



## Packed lunches made easy




A packed lunch can be a healthy and delicious choice, allowing you to provide the energy and nutrients your child needs to help them to take part in camp activities. Aiming for variety is key to avoid lunches becoming boring and repetitive, as well as getting the right balance of foods to provide all the nutrients your child needs.

For most children regardless of age, weight, activity levels, dietary restrictions/preferences or ethnic origin, a balanced packed lunch will follow general healthy eating guidelines, although portion sizes will vary based on individual factors such as age, weight and activity levels.



But remember, food can only be nutritious if it's eaten, so involve your children in planning their lunchbox for camp – do they prefer finger foods or will they eat a salad? Will they be happy taking certain foods such as fish or eggs? Make sure you keep the packed lunch cool – use cool bags or ice packs. You can even make your own - freeze a bottle of water, yogurt or fromage frais tubes the night before - they'll melt ready for lunch!

<b>What</b>	<b>Why</b>	<b>Top tips</b>
<p><b>A starchy food</b></p> 	To provide energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a variety of bread rolls, mini wraps, pitta pockets, chapatis - try mix and matching!</li> <li>• Avoid soggy sandwiches - try grated carrot or put tomatoes between your main filling and some lettuce to protect the bread.</li> <li>• Breadsticks and wholemeal crackers are great finger foods.</li> <li>• Make salads using leftover rice/pasta/couscous/potatoes/yams/plantain – add canned fish, canned pulses or cooked meat, cheese and any veg you have.</li> <li>• Make easy pizzas: pitta breads with tomato puree, veg and cheese – toasted under the grill and cooled in the fridge.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Plenty of different types of fruit and veg</b></p> 	To help towards 5 A DAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try all different types – from fresh to dried and even canned (in natural juice or no added salt).</li> <li>• Think rainbows and try and provide a variety of colours.</li> <li>• Make them easy to eat - cut into chunks or sticks rather than leaving them whole.</li> <li>• Try veg sticks like carrots, cucumber, peppers or sugar snap peas, either on their own or with</li> </ul>

		a dip.
<b>A protein portion</b> 	To help growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You can make good protein-based dips from oily fish (e.g. mackerel or salmon) or a veg alternative like houmous.</li> <li>Use cold cooked meat (e.g. jerk chicken), fish (e.g. tuna), tofu or Quorn in salads.</li> <li>Frittatas (posh omelettes!) are great for packed lunches and a good way of using up leftover veg and meats</li> </ul>
<b>Dairy (or fortified dairy alternative)</b> 	For calcium to help strong bones and teeth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include a pot or tube of low-fat yogurt/fromage frais, or a mini cheese portion/cheese triangle</li> </ul>
<b>Fluids</b> 	For hydration, especially when active and/or in hot weather	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Smart choices are water, a small carton of fruit juice or low fat milk if you can keep it cool.</li> <li>Encourage your child to drink regularly and remind them that water is available throughout the day.</li> </ul>



When it comes to snack time, for physically active children some parents may think a sugary snack is great for an energy boost but having too much free sugars, as in sweets and sugar-sweetened carbonated drinks, is bad for dental health and can provide excess energy that can contribute to weight gain. It's a good idea to select healthier options where possible and provide foods that will keep

your child's energy levels topped up whilst also providing some nutrients. Try baked pitta bread chips, plain popcorn or rice cakes, or for a sweeter snack, a piece of fruit, or a small slice of banana bread or malt loaf.

If your child enjoys baking, have a look at recipes for healthier fruit loaves or muffins that you could make at the weekend together.

Happy eating!