

SCHOOL LUNCH CHEAT SHEET

pack like a nutrition pro



1 PROTEIN 1/4 cup - 2oz - 8 fl oz

hard boiled egg
beans, lentils, soy
cubed meat
nitrate-free deli
meat
chicken/egg/tuna
salad

cheese
yogurt
nut/seed butter
cottage cheese
hummus
milk
jerky

2 STARCH 3/4 cup - 2 slices - 2 oz

crackers
(cheese/graham)
cereal
rice/popcorn cakes
pea crisps (veggie)
pasta
chips

bread
sweet potatoes
muffins
energy/granola bar
tortilla

3 FRUIT 1/2 cup - 1 med

applesauce/pouch
dehydrated fruit
freeze-dried fruit

banana
orange
berries
grapes
melon
kiwi

4 VEGETABLE 1/2 - 1 cup

cucumber
tomato
bell pepper
carrots
snap peas

jicama
salad greens
celery
freeze-dried veggies

5 FAT 1 Tbsp - 1 oz

fat helps your child feel full and stay
satiated

whole milk dairy, eggs, oil, seed/nut
butters, avocado and fatty meats
provide this nutrient

6 FUN

presentation and packaging

HOW TO:

- ★ Include an item from each category.
- ★ Some foods will meet a combination of categories.
- ★ Serve a portion size that fits your child's appetite.



SCHOOL LUNCH CHEAT SHEET

PACK FOOD YOUR CHILD WILL EAT

- Food does little to give your child fuel to learn and perform if it goes uneaten.
- Balance nutritious choices with ensuring that your child has food s/he is willing to eat.

MONOTONY IS FINE - IF IT'S WORKING

- You don't need to have a vast array of lunch ideas for your child.
- Varying the vegetable, fruit, protein source a couple times a week (or month) are more than adequate to provide ample variety.

BE COST-CONSCIOUS

- Food waste is a consideration. Don't over pack!
- Convenience foods save time, but also have a higher price tag. Aim to include foods that are not prepackaged as often as possible.

KEEP IT SIMPLE

- Lunch time offers many distractions. Make it easy for your child to see what is available, open packaging and eat.
- You don't need to create a photo-worthy lunch.

INCLUDE LEAN PROTEIN

- Don't forget about plant protein - including tofu, edamame, roasted chickpeas or even dips like hummus.
- Pay attention to food safety with protein foods as they are the most likely to cause illness.

PRESENTATION MATTERS

- Make it appealing, colorful
- Use a bento box or divided container
- Clear containers
- Cookie cutters
- Bite sizes foods
- Cut fruit/vegetables