

Best Back-to-School Lunch Ideas



Fall is just around the corner which signals both back to school and back to packing your kids a healthy school lunch! Packing a nutritious lunch is a great way to provide them with the nutrients and energy they need to focus and do their best at school. The trick is providing a healthy lunch that your kids will actually eat and not throw or trade away! Try these lunch box ideas to kick-start the school year:

Monday: Peanut (or Almond) Butter and Sliced Apple or Banana Quesadilla

Spread 2 Tbsp of peanut (or almond) butter on a whole wheat tortilla. Top with apple or banana slices (or both!). Fold in half. Serve with cut up celery and carrots, a cheese string, and a carton of low-fat milk.

Tuesday: Checkerboard Turkey Sandwich

Spread 1 Tbsp light cream cheese on 1 piece of whole wheat bread. Top with 3 slices of lean turkey breast, tomatoes, remaining slice of white bread. Cut the sandwich into 3 lengthwise strips and then 3 crosswise strips to make 9 squares; arrange to resemble a checkerboard. Finish off the meal with orange slices and 100% fruit juice. *(Source: Kraft Canada)*

Wednesday: Egg Salad and Veggie Pita

Mix a sliced hard-boiled egg with plain yogurt, chopped peppers, tomatoes, and shredded carrots in a whole wheat pita. Serve with 2 graham crackers and apple slices.



Thursday: Leftovers!

With insulated food jars, you can send hot foods to school too, such as leftovers from that delicious meal you made the night before! Some ideas include: beef and vegetable stew with a whole wheat roll, chicken casserole with carrots and dip, or pasta salad with a piece of fruit and yogurt.

Friday: Tuna Dippers

Mix 1 can of tuna with miracle whip dressing. Serve with whole grain Triscuit crackers and carrot sticks. Finish off the lunch with a box of raisins and cheese slices or yogurt. Kids love to dip! You can also use cottage cheese, hummus, yogurt, or guacamole as healthy dips.

Tips to keep lunch interesting and your kids eating it:

- Make food fun by cutting sandwiches into different shapes. Cookie cutters work great!
- A little prep work can make anything more kid-friendly. Peel clementines and oranges in advance or cut kiwi fruit in half and let kids scoop out the flesh with a teaspoon.
- Change the bread – try different kinds of grains (rye, pumpernickel, flax) as well as the type of bread like whole grain tortillas, bagels and pitas.
- Switch up the veggies and fruit. Give your kids something different to experience each bite.
- Turn a container of low-fat yogurt into a complete meal by sending along some stir-in granola, trail mix, unsalted chopped nuts, or whole grain cereal.
- Kids ultimately like a lunch they enjoy and helped prepare in advance, which means they'll be less likely to throw or trade it away.