ingredients when you do your food shopping
- Utilise leftover dinners such as pasta or rice dishes in the lunchbox the next day
- Making homemade vegetable or fruit slices/muffins/breads is more cost effective and nutritious than pre-prepared varieties
- Buy fresh fruit and vegetables that are in season as they will be better quality and cheaper
- Pack food in reusable containers to avoid excess packaging and rubbish
- Use an insulated lunchbox or freeze a small water bottle to keep food cool

# Mix 'n' Match

To create a balanced lunchbox, mix 'n' match foods from the 5 core food groups

FRUIT	VEGETABLES	MILK, YOGHURT & CHEESE	MEAT & ALTERNATIVES	GRAIN & CEREAL FOOD
<p><b>FRESH FRUIT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apple</li> <li>• Banana</li> <li>• Mandarin</li> <li>• Orange quarters</li> <li>• Passionfruit halved</li> <li>• Watermelon, honeydew, rockmelon chunks</li> <li>• Pineapple chunks</li> <li>• Grapes</li> <li>• Plums</li> <li>• Nectarines, plums, peaches</li> <li>• Strawberries</li> <li>• Blueberries</li> <li>• Cherries</li> <li>• Kiwi fruit</li> <li>• Pear</li> </ul> <p><b>MIXED FRUIT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fruit salad</li> <li>• Fruit kebabs</li> </ul> <p><b>DRIED FRUIT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dried fruit, nut, popcorn mixes</li> </ul> <p><b>TINNED FRUIT/FRUIT CUPS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In natural juice (not syrup)</li> </ul>	<p><b>RAW VEGIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corn cobs</li> <li>• Carrot sticks</li> <li>• Capsicum sticks</li> <li>• Cucumber sticks</li> <li>• Celery sticks</li> <li>• Green beans</li> <li>• Snow peas</li> <li>• Cherry tomatoes</li> <li>• Mushroom pieces</li> </ul> <p><i>Can serve with a vegie based dip or salsa...</i></p> <p><b>SALADS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coleslaw and potato salad</li> <li>• Mixed bean salad</li> <li>• Pesto pasta salad</li> </ul> <p><b>BAKED ITEMS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grilled or roasted vegies</li> <li>• Wholemeal vegie muffins</li> <li>• Zucchini slice</li> </ul> <p><b>SOUP</b> (in thermos)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pumpkin soup</li> <li>• Potato and leek soup</li> <li>• Chicken and corn soup</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Milk</li> <li>• Calcium-enriched plant based milks</li> <li>• Yoghurt (frozen overnight)</li> <li>• Cheese cubes, sticks or slices</li> <li>• Cottage or ricotta cheese</li> <li>• Cream cheese</li> <li>• Tatziki dip</li> </ul> <p><i>Can serve with...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fruit</li> <li>• Wholegrain cereal</li> <li>• Vegie sticks</li> <li>• Rice/corn cakes</li> <li>• Wholegrain wheat crackers</li> </ul> <p><b>Don't forget a water bottle for refilling throughout the day!</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tinned tuna or salmon in springwater</li> <li>• Lean, skinless meats</li> <li>• Falafel balls</li> <li>• Lean meat patties</li> <li>• Lentil patties</li> <li>• Lean deli meats (e.g. ham, chicken, turkey)</li> <li>• Boiled eggs</li> <li>• Baked beans</li> <li>• Tofu</li> <li>• Hommus dip</li> <li>• Lean meat kebabs</li> <li>• Peanut butter</li> <li>• Vegetable fritata</li> <li>• Homemade pizzas with lean meat &amp; vegies</li> </ul> <p><i>Can serve with...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wholegrain roll, sandwich or wrap with salad</li> <li>• Rice/corn cakes</li> <li>• Wholegrain wheat crackers</li> <li>• Side salad</li> <li>• Steamed or roasted vegies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bread, rolls, wraps, pita, bagels, English muffins (preferably wholemeal or wholegrain)</li> <li>• Pasta dishes</li> <li>• Rice, quinoa, cous cous dishes</li> <li>• Noodle dishes</li> <li>• Sushi</li> </ul> <p><b>SAVOURY BAKED ITEMS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homemade pizzas</li> <li>• Wholemeal savoury muffins</li> <li>• Pasta bake</li> </ul> <p><b>SWEET BAKED ITEMS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fruit loaf</li> <li>• Wholemeal fruit based muffins</li> </ul> <p><b>SNACKS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cereal</li> <li>• Crackers</li> <li>• Popcorn</li> <li>• Crispbreads</li> <li>• Rice/corn cakes</li> <li>• Pikelets</li> <li>• Crumpets</li> <li>• Wholemeal scones</li> </ul>

This resource is adapted from the Healthy Eating Advisory Service's Pick & Mix 1-6 poster Copyright © State of Victoria

# Sandwich Filling Ideas

Sandwiches, rolls and wraps are a common lunchbox staple and can be very nutritious if made with the right ingredients.

Pick and mix from the list below to make a nutritious and filling lunch for your child.

## 1. Bread, wrap or roll

Choose a wholemeal, wholegrain or high fibre variety.



## 2. Spreads

- Avocado
- Hummus
- Tzatziki
- Cottage cheese
- Reduced fat cream cheese
- Reduced fat mayonnaise

## 3. Protein source

- Barbecue chicken (skin removed)
- Leftover meat e.g., meat patty, grilled chicken, roast
- Ham
- Turkey
- Boiled egg
- Canned tuna or salmon
- Tofu
- Falafel
- Mashed chickpeas
- Reduced fat cheese

## 4. Salad filling

- Lettuce
- Spinach
- Grated carrot
- Tomato
- Cucumber
- Avocado

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