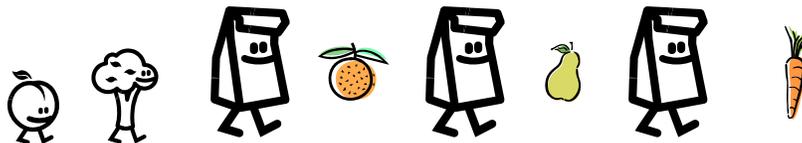


## Lunch To Go



Lunch often tops children's list of things they like most about school. However, for parents lunch can be a dreaded chore. Packing school lunches is time-consuming and can be frustrating because your child may not always like the foods you pack.

### Get Kids Involved



One of the best ways to ensure kids will eat what you pack is to include them in the entire process. Start with letting them decide if they will use a lunch box, insulated bag, or paper sack.

Work with your child to make a list of foods that they want to include in their lunch. You can help guide the list to be sure it includes only foods that are both safe to pack and contribute to a healthy diet.

Take the kids to the grocery store to purchase the food on the list for their lunches. When you get home have them help you store the foods. When it is time to prepare the lunches, have them help with preparing and packaging the food.

### Try these in sack lunches:

- Substitute dried fruit chips, pretzels and popcorn for potato chips.
- Thread broccoli, tomatoes, zucchini and cauliflower on a straw to make veggie kabobs. Send low-fat ranch dressing for dip.
- Cube fruits, which can be dipped in fruit-flavored yogurt. Send bananas, pears and pineapple chunks or single-serve containers of applesauce.
- Pack a pita pocket with peanut butter or another favorite filling.
- Make a tortilla pizza, rolling spaghetti sauce, cheese and low-fat pepperoni inside.
- Read Nutrition Fact labels so you can choose healthier food choices that are lower in fat, and sodium. Select chicken, turkey, lean ham and other lean lunch meats which are rich in protein.
- Select a beverage that is 100% juice. Include 1 % milk—or send along money to buy it.
- Keep portions small. Little bellies fill quickly, so limit portions to a half a cup or less.
- Remember the sizzle. Make the lunch look appealing. Dig through that drawer to find cookie cutters to turn sandwiches into seasonal shapes. Toss in a special note written on a napkin from Mom or Dad.
- Use an ice pack to keep cold foods cold or pack perishable foods next to a frozen juice box that will thaw in time for lunch.

