

What is a healthy packed lunch?

A healthy packed lunch is a balanced meal providing a variety of nutrients, to be found in four food groups:

Starchy Foods

Base each meal on a starchy food, such as bread, potato, rice, pasta, yam. Starchy foods give energy, fibre, vitamins and minerals.

- 😊 Bread, try different types, such as sliced bread, wraps, chapattis, bread rolls, bagels or naan bread.
- 😊 Other starchy foods, such as pasta, potato, couscous or rice.
- ✓ Whole grain varieties are best for fibre, which is vital for a healthy digestive system.



Meat and Alternatives

Add some protein, for example meat, fish, eggs, beans or pulses. Protein foods build muscles and provide minerals.

- 😊 Lean meats, such as chicken, turkey or ham.
- 😊 Include oily fish, such as fresh tuna, sardines or mackerel at least once every three weeks.
- 😊 Cheese, such as cottage cheese, edam, cheddar or soft cheese.
- 😊 Egg, such as boiled, quiche or omelette.
- 😊 Meat alternatives, such as quorn or tofu.
- 😊 Dishes containing pulses, beans or meat, for example curry or falafel.



Milk and Dairy Foods

Include a dairy product or dairy alternative, such as cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais or tzatziki. These foods provide calcium necessary for strong bones and teeth, as well as providing protein and vitamins.



Fruit and Vegetables

Don't forget to include fruit and vegetables. You can use fresh, frozen, tinned or dried. Fruit and vegetables are full of vitamins, minerals and fibre necessary for the body to function properly and to keep you strong and healthy.

- 😊 Add tomato, lettuce, cucumber or apple to a sandwich.
- 😊 A vegetable dish, such as vegetable curry, salad or roast vegetables.
- 😊 Fresh fruit, such as apple, banana, pear or satsumas.
- 😊 Dried fruit, such as raisins, apricots or dates.
- 😊 Fruit salad (fresh or tinned in juice) or vegetable salad.
- 😊 Finger foods, such as cherry tomatoes, carrot or slices of pepper. Good with a dip, such as taramasalata or salsa.
- ✓ Use fresh fruit and vegetables, which are in season to help the environment and enjoy variety!
- ✓ All packed lunches should contain at least one item of fruit, vegetable or salad.



Drinks

Drinks, especially water, help children to concentrate and feel well. Water is freely available in school.

- ✗ The school has a water-only policy so please do not put any other drinks in the packed lunch.



- ✗ The school has a no peanuts or nuts policy as some children are allergic to these.