

Lunch Ideas

LUNCH BOX BASICS

insulated lunch bag
insulated food container
reusable spoons and forks

small ice packs
containers with lids (various sizes)
reusable water bottle

1. tuna noodle salad with red pepper slices
2. minestrone or lentil soup with whole grain crackers and a yogurt
3. roast beef, chicken or turkey sandwich with cherry tomatoes, cantaloupe and an oatmeal raisin cookie
4. mini pizza (homemade pizza cooked on an English muffin or pita bread) with carrot sticks and a container of cut-up strawberries
5. homemade “snackable” lunch box with: fresh vegetables and/or fruit; cheese cubes, roast meat or chicken; mini bagels or whole grain crackers (use muffin liners or small plastic containers to separate different items)
6. couscous or quinoa salad with chickpeas, shredded carrot and sliced snap peas, and milk to drink
7. spaghetti and meat sauce with kiwi slices
8. yogurt parfait (yogurt, fruit and granola or dried cereal) with a slice of homemade, whole wheat banana bread
9. whole grain crackers with hummus, cheese, mini carrots and pineapple chunks
10. taco salad with taco-seasoned meat or beans, lettuce, tomato, salsa, shredded cheese topped with crumbled whole grain tortilla chips or rice
11. cold cereal with milk and a banana
12. leftover stir fry with rice, and milk to drink
13. tuna or salmon salad sandwich with cucumber slices, tomato and lettuce, and a fruit cup
14. pasta salad with cheese, beans, bell peppers and tomatoes and a container of fresh or frozen blueberries
15. bean wrap (kidney beans or black beans, corn, grated cheddar cheese, guacamole, salsa and sour cream wrapped up in a whole wheat flour tortilla) with a mandarin orange
16. pita pocket with hummus, lettuce, shredded carrots, cucumber slices and cheese, and a tube of yogurt
17. leftover beef stew or chili with a slice of whole wheat bread and orange wedges
18. toasted multi-grain bagel with nut or seed butter and jam, with yogurt and melon slices
19. egg salad sandwich topped with lettuce and tomato slices, a container of fresh or frozen raspberries, and milk to drink
20. nut or seed butter and a banana, rolled up into a whole wheat tortilla or on a whole wheat hot dog bun and a yogurt drink
21. salad shaker – mix of salad ingredients (ex: lettuce, cucumber, bell peppers, tomato, shredded carrots, dried cranberries, shredded cheese, nuts, seeds, roasted chicken) in a container with a lid; a separate container with dressing, and a whole wheat crusty roll
22. raisin bran muffin with string cheese and a banana
23. chicken salad sandwich on whole wheat bread and a container of mango slices
24. cottage cheese with a fruit cup, a slice of whole grain bread and an oatmeal raisin cookie
25. pieces of roast chicken with honey mustard for dipping, snap peas, and a homemade muffin or biscuit

A note about peanut butter alternatives

Substitutes for peanut butter include: soy butter (ex: WowButter™), golden pea butter, sunflower seed butter (ex: SunButter™) and nut butters (ex: almond, hazelnut). These products provide similar amounts of protein and fat as peanut butter, and have a similar taste and texture.

Be aware of food allergies and child care facility policies. Choose age-appropriate foods. Remember that children under four years of age are at high risk for choking.