

Chef Solus' Healthy Lunch Box Ideas



Healthy lunches for school can be quick and easy. Here are some of our dietitians favorite lunch box meals that are easy to make. We included a few ideas on making lunch fun for the kids along. Have the kids color in the pictures and post it in your kitchen for easy reference!

Sandwich Ideas

Get out the cookie cutters – no not for cookies, but for sandwiches. Kids love food in shapes. Surprise them with different shapes over the week.

Serve sliced ham, chicken, tuna or egg salad sandwiches on 100% whole wheat or other bran. Some kids love mustard and mayo but some kids may just want a pickle with it. Go with what your child likes.



Peanut butter and banana sandwich – apples will work too. (*Meatless*)

Some kids don't like peanut butter but will enjoy cashew or almond butter as a spread. (*Meatless*)

Tea sandwiches: These are bite-sized sandwiches. You can make your child a cream cheese tea sandwich with very thin cucumber slices. (*Meatless*)

Serve sliced meat rolled up into tubes and offer the bread separate.



Tuna salad can be offered with crackers. Remember, bread doesn't have to be sliced bread; offer whole wheat bagels or tortillas. Even just plain sticky brown rice or couscous can be a hit.

Make a face - Open faced bagel with cream cheese and a face (use raisin for the eyes, a cashew for the nose etc.) Kids love to help create a face. (*Meatless*)

Bite-Sized Food Ideas

Toothpicks can add some fun too – kids love bite-sized food. So make a mini-sandwich and place a toothpick in it. You can get toothpicks with fun designs at party stores.

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Other bite-sized food includes cucumber and avocado rolls (many grocery stores now have a section of Japanese food). *(Meatless)*

Make your own Japanese rolls: Use Korean roasted seaweed (this has a nice sesame flavor to it) and sticky rice. Just roll up the rice like into a mini-cylinder shape. Have your kids help you make it the night before.

Add dips- kids love dipping foods - Fruits and veggies are great for dipping! Serve mini-carrots or jicama with ranch dressing, slightly steamed broccoli with light mayo, sliced apples (use lemon juice to keep them from browning) with peanut butter. Try frozen peas and corn, usually favorites of kids. *(Meatless)*

Offer half of a sweet potato with a sprinkle of brown sugar or even slice it into circular shapes, Take advantage of tropical fruits such as mango slices or kiwi (easy to scoop out with a spoon). *(Meatless)*

Sliced mango, kiwi, or apples (use orange juice to help prevent browning) *(Meatless)*

Try a garbanzo and kidney bean salad. *(Meatless)*

Edamame (soybean) or sugar snap peas (good source of protein) *(Meatless)*

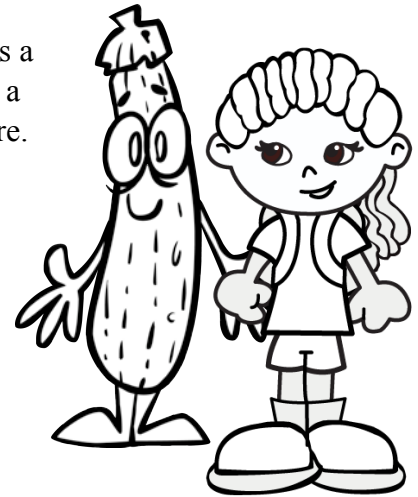
Cube cheese and offer it on a toothpick. *(Meatless)*

Trail mix (nuts, dried cranberries stick pretzels) *(Meatless)*

Vanilla yogurt with raspberries and granola or nuts on top (place it in a small plastic container (use an ice pack to keep it cold) *(Meatless)*

Fresh mozzarella cheese in a tortilla. *(Meatless)*

Cereal. Just make sure it is high in fiber (5 grams) and low in sugar (under 10 grams). Provide a container with a top and a spoon; your child can add the milk provided at school. *(Meatless)*



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Hot Lunches

Use leftovers for school lunch. If your child ate the beef stew last night for dinner, serve it up for lunch. Either use a thermos after heating it up in the morning or just serve it cold (place an ice pack in the lunch box though to prevent food illness).

Pasta: Use mini-penne or bowtie pasta. Just throw on some pasta sauce. If you make it the night before, add a tsp of olive oil to prevent sticking. Explore other noodles, particularly some of the Asian soba or rice noodles. *(Meatless)*

Use leftover chicken from dinner last night and make a sandwich vs. processed sandwich meat which is high in sodium (salt).

Breakfast for lunch? Make pancakes on Sunday and freeze the leftovers. You can warm them up and pack them up for a fun lunch. Scrambled eggs or a sliced boiled egg can be a hit too (remember the ice pack though). *(Meatless)*

Use these thin, curly noodles and serve with peanut sauce or just plain. During winter months, use a thermos to serve up warm noodles (boil them in vegetable broth and use about 1/3 of the liquid for added flavor). *(Meatless)*

Burritos: Just use mini-tortillas and serve with beans and cheese. Many kids don't need to have their foods warmed up to enjoy. Similarly, offer baked beans and a whole wheat tortilla separate; many kids like to enjoy food separately and may not enjoy pinto or black beans. *(Meatless)*



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