



# What's For Lunch?

## Healthy Lunch, Healthy Land

Are you eating out for lunch five days a week? Looking for a way to get your health and pocketbook back on track while living a more sustainable lifestyle? Try packing your lunch! Not only does packing your lunch allow you to take control of what goes into your body and how food is prepared, but you will also be saving money and minimizing waste from the plastic to-go containers, bags, and utensils.

Preparing your lunch the night before is easy. In about 10 minutes, you can have a healthy lunch that is likely lower in sodium, unhealthy fats, and calories. Don't forget to pack mid-morning and afternoon snacks too!

## Getting Started with the Outside

To keep it green, you can reuse a brown bag and put lunch items in reusable plastic containers. Or, you can invest in one of the many lunch bags or lunch boxes that have hit the market in recent years. A few resources to check out: Mirador Community Store, New Seasons, Goodsense Design and [laptoplunches.com](http://laptoplunches.com). These allow you to put everything in separate, safe, reusable containers.

To further minimize waste, buy bigger sizes of natural applesauce, yogurt, and low-fat cheese and make your own portions rather than buying these items individually packaged.

## It's the Inside That Really Counts

If you're going with the lunchbox staple – the sandwich – start with 100% whole wheat or whole grain bread. Just because it's brown, doesn't mean it's a whole grain. Check the ingredient list for “whole wheat”, “spouted wheat” or other whole grain listed as the first ingredient. You can vary your bread by using whole wheat pitas, tortillas (think wraps and burritos), mini-bagels, or English muffins.

If the sandwich is your main vehicle for protein, there are many options. Try a lean animal protein like turkey, chicken, tuna, ham, roast beef, or a vegetarian protein source such as old fashioned peanut butter, hummus, Tofu Pate, tempeh, veggie burger, or mashed beans. Look for one of the many deli meats that has 500mg of sodium or less (per serving) such as *Applegate Farms* organic turkey, *Hormel Natural Choice* Roast Beef, or some of the *Healthy Choice* varieties.

If you don't like sandwiches, try a “hearty salad” that includes a protein source like tofu, beans, chicken, or shrimp. Or try a whole grain-based salad like pasta, brown rice, or quinoa. You could also include homemade soups and stews full of vegetables and protein-rich beans. Yum!

## Drink Up!

Bring your beverage in a stainless steel container from home. Water is always the best beverage, however, unsweetened iced tea, sparkling water, nonfat or 1% milk are also healthy options.

## Mix and Match Ideas

Pick an item from each column to create a yummy sandwich, wrap, or whole grain entree. Find snack ideas too!

### *Bread/Starch*

Whole wheat/grain bread  
Rye bread  
Whole wheat bagel (1/2 or mini)  
Whole wheat English muffin  
Whole wheat bun  
Whole wheat crackers  
Whole wheat pasta  
Whole wheat pita bread  
Quinoa (excellent protein source as well)  
Brown rice  
Other whole grains

### *Protein*

Lean turkey, chicken  
Lean beef, ham  
Tuna /Salmon (packed in water)  
Peanut butter (Natural/old-fashioned)  
Nuts (limit to 1/4 cup/day)  
Soy nuts; edamame  
Tofu pate  
Hummus  
Beans (soup, dip, mashed)  
Low fat cheese (string cheese)  
Low fat/fat free yogurt (60-150kcal)  
1% or skim milk  
Low fat/nonfat cottage cheese  
Meat substitutes (Gardenburger, Boca, etc.)  
Seitan  
Eggs

### *Fruit & Vegetable*

Fresh fruits (see Dirty Dozen list below)  
Canned fruits (in water or juice)  
Natural applesauce (no sugar added)  
Dried fruits  
Fresh vegetables (carrots, snap peas, cherry tomatoes)  
Lettuce/tomato in sandwiches  
Salads (tossed, fruit, spinach)

## The Dirty Dozen

These 12 popular fruits and vegetables are consistently the most contaminated with pesticides. Consider choosing organic of the following produce:

**Apples, bell peppers, celery, cherries, grapes (imported), nectarines, peaches, pears, potatoes, red raspberries, spinach, strawberries.**

The best option is to grow your own organic fruits and vegetables and savor the flavor! Or pick up organic varieties at the local farmers markets or through a Community Supported Agriculture program.

Have fun and happy eating!