

Healthy

Lunchboxes

Top tips & ideas for a yummy, healthy lunchbox













What's for lunch planner

a week of lunch ideas

The lunchbox planner gives a week's worth of inspiration and ideas to help you make your child's lunchbox as easily as possible.

The planner will also help keep your child's lunch healthy, tooth friendly, low cost and full of variety, to make sure lunches are never boring.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<p>Pitta pizza </p> <p>Cherry tomatoes Tinned pineapple chunks Plain popcorn* Water</p> 	<p>Pasta salad </p> <p>Cheese cubes Sliced grapes Rice pudding pot Water</p> 	<p>Tuna & sweetcorn wrap </p> <p>Plain yoghurt Cucumber sticks Raisins Rice cakes Water</p> 	<p>Cheese and crackers Satsuma Cucumber sticks Boiled egg Fruity flapjack </p> <p>Water</p> 	<p>Egg mayonnaise roll </p> <p>Pepper and carrot sticks Houmous dip Sliced apple Banana cake Milk</p> 



Cheese is often high in fat and salt, try using less cheese or stronger tasting and reduced fat varieties.



Give your child sugar free squash 2-3 times a week as a compromise, if they really don't like water.
Try and limit dried fruit to 2 – 3 times a week. Eating lots can be bad for your teeth.



Avoid pre-cut, pre-peeled and packaged fresh vegetables and fruits as they are more expensive and lose nutrients as soon as the pack is opened.




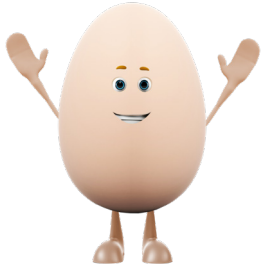
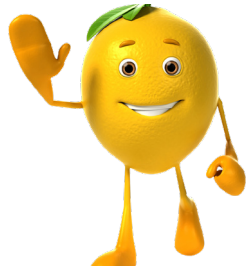
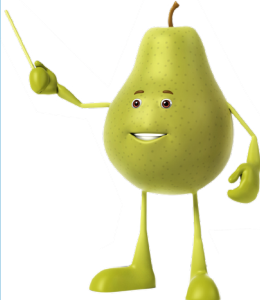
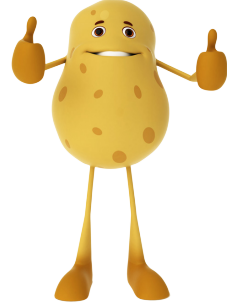

Cook a few portions and freeze the ones you don't use straight away for another day.



Keep reading to find these yummy recipes. *Remember popcorn is a choking hazard for children under 5 years old. If your child is in this age group, please swap this snack.

Scrummy swaps

We understand that everyone has their own likes and dislikes and dietary needs. Please swap any of the foods in the lunchbox recipes for whatever you fancy or have at home. Here are some ideas for some swaps you can make, to make every recipe delicious and healthy, but also work for you and your family.

Vegetable ideas	Fruit ideas	Additional ingredients ideas	Salad dressing ideas	Vegan swaps	Gluten free swaps	Dairy free swaps
Courgette Aubergine Sweetcorn Tomatoes Cucumber Beetroot Carrot Pepper Lettuce Spinach leaves Onion Celery Green beans Olives Peas Sweet potato Butternut squash Broccoli Sun dried tomatoes	Apple Banana Oranges Mango Pineapple Melon Kiwi Nectarine Strawberries Raspberries Blueberries Grapes Raisins Sultanas Dried apricots 	Ham or vegetarian alternative Cooked chicken Cheese (grated or chunks) Chickpeas Boiled egg Tinned salmon or tuna Tofu Bacon Sausage Mixed beans 	Cream cheese Salad cream Mayonnaise French dressing Caesar dressing Balsamic vinegar Plain yoghurt Pesto Olive oil Lemon juice and olive oil 	Tofu instead of eggs Lentils and beans instead of meat Jackfruit instead of meat Quorn or vegetable protein substitutes instead of meat Houmous instead of mayonnaise 	Potatoes Bread made with gluten-free flour Rice cakes Flat breads made with chickpea flour or maize flour Gluten free tortilla wraps Rice or quinoa Rice noodles Gluten-free pasta 	Instead of cows milk try oat or soya milk Instead of dairy cheese you could use a dairy free cheese substitute or try using avocado Instead of butter you could use a dairy free spread Instead of a cheese or yoghurt dip, try buying or making houmous 



