

Awesome School Lunch Ideas

This free tip sheet was produced by the Cheapskates Club – www.cheapskates.com.au

School has gone back, and the packed lunch routine has started. Keep lunches not only interesting (so they'll be eaten) but healthy and budget friendly with these great ideas.

The Sandwich Factory

Lunches for school or work can be expensive if you buy them each day so save yourself time and money by making a weeks' worth of sandwiches on one night and then freeze them. At the same time, make up the drinks for the week and store them in the door of the fridge. Then each morning, everyone just takes a sandwich or roll, drink and fruit and off they go! Even little children can put their lunch items in their lunchbox or bag.

Sandwich Fillings that Freeze

Some sandwich fillings that freeze well are:

- Ham and cheese
- Ham and mustard
- Ham, cheese and mustard
- Peanut butter and jam (I know it's an American thing but it's not too bad)
- Peanut butter and honey
- Peanut butter and cheese
- Cheese and Vegemite, Marmite, Promite
- Tasty cheese and jam (again, sounds odd but is very nice)
- Deli meats (strasburg, chicken loaf, silverside, ham, devon etc.)
- Shredded BBQ or roast chicken and mayo
- Leftover cooked sausages, sliced lengthwise with tomato sauce
- Leftover cooked steak, thinly sliced with BBQ or sweet chilli sauce

Additive Free/Gluten Free Snacks

I decided to take my children off as many food additives as possible. This has made a massive difference to their moods and ability to focus and learn. We also had to go gluten free for health reasons. As you can imagine this began as quite a challenge but here are the snacks that we now pack:

- fruit (try to give wide variety)
- two fruit salad (2 pieces fruit chopped)
- vegetable sticks
- cherry tomatoes

- plain popcorn (in microwave no oil)
- pikelets (homemade, gluten free)
- buckwheat and apple muffins
- plain rice crackers (no flavouring or colours)
- boiled egg
- cheese
- organic sultanas (to avoid additives)
- dried apricots (sulphite/preservative free)
- fruit leather (100% fruit)
- coconut and fruit balls (own recipe)
- cheese and puffed millet squares
- vegetable fritters

Other foods (just not ones my kids eat) are:

- humus with vegie sticks
 - celery filled with humus or ricotta
 - sushi
 - seed mix (e.g. sesame, pumpkin, sunflower, chia etc)
 - coleslaw
- Contributed by Naomi McDougall

Novel Lunchable Container Keeps Mum and Kids Happy

My pre-schooler loves Lunchables (he found out about them at day care) and will eat everything in one when he has them. Because they are so expensive to buy, and are not that great nutritionally, I bought three small boxes that have two small and two large compartments in them and make my own version of a Lunchable. I usually put in a piece of chicken, two or three cheese cubes, some cherry tomatoes, a twist of sultanas and his drink bottle (half frozen to keep it all cool). I know there's nothing special in this, lots of dollar savvy mums out there do it. My trick is I didn't spend a fortune on special lunchboxes or Tupperware - I went to the Reject Shop and bought three small boxes from the hardware department for \$1.50 each! They are usually used for fishing gear or small tool kits, but they make great lunchable boxes and best of all if one gets lost it's not a big deal.

Contributed by Tanya Grievess