

# What's for Lunch this Week?!

LUNCH BOX	 GROWING FOOD (PROTEIN & GRAINS)	 VEGETABLE	 FRUIT	 EXTRAS
MONDAY				
TUESDAY				
WEDNESDAY				
THURSDAY				
FRIDAY				

# Lunch Box Ideas

GROWING FOOD (PROTEIN & GRAINS)	VEGETABLE	FRUIT	EXTRAS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tortellini salad with edamame, almonds, dried cranberries and dressing or pesto</li> <li>• Quinoa salad with veggies and chickpeas</li> <li>• Nut/seed butter fruit wraps</li> <li>• Sunflower butter and banana sandwich</li> <li>• Apple and cheddar quesadillas</li> <li>• Tuna salad in whole wheat pita pocket</li> <li>• Chicken salad with crackers</li> <li>• Turkey avocado roll ups</li> <li>• Tofu scramble with brown rice</li> <li>• Black bean salad with whole grain chips</li> <li>• Mini taco bowls, or bean &amp; rice burrito</li> <li>• Black bean and sweet potato quesadillas</li> <li>• Kabobs: low-sodium turkey/chicken breast, cherry tomatoes &amp; cucumbers</li> <li>• Hummus and veggie pita pockets</li> <li>• Cottage cheese, sunflower seeds, mixed berries, &amp; crackers</li> <li>• Hard boiled egg and Canadian bacon on whole wheat English muffin</li> <li>• Greek yogurt parfait with whole grain granola, seeds, and berries</li> <li>• Frittata with veggies or mini quiche bites</li> <li>• Dinner leftovers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Snap peas</li> <li>• Cherry tomatoes</li> <li>• Bell pepper strips</li> <li>• Baby carrots</li> <li>• Olives</li> <li>• Sliced cucumbers</li> <li>• Celery sticks</li> <li>• Green beans</li> <li>• Shelled edamame</li> <li>• Avocado slices</li> <li>• Blanched broccoli spears</li> <li>• Mixed salad</li> <li>• Cauliflower</li> <li>• Roasted sweet potato cubes</li> <li>• Leftover roasted veggies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apple, unsweetened applesauce</li> <li>• Banana</li> <li>• Clementines / cuties</li> <li>• Orange wedges</li> <li>• Grapefruit wedges</li> <li>• Grapes</li> <li>• Pear</li> <li>• Nectarine</li> <li>• Peach</li> <li>• Plum</li> <li>• Kiwi</li> <li>• Berries</li> <li>• Watermelon cubes</li> <li>• Melon slices</li> <li>• Apricots</li> <li>• Pineapple chunks</li> <li>• Canned fruit, in natural juice</li> <li>• ¼ cup dried fruit (no added sugar if possible)</li> <li>• Smoothie</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low-fat milk</li> <li>• Yogurt</li> <li>• String cheese</li> <li>• Cheese cubes</li> <li>• Cottage cheese</li> <li>• Whole grain, fruit/veggie packed muffins (banana oat, carrot zucchini)</li> <li>• Protein energy balls</li> <li>• Granola Bar (&lt;10 g sugar, &gt;3 g fiber)</li> <li>• Air popped popcorn</li> <li>• Baked chips</li> <li>• Rice cakes</li> <li>• Whole grain cereals</li> <li>• Whole grain crackers</li> <li>• Pretzels</li> <li>• Trail mix</li> <li>• Nuts or seeds</li> <li>• Guacamole, hummus, Greek yogurt dip</li> <li>• Small treat: stickers, note, joke</li> </ul>

## Planning tips

- Let kids help plan, shop, prepare, and pack based on their readiness
  - Grades 1-3: introduce lunch planning chart, include them in decision making
  - Grades 4-6: encourage packing all or part of their lunch independently
- Pick items from each food group: protein, grain, veggie, fruit, dairy
- Include a variety of colors and shapes. Use fun shape cutters for sandwiches or fruit
- Wash fruit and veggies. Peel and slice to make them easier to eat at lunch time
- Make sure the lunch box / containers / pouches are easy to open
- Repurpose leftovers
- Small treats are ok: bites sized chocolate, cookie, pebble, flower, note
  - Special surprises can make lunchtime exciting!
  - Focus on balanced lunch most of the time. Save special sweet treats for 1-2 days a week

## Lunch box upgrades

- Fruit roll up → Favorite fruit or fruit leather without added sweetener (Stretch Island, Annie's)
- Fruit snacks → Dried cherries or other fruit (unsweetened, remember ¼ cup portion size)
- Juice box → grapes and bottled water, fruit infused water, or citrus sprinkles like True Citrus
- Cookies → Cocoa spiced popcorn, cocoa energy balls with dried fruit
- Chips → Baked tortilla chips with bean salsa