Recipe: Pitta pizza

Serving: **Serves 1**
Preparation time: **10 mins**
Cook time: **12 mins**
Difficulty: **MEDIUM**



INGREDIENTS

1 pitta
2 tablespoons of tomato puree, tomato pasta sauce or tomato passata
1 handful of grated cheese

Ideas for toppings include:

Sliced tomatoes
Sweetcorn
Peppers

For more topping ideas look at the list of scrummy swaps (on page 5).

METHOD

1. Grate all the cheese
2. Prepare your toppings e.g. chop vegetables and meat into small pieces
3. Spread the tomato base over the pitta ensuring the whole area is covered
4. Sprinkle some grated cheese over the base (leave a sprinkle for the end)
5. Add your chosen toppings
6. Add another sprinkle of cheese
7. Grill on a baking tray for 10 minutes or bake in an oven (180°C/Gas Mark 4) for 12 minutes until cheese has fully melted
8. Leave to cool



Recipe: Pasta salad

Serving: **Serves 1**
Preparation time: **15 mins**
Cook time: **15 mins**
Difficulty: **MEDIUM**



INGREDIENTS

4 tablespoons of cooked pasta
2 tablespoons of vegetables of your choice*
2 tablespoons of additional ingredients of your choice*
2 tablespoons of a salad dressing of your choice*

**Mix and match the other ingredients from the list of Scrummy swaps (on page 5).*

METHOD

1. Cook the pasta according to the packet instructions and allow to cool
2. Prepare your chosen vegetables and additional ingredients by cutting into bitesize pieces
3. In a bowl mix the cooled pasta with your chosen vegetables and additional ingredients
4. Mix in your chosen dressing



Recipe: Tuna & sweetcorn wrap

Serving: **Serves 1**
Preparation time: **5 mins**
Cook time: **0 mins**
Difficulty: **EASY**

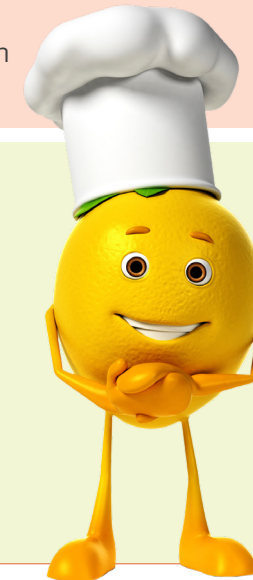


INGREDIENTS

1 tortilla wrap
1 tablespoon of tuna
1 tablespoon of tinned sweetcorn
1 tablespoon of mayonnaise

METHOD

1. In a bowl mix together the tuna, sweetcorn and mayonnaise
2. Spread the tuna mixture onto the wrap
3. Roll the wrap, following the steps in the diagram



HOW TO FOLD AND ROLL A WRAP

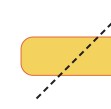


1. Place fillings in the centre of the wrap



2. Fold both sides of the wrap

3. Fold towards the top of the wrap



4. Cut into diagonal slices and enjoy!



Recipe: Fruity flapjack

Serving: **Serves 8**
Preparation time: **20 mins**
Cook time: **18 mins**
Difficulty: **MEDIUM**



INGREDIENTS

300g porridge oats
2 handfuls of dried fruit e.g. apricots, dates, figs, sultanas
1 large or 2 small apples
100g butter/margarine, plus extra for greasing
30g brown sugar
3 tablespoons golden syrup
1 tablespoon of flour

METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C or gas mark 4
2. Lightly grease a shallow medium-sized baking tin with a little margarine or butter
3. Measure out the oats and the flour and cut up any large pieces of dried fruit and add to a bowl
4. Wash and grate the apple/s (including the skin) and squeeze out any excess juice.
5. Mix together the apple, the oats, the flour and dried fruit
6. Melt together the butter/margarine, sugar and golden syrup in a pan on a low heat
7. Add the oats, dried fruit and grated apple to the melted margarine mixture and mix thoroughly
8. Spoon the mixture into the tin and level out
9. Bake for 15 – 18 minutes until pale golden but still soft
10. Leave in the tin until cool then cut and divide into equal pieces



Recipe: Egg mayonnaise

Serving: **Serves 1**
Preparation time: **5 mins**
Cook time: **8 mins**
Difficulty: **EASY**

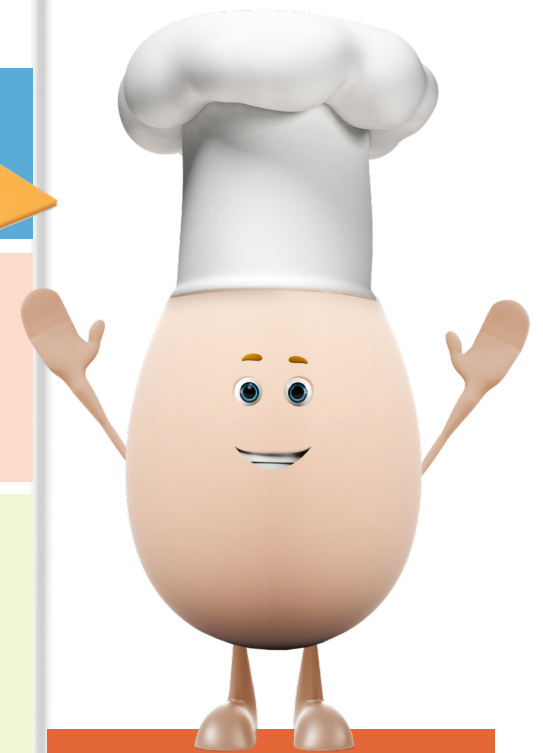


INGREDIENTS

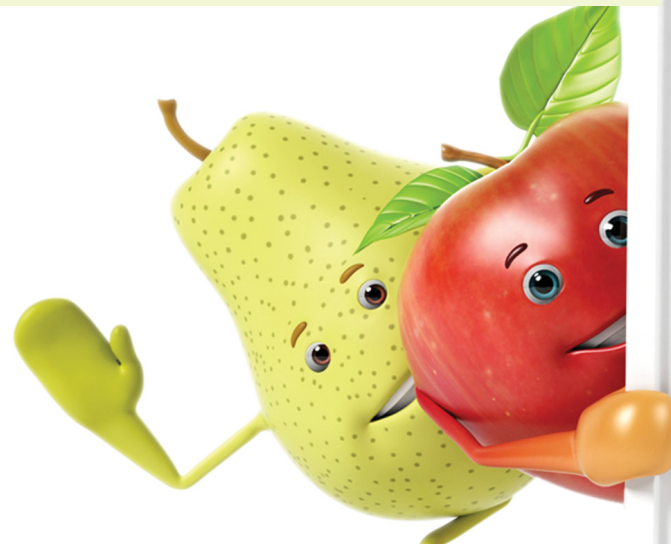
1 egg
½ to 1 tablespoon of mayonnaise

METHOD

1. Place egg in a saucepan and cover with water
2. Bring the water to a boil
3. Boil the eggs for 10 minutes
4. Allow the egg to cool and peel the shell off
5. In a bowl mash the egg together with the mayonnaise



For more lunchbox ideas and recipes scan the QR code




Portion sizes

Because children grow at different rates, there's no set rule for how much they should eat at each age. The amount of food your child wants to eat will increase as they grow, so it's important to be led by their appetite.



All children are different in size, so a useful tip is to use their hand to roughly workout the portion sizes of different foods. As they grow so will their hands, so you'll naturally increase the amount of food you offer them as they get older.

Use the guide to roughly workout the portion sizes of different food items.




STARCHY CARBOHYDRATE FOODS

such as bread, rice, potatoes, wraps, pitta, couscous, chapatti and pasta.
Measure from the size of your child's fist.




FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

Measure from the amount your child can hold in their hand.




PROTEIN FOODS

such as beans, fish, eggs, meat and meat alternatives such as Quorn or soya products.
Measure from the size of the palm of your child's hand.



CHEESE

Measure from the size of your child's thumb.



When preparing your child's lunchbox try and provide the following portions of food groups. Use the hand guide to roughly workout how big a portion is.

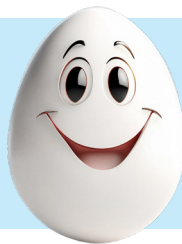
ONE PORTION OF STARCHY FOODS

such as bread, rice, potatoes, wraps, pitta, couscous, chapatti and pasta



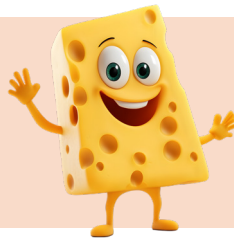
ONE PORTION OF PROTEIN FOODS

such as beans, fish, eggs, meat and meat alternatives such as Quorn or soya products



ONE PORTION OF DAIRY FOODS

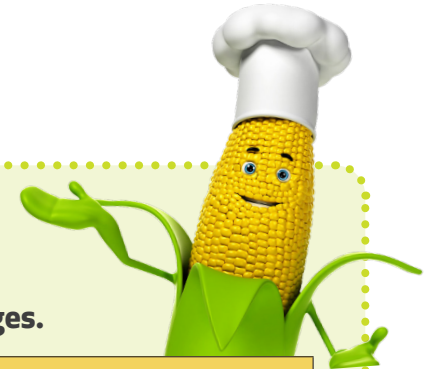
such as yoghurt, cheese or a dairy free alternatives



AT LEAST TWO PORTIONS OF FRUIT & VEGETABLES



You can adapt the portion sizes in the lunchbox examples provided in this resource based on your child's appetite and the size of their hand.



For example, we have adopted the portion of this Egg roll lunchbox to help you make a lunchbox suitable for children of different ages.

2 YEARS OLD

- Half egg roll
- Half slice of banana cake
- Thin sliced apple
- Thin pepper and carrot sticks
- Houmous dip
- Small bottle of milk



8 YEARS OLD

- 1 and a half egg rolls
- 1 slice of banana cake
- Sliced apple
- Pepper and carrot sticks
- Houmous dip
- Milk



15 YEARS OLD

- 2 egg rolls
- 1 slice of banana cake
- An apple
- White grapes
- Pepper and carrot sticks
- Houmous dip
- Water



REMEMBER TO USE YOUR CHILD'S HAND SIZE AS A GUIDE FOR PORTIONS

Preparing a lunchbox for a younger child

Food can be a choking hazard for younger children because they often do not chew their food so well, and find small, round, firm foods more difficult to eat.

It is important to prepare and serve food safely to reduce the risk of choking. Here are some food preparation ideas to help with this:



Small fruits

(for example grapes, tomatoes, berries)

For fruits that are round and small, it is important to cut them into smaller pieces to make it easier for a child to eat. Try cutting them into quarters- 4 small pieces- or halves- 2 pieces. Grapes should still be cut into halves, or quarters until a child is 5.



Large, firmer fruits

(for example apple, melon)

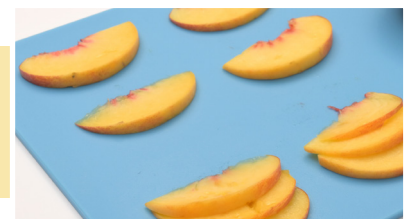
Cut into thin slices, not chunks.



Stones or hard pips in fruit

(for example peach, plum)

In all fruit served to a young child, it is best to always remove stones or hard pips.



Meat or fish

Remove all bones.

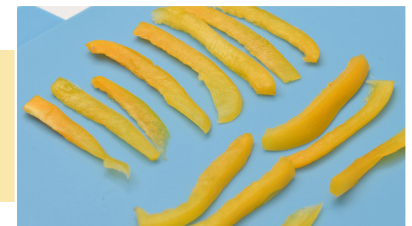
Cut soft meat into thin, short strips.



