

Packing a school lunchbox



When children eat well they behave better, are able to listen well and concentrate for longer.

Packing a healthy school lunchbox will help children to learn and play well and be happy at school.



Steps to planning a healthy lunchbox

1. Make time to prepare. Have fresh fruit and vegetables, milk and yogurt, bread and crackers all bought in advance.
2. Shop wisely and save money. Buy fresh fruit and vegetables in season to ensure good quality and value for money.
3. Make your own snacks. For example snack packs from fresh ingredients which you can buy in bulk.
4. Look after the environment. Put sandwiches and other items in reusable containers. This uses less packaging and creates less rubbish.
5. Choose a variety of foods from the 5 food groups (see table below).
6. Include a bottle of water. No need for sweetened drinks such as juice, cordial or soft drink as these contain too much sugar which is not good for teeth. Non-water drinkers usually start drinking water with the example of other children. Freeze a small quantity each night and top up with cold water in the morning for a cool summer drink.
7. Keep food cool. In warm weather freeze a water bottle or put a small ice pack in the lunchbox.

Remember to involve your children in preparing and packing their own lunchbox.

What makes a healthy lunchbox?

Food group	Nutrients	Examples
<p>Grain foods</p> 	<p>Carbohydrate providing energy for brain and body. Choose wholegrain options for more fibre and longer lasting energy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All types of bread – whole meal, multigrain, white, pita or other flat breads, fruit loaf - Rice, pasta, crispbreads, rice crackers
<p>Fruit</p> 	<p>Carbohydrate for long lasting energy, vitamins, minerals and fibre.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fresh whole fruits or cut up and placed in a container - Dried fruit mix, canned fruit
<p>Vegetables</p> 	<p>Vitamins, minerals and fibre for healthy gut and strong immunity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cherry tomatoes, capsicum strips, snow peas, small corn cob or baby corn spears - Carrot, celery and cucumber sticks - Salad vegetables or coleslaw in a sandwich
<p>Milk, yoghurt & cheese</p> 	<p>Major source of calcium for strong bones and teeth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Milk poppers - Cheese slices, cubes or sticks - Tub of yogurt
<p>Lean meats, fish, poultry, egg, nuts and legumes</p> 	<p>Protein, iron and zinc for growing bodies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cold lean meats or chicken - Tinned fish such as salmon, tuna or sardines - Boiled eggs, baked beans, hommus