

Healthy LUNCHBOX

The benefits of healthy school lunches

A healthy and balanced packed lunch will:

- Help students to concentrate at school.
- Provide students with enough energy required.

The lunch should include nutritious foods from the following food groups:

- Cereals, cereal products (preferably wholegrain) and potatoes.
- Vegetables.
- Fruit.
- Milk and milk products.
- Lean meat, fish, poultry, eggs, legumes, nuts and seeds.

Practical advice

- Food in the lunchbox should be kept at a safe temperature of 4°C or below from the time a child leaves for school until lunchtime. This can be achieved by using an ice-pack.
- Wash your hands before preparing food.
- Use a variety of fresh foods to ensure that children are getting different nutrients.
- Limit foods high in saturated fats, sugar and salt due to their negative effects on health.
- Plain water as a drink.

- Avoid trans fats since these are artificially produced fats and do a lot of harm to the body.
- A product contains trans fats, if hydrogenated fats or vegetable fats partially hydrogenated are found on the ingredients list.
- Preferably use seasonal vegetables and fruit.
- Avoid perishable foods e.g. meat, poultry and dairy products in hot weather.
- Serve adequate portion sizes according to age and activity levels.
- Encourage homemade food and involve children in the preparation of their lunch.
- If you prepare lunch in the evening, keep refrigerated.
- Always throw away any left-over perishable foods brought back home in the lunch box.

Sandwich filling ideas

- Tuna (drained of oil) with fresh tomatoes and cucumber.
- Hummus/aubergine/bean/olive dip.
- Low fat cheese e.g. local mozzarella or pasteurised cheeselet, with grated carrots and cherry tomatoes.
- Sardines/mackerel/salmon, olives, tomatoes, lettuce and cucumber.
- Traditional homemade "bigilla".

Adapt the portions according to the age of the child.



LUNCHBOX

Yummy dips (choose one)

+
FRESH FRUIT & WATER

Recipe

TUNA, MACKEREL OR SARDINE DIP

INGREDIENTS

- ½ large can tuna/mackerel/sardine (drained from oil)
- 1 clove of garlic
- ½ tsp mustard
- ½ tsp chopped fresh mint, basil and parsley
- ½ tbsp sliced olives
- ½ tsp capers
- 1 small fresh tomato, deseeded
- Pinch of ground black pepper



RED KIDNEY BEAN DIP

INGREDIENTS

- 100g canned red kidney beans (rinsed in water) or cooked dried red kidney beans
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 garlic cloves
- Parsley

OLIVE DIP

INGREDIENTS

- 100g pitted black olives
- 2 garlic cloves
- ½ tsp capers
- 1½ tbsp parsley
- 1 small deseeded tomato





LUNCHBOX

Yummy dips (choose one)

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FRESH FRUIT & WATER

Recipe

HUMMUS DIP

INGREDIENTS

- 100g canned chickpeas (rinsed in water) or cooked dried chickpeas
- ¼ tsp mustard
- 1 garlic clove
- ½ tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- ½ tsp fresh lemon juice
- Parsley

Mix all ingredients in a food processor and blend until smooth.



AUBERGINE DIP

INGREDIENTS

- 1 small aubergine
- 1½ garlic cloves
- 1 small onion
- ½ tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- Mint and parsley
- Pinch of ground black pepper

METHOD

1. Peel, wash and chop the garlic and onion. Wash the aubergine and slice it.
2. Place all ingredients on an ovenproof dish. Add some olive oil, mint, parsley and pepper.
3. Bake for about 30 minutes at gas mark 6, (200°C).



LUNCHBOX

Accompaniments to dips



Accompaniments

INGREDIENTS

- 1 large carrot, cut into sticks
- ½ small cucumber, cut into sticks
- 1 coloured pepper, cut into sticks
- 8 cherry tomatoes
- 6–8 wholemeal "galletti" or 1 wholegrain bun or pitta bread



LUNCHBOX

Chickpea patties

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FRESH FRUIT & WATER

Recipe

INGREDIENTS

- ½ large can chickpeas (rinsed and drained) or cooked dried chickpeas
- ½ tbsp parsley
- 1 chopped onion
- ¼ tsp ground cumin
- ¼ tsp ground coriander
- 1 chopped garlic clove
- 1 tsp plain flour
- 1 tbsp water (if required)
- Pinch of ground black pepper

METHOD

1. Pre-heat oven, gas mark 6, (200°C). Lightly grease a baking sheet with olive oil or use a baking paper.
2. Mix the chickpeas, onions, garlic, coriander, cumin, parsley, pepper and flour in a food processor or hand blender. If mixture is too dry, add some water.
3. Shape the patties and place them on a baking sheet.
4. Bake for about 20 minutes.



