

What is a healthy packed lunch for school?

Starchy Food

Base each meal on a starchy food such as bread, potato, rice, yam, plantain. Starchy food gives energy, fibre, vitamins and minerals.

Bread, try different types such as pitta bread, wrap, chapattis or bread rolls.

Other starch foods such as pasta, couscous or rice can be used too

- ✓ Whole grain varieties are best for fibre which is vital for a healthy digestive system



Meat and Alternatives

Add some protein, for example meat, fish eggs, bean or pulses. Protein food builds muscles and provides minerals



Lean meat such as chicken, turkey or ham



Include oil fish such as pilchards, sardines or mackerel at least once every two weeks



Cheese such as cottage, edam or soft cheese



Meat alternatives such as tofu, tempeh or quorn



Dishes containing pulses, beans example dahl or bean salad.



Meat products such as sausage and chipolatas, pies and pastries, fried food should not be included more than once a fortnight.



Use butter, margarine, mayonnaise or salad dressing sparingly because these can be high in fat or use lower fat alternatives.

Milk and dairy foods

✓ Include a dairy product or dairy alternative such as fromage frais or fruit yoghurt. These foods provide calcium necessary for strong bones and teeth as well as providing protein and vitamins.

- ✓ Lower fat varieties are healthier

Fruit and Vegetables

😊 Don't forget to include fruit and vegetables. You can use fresh, frozen, tinned or dried. Fruit and vegetable are full of Vitamins, Minerals and fibre necessary for the body to function properly and to keep as strong and healthy.

😊 Add tomato, lettuce or beetroot to a sandwich

😊 A vegetable dish such as salad or roast vegetables

😊 Fresh fruit such as banana, apple, pear, Satsuma or grapes

😊 Fruit salad (fresh or tinned in juice)

😊 Dried fruit such as raisins, apricots or figs

✓ Fingers foods such as cherry tomatoes, cucumber sticks or celery sticks are good with houmous or guacamole

✓ Use fresh fruit or vegetables that are in season to help the environment and to enjoy varieties

✓ Aim to include one portion fruit and vegetable or salad



Drinks

😊 Drinks especially water helps children to concentrate and feel well. Water is freely available in schools.

😊 Only water, milk, pure fruit juice and smoothies should be included in lunch box



Snacks and confectionary

Snack food may be included occasionally but aim to make healthier choices. Snack foods tend to be high in fat, sugar and salt. Foods high in fat can cause excessive weight and lead to heart disease. High sugary foods are high in calories and bad for the teeth. High salt food may increase blood pressure which can lead to heart disease and some cancer.

For healthier snack

✓ Replace sweets and chocolates for dried fruit a small bunch of grapes or fruit salad

✓ Replace cakes and pastries with fruit bread or malt loaf

✓ Replace salted savoury snacks with rice cakes or bread sticks

✗ Packed lunch box should not include chocolate, biscuits, sweets, salted savoury snacks and fizzy drinks

✗ Don't include jam and chocolate spread filling for a sandwich

Examples of Healthy Packed Lunch Boxes for Children

Lunch Box 1

- 😊 Egg Salad Bagel
- 😊 Carrot Sticks
- 😊 Clementine
- 😊 Yoghurt
- 😊 Water

Lunch Box 2

- 😊 Hummus in Pitta Bread
- 😊 Pear
- 😊 Celery sticks
- 😊 Fruit cake
- 😊 Milk

Lunch Box 3

- 😊 Chicken Salad Sandwich
- 😊 Banana
- 😊 Pepper
- 😊 Flapjack
- 😊 Smoothies

Lunch Box 4

- 😊 Cheese Salad Sandwich
- 😊 Cherry tomatoes
- 😊 Fruit Fromage Frais
- 😊 Apple
- 😊 Fruit Juice

Lunch Box 5

- 😊 Tuna Sweet corn Wrap
- 😊 Grapes
- 😊 Cucumber Slices
- 😊 Snack Bar
- 😊 Water