

Healthier Choices for a Tasty Lunchbox



**For more guidance on nutrition, healthier eating
and getting active (for all ages), follow Healthy Somerset!**

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Healthier Choices for a Tasty Lunchbox

Appetites and tastebuds can be ever changing, and it can be a challenge to keep up with new ideas and still be confident that we are providing all the nutrients needed for growth.

This guide will give you an idea of portion sizes, variety, healthier swaps suggestions and creative ways to use up leftovers. Some meals could be batch cooked in advance and eaten over a couple of days.



Switch around ideas to suit your child and what you have in the cupboard. Remember, it is normal for children to experience food related peer pressure and this can be challenging. Check your school's lunchbox policy to be sure of their recommendations.

Useful Websites and Apps

Be sure to check out the Healthier Lives website for more info on staying healthier as a family:

www.nhs.uk/healthier-families

The **NHS Food Scanner App** is a great FREE tool for finding out how much sugar, saturated fat and salt is in a food or drink, and then providing healthier swap suggestions.

Better Health Families are also on **Facebook and Instagram** – follow their pages for regular updates and helpful tips!



Our Lunchbox Template



Getting Organised

Are you able to plan your lunchboxes for the week?

This could help you save time and money when shopping, by ensuring that nothing goes to waste. Here are some of our ideas...

Pitta

You can store pitta bread in the freezer and they will keep for longer.

Wraps

One small tin of salmon makes enough for 2 wraps - store leftover mixture in the fridge for up to 2 days.

Yoghurt

Buy one large pot and split into small tubs for lunches.

Fruit

Choose two or three different fruits each week to add variety.

Monday - Ham salad pitta pocket, malt loaf slice + banana

Tuesday - Monday night leftover pasta, yoghurt + apple

Wednesday - Salmon cucumber wrap, malt loaf slice + apple

Thursday - Hummus salad sandwich, yoghurt + breadsticks

Friday - Salmon and carrot wrap, banana + a small flapjack

Getting Started

**Be
SUGAR
SMART!**

Under 7s
should have no
more than 5
teaspoons (19g)
of sugar per
day

Under 11s should
have no more
than 6 teaspoons
(25g) of sugar
per day

Check the labels,
you may be
surprised by the
sugar content of
packaged
foods!



Remember, you and your children should aim to eat your 5-a-day. Aim to get two portions of fruit and veg in their lunchbox!

Keep encouraging children to try new foods.

It is always worth experimenting with different flavours and spices as they get older.

Get Snack Smart!



Banana – natural sugar, high fibre



Veg sticks (with hummus) – low sugar, high fibre

Save Money, Save Waste!

Preparing snacks at home can be much cheaper than pre-packaged snacks and saves plastic waste!

- Can be enjoyed every day
- 3-4 times per week
- Only occasionally



Chocolate – high saturated fat, high sugar



Cheese cubes – source of calcium but high in salt



Crisps – high fat, high salt, low fibre

Get Snack Smart!



Berries and natural yoghurt
– natural sugar, high fibre, calcium and protein



Dried fruit – high in natural sugar, high fibre



Breadsticks – low sugar, medium salt



Malt loaf slice – medium sugar, high in fibre

Lots of children's snacks can be packed with hidden sugar and salt, even if they claim to be good for us. Check out our traffic light guide to find out more...

- Can be enjoyed every day
- 3-4 times per week
- Only occasionally



Cake slice – high sugar, high fat

Hit the Spot Sandwich Fillers

All of these can be used in sandwiches, wraps or pittas – variety is great for keeping lunches interesting!



Salmon and cucumber wrap.
Mash tinned salmon and mix with diced cucumber and soft cheese – add to a wrap with salad leaves.



Hummus, grated carrot and sultanas.



Beef and homemade slaw sandwich.
For the slaw: mix grated carrot, shredded cabbage and diced red onion with plain yoghurt, mayo and a splash of lemon juice.



Ham salad pitta pocket.



Salmon and carrot wrap.
Mix mashed tinned salmon, grated carrots and salad of your choice.

Tummy Filling Lunch Pots

Prep these in advance, make extra portions and use over 2-3 days!

Remember, your child's taste will change as they get older. Try adding other ingredients like avocado, olives, red onion and cherry tomatoes to increase the variety of nutrients they are eating.



Pasta Pots

Cooked wholewheat pasta (about a handful) mixed up with chopped pepper/ cucumber/tomatoes/ sweetcorn. Add small chunks of cheese, beans or tuna. Either drizzle with oil or add a teaspoon of mayonnaise.



Mediterranean Couscous

Cook couscous with vegetable stock, and mix with chopped tomatoes, lettuce, cucumber and feta cheese. Drizzle with a dressing of 2tbsp olive or rapeseed oil mixed with a splash of lemon juice. You could also add other veggies of your choice.

Level Up Leftovers

Here are some ideas for you to transform your evening leftovers into lunches...



New potatoes – Try adding boiled eggs or tinned tuna, with chopped salad or mixed veg



Pasta – Add veggies and protein. Mix in some chopped salad, tinned chickpeas, peas, mashed boiled egg...

Save Money, Save Waste!

Using leftovers for lunchboxes is a great way to save money and reduce food waste – don't throw leftovers away!