

Healthy Lunchbox Ideas



COOKING

Providing a healthy lunchbox for your children is important as it contributes to their physical wellbeing and learning experiences at school. When they have enough food in their lunch box that is nutritious they will have the energy and concentration they need for the entire school day.

Packing a balanced lunch box can be done with some planning and preparation. To provide a balance of nutritional foods that will maintain their energy and concentration you can pack something they will eat at recess or morning snack time, something they will eat at their lunch break, something they may leave for after school and a drink of water.

What can I pack for recess or morning snack time?

- A piece of fruit (seasonal)
- A tub of yoghurt
- Pieces of cheese and crackers
- Some cut up vegetables and dip
- What can I pack for lunch time (Main school meal)
- A sandwich, roll or wrap
- A salad mixed with egg or other meat, cheese or tuna
- Cold pasta and cheese
- Cold quiche or baked savoury food like homemade sausage rolls

What other snacks can I pack for their day?

- A piece of fruit (seasonal)
- A tub of fruit
- A tub of fruit in jelly
- A box of sultana's
- Cream cheese and crackers
- Plain popcorn

Remember that some of these food items are cold and usually stored in a fridge at home. If you are sending them to school it will important to remember to use a lunch box that provides storage of these cold items. This could include putting a frozen drink (like a small milk) or other frozen item in their lunch box to keep these items cold. All meats, cheese, milk, yoghurt and salad should be kept in a lunch box that protects them from getting warm.

Drinks

Always provide a bottle of water to your children; they can refill this bottle during the day to quench their thirsts. Alternatively offer low fat milk or calcium-fortified soy milk.

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There are many days of the school year and keeping their lunch boxes interesting and full of nutrition can be challenging at times so here are some ideas to help you when you are considering what kinds of occasional or snack foods.

Often supermarket bought snack foods are high is sugar, saturated fats and salt and it is best to use these foods occasionally.

Occasional foods include:

- Crisps or packets of chips
- Biscuits, wafers and muesli bars
- Confectionary (including chocolate and lollies)
- Fruit juices

Food allergies and the school lunchbox

Keeping children safe at school is a priority.

It is important that you are aware of your child's school policies when it comes to preparing food. In Australia many children suffer from food allergies which range from severe allergic reaction to minor irritation which is potentially threatening the life and well-being of your child or someone else's children.

Being aware of the school food policies will ensure that you do not include items in your child's lunch box that are could potentially be harmful to other children.