

It's Time to Munch a Healthy Packed Lunch...

Ideas for families

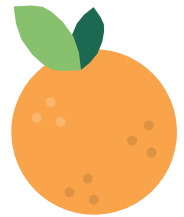
Whether you're making a packed lunch for school, nursery, a day trip or picnic, here are some ideas to keep things interesting and tasty!



For more tips and ideas see First Steps Nutrition Trust booklet "Eating Well, packed lunches for 1-4 year olds"
[Eating well early years — First Steps Nutrition Trust](#)

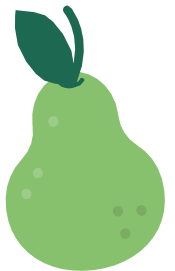
Packed Lunch Idea 1

- Egg sandwich
- Cucumber sticks
- A tangerine
- Dried apricots
- Plain milk



Packed Lunch Idea 2

- Pitta bread filled with grated cheese and salad
- Carrots sticks
- Small tub of fruit cocktail in natural juice
- Slice of malt loaf
- Water



Packed Lunch Idea 3

- Roll filled with tuna and sweetcorn
- A small banana
- Chopped peppers
- Plain yogurt
- Water



Packed Lunch Idea 4

- Tortilla wrap filled with mixed beans and tomato
- Small box of raisins
- Pear slices
- Plain breadsticks
- Plain milk



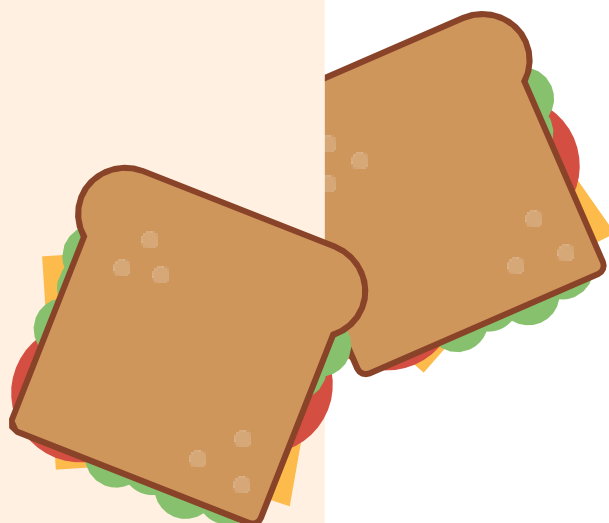
Sandwich Ideas

It's important to include some starchy carbohydrate in a packed lunch to provide energy for the afternoon ahead. These foods include bread, potatoes, rice, pasta, cous cous and noodles.

Trying different types of breads can make lunch time more interesting e.g. wholemeal, granary, chapatis, tortilla wraps, bagels, pitta breads, French stick.

Sandwich filling ideas:

- Cottage cheese and pineapple
- Cream cheese and chopped peppers
- Tuna and beetroot
- Flaked mackerel and cucumber
- Tinned salmon, tomato and lettuce
- Cheese and grated apple
- Hummus and mixed salad
- Egg, cress and tomato
- Tuna and onion
- Chicken and pineapple
- Peanut butter*
- Turkey with tomato, cucumber and lettuce
- Mixed beans with tomato and grated cheese



Feel like a change from sandwiches?

- Crackers with different toppings e.g. mozzarella and tomato or cottage cheese and pineapple.
- Pasta, couscous or rice salad e.g. pasta mixed with tuna and sweetcorn, chickpeas with rice and peas.
- Tub of salad, slice of meat e.g. lean beef or chicken with separate fingers of bread.
- A slice of homemade, cooked and cooled vegetable pizza (these can be made on pitta breads or English muffins).
- Hummus with breadsticks and vegetables to dip e.g. cauliflower, cucumber, mushrooms, carrots, celery, peppers.
- Dhal with chapati.

*If any child in a childcare setting has a nut allergy, then all parents and carers will be asked to avoid sending in packed lunches that contain any nut products.

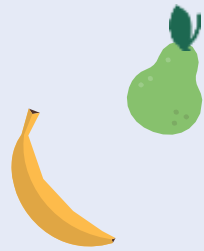
Fruits and Vegetables

Include fruit and vegetables as part of packed lunches for flavour, colour and vitamins. These could be in a salad or sandwich or to eat on their own e.g.

- Cherry tomatoes
- Cucumber sticks
- Apple
- Pineapple pieces (tinned in juice)
- Small box of raisins
- Grapes
- Strawberries
- Tinned peaches in juice



- Carrot sticks
- Pepper slices
- Pear
- Satsuma
- Melon pieces
- Banana
- Fruit cocktail in juice
- Ready-to-eat dried apricots or cherries



Handy Hints

- ✓ Remember to wash fruits and vegetables before eating.
- ✓ A portion for young children is about a child sized handful.
- ✓ Cutting up fruit to put in a lunchbox can make it fun to eat.
- ✓ Items such as grapes will need to be cut in half, lengthways for young children.
- ✓ Keep dried fruit to mealtimes to help look after your child's teeth.

Healthy Drinks

The healthiest drinks for packed lunches are plain water or milk.

Occasional Foods

From time to time the following could be included in a packed lunch:

- Slice of malt loaf
- Fruit or plain scone
- Homemade fruit muffin
- Small pancake
- Slice of banana bread
- Slice of fruit bread

Top Tips to Keep your Lunchbox Clean and Cool:

- Use an insulated lunch box. Clean and dry it every day.
 - Use ice packs or a frozen bottle of water.
 - If making the lunchbox the night before keep it cool in the fridge.
 - Don't forget to keep your lunch box cool at school.
- Make sure it is stored in a place that is away from warm areas.



Public Health Dietetic Team, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board and Gwent Healthy and Sustainable pre-school officers, with thanks to Cardiff and Vale Public Health Dietetic Team for the original publication.

For more information about eating well ask your Healthy and Sustainable Pre-school Officer, Health Visitor or School Nurse. June 2021