



LUNCH BOX FOOD IDEAS- STARCHY FOODS

Oatcakes- you can serve these with slices of cheese, ham, or spreads such as hummus or soft cheese.

Rice Cakes - Available in a range of flavours and sizes, a good alternative to crisps.

Crispbreads and Crackers - available in different varieties, choose wholegrains such as Rye crackers or wholegrain for more fibre

Couscous - Serve plain or add whatever bits and pieces you have to hand. Chop up and mix in left over meat, vegetables fruit such as grapes and raisins to make a delicious salad.

Granola - Serve by itself, or use as a topping for yoghurt.

Rice - Serve plain, mould into shapes or raid your fridge for bits and pieces to make a delicious rice salad.

Bread, bread rolls and bagels - Great for sandwiches, try 50:50 varieties or wholegrain

Potatoes - Potatoes are great for lunch, try boiled new potatoes, left over roast potatoes or even make a potato salad.

Popcorn - Popcorn can be a healthier alternative to crisps. Have a go at making it yourself and try plain or add your own flavour combinations.

Pitta Bread - Kids love them stuffed, toasted, or sliced for dipping.

Pasta - Pasta comes in so many different shapes and sizes, serve it up plain or add all sorts to make a delicious pasta salad.

Tortilla Wraps - As well as filling and rolling you can also cut into bite size spirals, or bake to make tortilla crisps.

Breadsticks – good for dipping, or on their own as an alternative to crisps

Pretzels - These contain less fat than standard crisps but check the label for salt.



LUNCH BOX FOOD IDEAS- DAIRY FOODS

Snack cheese such as Babybel and Cheese Triangles. These are quick and convenient. Or as a cheaper alternative you can portion out your own in small containers and pack with crackers.

Roule Cheese - If your child likes garlic pop a chunk in a container to spread on crackers, oatcakes or rice cakes or use as a sandwich filler.

Milk –Ask your school if you can buy a couple of cartons a week for packed lunches.

Feta Cheese – It's strong flavour means you only need a little and is delicious in salads, use as a filler for wraps or crumble chunks into rice or couscous.

Mozarella – Its mild taste makes it a hit, serve it with cherry tomatoes and pesto in sandwiches or add chunks to rice, pasta or couscous salads

Yoghurt – Check the labels for sugar content or buy plain yogurt in a large tub and portion it out yourself in a leak-proof container and add fresh, frozen or tinned fruit.

Crème Fraiche - Stirred into pasta with bacon or ham, peas or broccoli and a little grated cheese is delicious

Cheddar Cheese - Always a big favourite. Use as a sandwich filler, a topping for homemade pizza, cheese muffins or frittata or serve grated, sliced or cubed as a finger food or with crackers.

Cream Cheese - Another favourite, serve in a wrap with crackers or pitta, mix into a dip and serve with vegetable sticks.

Dairy Alternatives – There are a variety of dairy free and vegan alternatives to milk, cheese and yogurts, check the label to ensure they are fortified with calcium



LUNCH BOX FOOD IDEAS-PROTEIN FOODS

Tuna - Stuff in a pitta pocket, with some cucumber or lettuce. Mix a little mayo and add sweetcorn, chopped pepper and spring onion or mix in with pasta.

Ham – Cut off any visible fat and check the fat and salt content. Add slices of ham to wraps, serve by itself rolled up or around cheese, cut into small pieces and add to pasta or rice salads.

Eggs – Hard boiled eggs are a great source of protein. Serve them whole or sliced with a salad or mix with cress and mayonnaise for a sandwich or wrap. Use in baking to make cheese muffins or a frittata.

Prawns - Often forgotten but lovely stirred into rice, pasta or couscous or stuff into pitta pockets with salad and mayo

Hummus - Serve in a tub to spread on pitta, tortillas or crackers or with vegetable sticks for dipping.

Chickpeas - These also count as one of your 5-a-day vegetable portions. You can roast them to make a tasty snack or serve raw stirred into salads

Nuts & Seeds - If there are no school restrictions, try mixed unsalted nuts, such as cashew, almonds, walnuts and Brazil nuts as a snack, mix with dried fruits or sprinkle seeds on top of salads or yogurts

Roast Beef - Use up leftovers from a Sunday roast. Roll it up as finger food, put in a pitta or shred into pasta.

Chicken - Again use any leftovers, serve on its own, add to a salad or pitta, even chicken dippers make great finger food.

Sausages - Whilst not the healthiest option they can be given as an occasional treat, try lean or cocktail sausages chopped in a pasta salad.



LUNCH BOX FOOD IDEAS- FRUIT FOODS

Pineapple - Slice or cut into chunks and serve. The tinned variety in juice are handy to have in the cupboard and taste lovely.

Citrus Fruits – Easy peelers, satsumas, mandarins and oranges, freeze well, peel them ready to eat or serve tinned varieties.

Kiwi – Cut in half and pack a spoon, or peel into slices or chunks.

Melon – Slice or cut into chunks or serve with other fruit as a kebab

Apple – Cut into slices and brush with orange or lemon juice to prevent browning.

Bananas – A healthy fast food. Dried banana chips can be an alternative but check the sugar content.

Blueberries - Serve on their own, with other fruit or on plain yogurt.

Strawberries - Serve them as they come or slice off the top and cut into slices or chunks.

Raspberries - Serve by themselves, or add with other berries to make small tubs of sugar free jelly in a silicone cup cake case.

Apricots - Dried apricots are great if you run out of fresh fruit, serve whole or chopped and mixed with other dried fruit. Too much can be high in sugar, a portion is around 30g or a small handful.

Dried Vine Fruits - Raisins, sultanas and currants are easy to buy in bulk.

Dried Apple Rings / Dried Mango - Soft and chewy they are always a big hit with children, chop them up to add to a yoghurt.

Dried Berries – Strawberries, blueberries, cranberries are a good alternative to fresh fruit as they last longer and you only need a small amount. Keep to mealtimes as the sugar can be bad for teeth



LUNCH BOX FOOD IDEAS-VEGETABLE FOODS

Cucumber - One of our favourites, cucumber can be cut into sticks, cubes or chunks, served with a dip, garlic mayo or hummus, or chopped and stirred into a rice, couscous or pasta salad.

Carrot - Cut them into sticks, disks or chunks and grate them into salads and mix in.

Peas - Peas are great source of protein. You can pop frozen peas in your lunch box straight from the freezer. Serve on their own, or mix in with rice, couscous or pasta.

Sweetcorn – Tinned, frozen or fresh sweetcorn all work, serve as it is, add to sandwiches and wraps or as part of a salad.

Olives - Serve as they come, or add them to pasta or rice salad.

Spinach & lettuce - Adds colour and tasty in wraps, and pittas

Tomatoes - Slice tomatoes and add to wraps chop them for salads or cut into wedges to eat on the side. Kids love cherry and plum tomatoes.

Pepper - Cut into sticks, straight across the middle, add them to salads or look out for mini peppers which you can stuff with cream cheese

Broccoli - Serve raw , lightly steamed with a dip or mix in with noodles, pasta, rice or couscous salad.

Beetroot - You can buy it cooked or pickled, serve in chunks or slices, whizz it with a bit of yoghurt or cream cheese to make a dip.

Mange Tout and Sugar Snap Pea Serve raw, they make an easy lunch box food.

Baby Sweetcorn - Serve them whole, halved or sliced across in little rounds.