Vegetables

(for example cucumber, carrots, peppers)

By age 2, children can eat raw vegetables. Cut vegetables into thin batons/ sticks for young children.



Bread

(for example wholegrain, white, chapatis, bagels)

Cut breads into thin strips, or quarters.



Cheese

Grate, crumble or cut cheese into thin strips.



Nuts or popcorn

Do not give popcorn or whole nuts to children under 5.

You could try using chopped or flaked nuts instead. Most nurseries or schools have a 'no nuts' policy. This means for allergy reasons all food on site, including lunchboxes, should not include nuts.



Things to consider

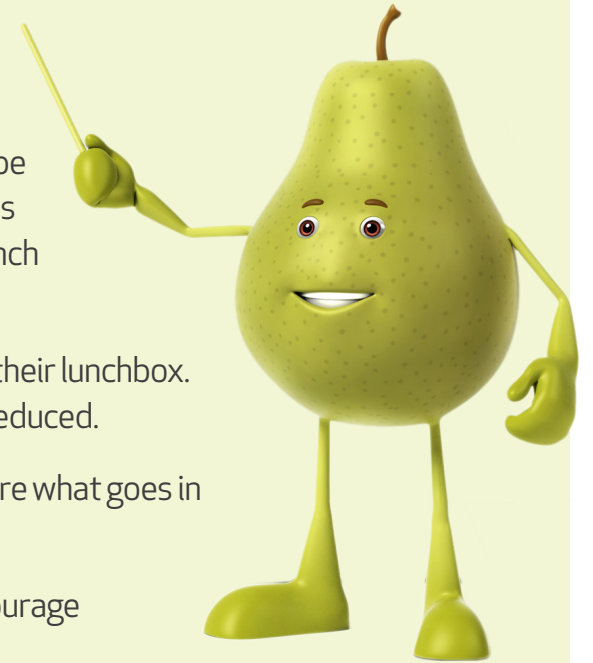
when packing a lunchbox

Having spent time preparing a healthy lunch for your child, it can be so frustrating when your child's lunchbox is lost, the lunchbox comes home with the food uneaten, or there are spillages.



Here are some ideas, to give you some food for thought, to help with this.

- **Naming the lunchbox.** Making sure your child's lunchbox, additional containers and your child's drinks bottle are named, to stop them getting lost.
- **Small containers.** Having smaller containers inside your child's lunchbox can be handy to keep parts of your child's lunch separate. For example, it is good to use a smaller tub with a lid for a pasta salad or carrot sticks.
- **Will the food travel well?** Spillages in lunch boxes can be very common. Making sure that the lids on small containers and drinks are on tightly can help things inside the lunchbox not to leak.
- **School lunchbox policy.** Schools may have a lunchbox policy where some items are not allowed to be taken into school. These could be items such as chocolate bars, fizzy drinks, or nuts, for example. It is a good idea to check if your child's school has a lunchbox policy and if so, to make sure your child's lunch follows their guidelines.
- **Likes and dislikes.** It is helpful if children have tried and liked the food at home before it is put into their lunchbox. This will make sure their tummies are full for the rest of the school day, but also that food waste is reduced.
- **Get your child involved.** Your child is more likely to eat their lunchbox if they help choose and prepare what goes in their lunchbox.
- **Drinks bottles.** A drink bottle for a child should have a 'free flow' spout. This type of bottle will encourage children to sip and swallow rather than 'suck' their drink and will help them to have healthy teeth.



What's for lunch planner

Your own lunchbox ideas

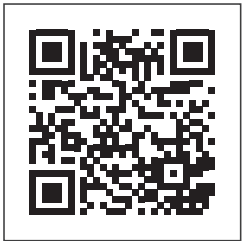
Use this weekly lunchbox planner to plan a week's worth of lunchbox ideas for your child.

Use the shopping list to make a note of any ingredients you need.

Use the notes section to add any comments or reminders for the week.



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Shopping List
Notes					



For more information go to
www.dudleyhealthylunchbox.org.uk
or scan the QR code above.