LUNCHBOX

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Recipe

INGREDIENTS

- 1 wholemeal small bread
- ½ small can tuna/sardines/ mackarel/salmon (drained)
- 1 small tomato
- 1 chopped lettuce leaf
- ½ tsp capers
- ½ tsp sliced olives
- 2 slices cucumber
- ¼ chopped small onion
- 15g pasteurised cheeselet, diced
- 1 tsp canned butter beans (rinsed in water) or cooked dried butter beans
- ½ tsp chopped mint
- ½ tsp extra virgin olive oil
- Pinch of ground black pepper

METHOD

1. Cut open the bread and spread with tomato.
2. Mix all other ingredients together in a mixing bowl.
3. Spread filling over the bread.



LUNCHBOX

Hummus & veggie wrap

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Recipe

INGREDIENTS

- 1 wholegrain tortilla
- 3 tbsp hummus
- 2 lettuce leaves
- ½ coloured pepper, sliced
- 30g grated pasteurised cheeselet
- 1 small grated carrot
- 4 slices cucumber, deseeded and cut into sticks
- 1 small tomato, deseeded and thinly sliced
- Pinch of ground black pepper

METHOD

1. Warm the tortilla in a pan or a microwave oven.
2. Spread the hummus over the tortilla.
3. Place all other ingredients evenly in the middle of the tortilla.
4. Fold the top and the bottom of each tortilla towards the centre and roll up.



LUNCHBOX

Pizza squares

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Recipe

INGREDIENTS

- 2 slices wholegrain bread
- 1 tomato, deseeded and sliced
- 2 large fresh sliced mushrooms
- 1 tbsp sliced olives
- 1 small can tuna (drained of oil)
- 2 slices mozzarella
- Basil and oregano

METHOD

1. Pre-heat the oven gas mark 4, (180°C).
2. Place the tomato and mushrooms on the bread.
3. Add the tuna, the olives and herbs. Top with cheese.
4. Bake for about 10-12 minutes or until the cheese starts to melt.
5. Remove from oven, cool and refrigerate.



LUNCHBOX

Rainbow pasta salad

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FRESH FRUIT & WATER



Recipe

INGREDIENTS

- 75g wholemeal pasta
- 2 tbsp frozen sweetcorn
- 1 small grated carrot
- 1 small chopped tomato
- 2 tbsp frozen peas
- 1 small can tuna (drained of oil)
- 30g pasteurised cheeselet or mozzarella, diced
- 1 tbsp chopped parsley

METHOD

1. Cook the pasta in boiling water.
2. Mix all ingredients in a mixing bowl.
3. Drain the pasta and mix with all other ingredients.



LUNCHBOX

Couscous salad

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FRESH FRUIT & WATER

Recipe

INGREDIENTS

- 35g wholemeal couscous
- ½ small can red kidney beans (rinsed in water) or cooked dried red kidney beans
- 15g pasteurised cheeselet or mozzarella, diced
- 2 small chopped tomatoes
- ¼ coloured pepper
- ¼ small chopped onion
- ½ tsp fresh mint
- ½ tsp fresh basil
- 3 slices diced cucumbers
- 1 tsp sliced olives
- 1 tsp capers
- 1 tsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tsp balsamic vinegar
- Pinch of ground black pepper

METHOD

1. Prepare couscous according to the instruction on the packet.
2. Mix **all** the chopped vegetables, herbs, diced cheese and beans with the couscous.
3. Add olive oil and balsamic vinegar and mix. Season with pepper.



LUNCHBOX

Homemade cereal bar

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FRESH FRUIT & WATER



Recipe

INGREDIENTS [MAKES 12 BARS]

- 2 cups rolled oats
- 2 large apples
- ¾ tsp ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp ground cloves
- 4 tbsp sunflower seeds
- 100g raisins
- 30g chopped almonds
- 100g chopped prunes
- 300ml fresh orange juice
- 1 teaspoon vanilla essence

METHOD

1. Heat the oven gas mark 4, (180°C). Line a square ovenproof dish, 20cm x 20cm (8"x8") with baking paper.
2. In a saucepan, place the prunes, apples, raisins, orange juice, cinnamon and cloves. Cook for a few minutes on moderate heat.
3. Remove from heat. Add the oats, sunflower seeds, almonds and vanilla essence.
4. Pour the mixture in the greased dish, press evenly and bake in the oven for about 20-25 minutes.
5. Cool and when set cut into 12 portions.
6. These can be frozen for future use.

