



Lunchbox Menu Planning

Food Smart Schools • an naq nutrition program

For more information visit www.foodsmartschools.org or email info@foodsmartschools.org

Menu planning is a great way to stay organised with your family's food for the week. It is a cost effective, time saving idea that helps to ensure you and your family have healthy meals planned for every day of the week.

Menu Planning:

- **Step 1:**
Pick a day and time that will be the day you plan the meals for the rest of the week (e.g. Wednesday evening).
- **Step 2:**
Utilise our menu planning page to assist in deciding the morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea options for each day.

All healthy children, no matter what their weight, height, gender or age need to eat from the five core food groups every day. To do this, aim to include at least one food from each of the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating food groups in your child's lunchbox every day. The following pages will guide you in how to plan for a 'Healthy Lunchbox Week'.

For further information and recipe ideas, visit the Food Smart Schools website – www.foodsmartschools.org.

Be a Smart Shopper:

- Plan Ahead!
- Write a detailed shopping list from the menu you have planned – stick to this as you do your shopping.
- For ease, group items together in order of where you will find them in your supermarket
- Check your fridge, freezer and pantry before you go shopping to ensure that you don't buy any products that you already have.
- Try to go shopping on the days that you know a fresh delivery of food has come in – this is often a Monday.
- Check the unit pricing on the price tag (e.g. \$/kg). Often you will find better bargains here than if you just look at the cost of the product.
- Try not to go shopping on an empty stomach – you may be more likely to buy unnecessary items.

Planning a Healthy Lunchbox

To help ensure your family is getting the right amount of food and nutrients each day ensure that a wide variety of items are included in their lunchbox:

Vegetables and legumes/beans

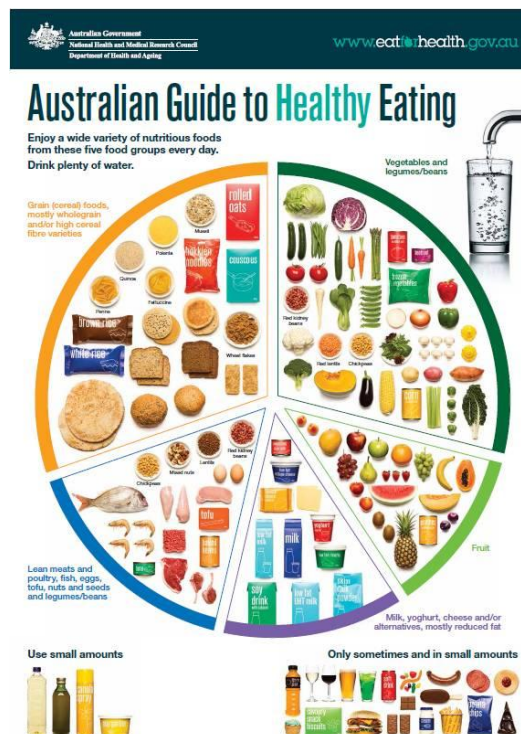
- Salads - tomatoes, carrots, cucumber, celery, lettuce
- Vegetables - stir fried, corn on the cob, capsicum slices
- Low fat potato salads

Grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain and/or high cereal fibre varieties

- Sliced bread, bread rolls
- Pita/pocket bread
- Lavash bread
- Fruit bread
- Homemade pizza on English muffin
- Pasta or noodles
- Rice
- Crackers, crisp bread
- Scone

Drinks

- Include a bottle of water every day



Extra Foods

- Avoid in including these foods or include only a very small amount

Fruit

- Piece of whole fresh fruit
- Fruit salad
- Tinned fruit

Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or alternatives, mostly low fat

- Chilled long life milk popper
- Yoghurt
- Cheese

Lean meats and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds and legumes/beans

- Sliced lean meats - lamb, ham, chicken, beef
- Boiled eggs
- Tuna/Salmon
- Baked beans
- Lentils – including chickpeas, butter beans, etc
- Eggs

The Australian Dietary Guidelines recommend reduced fat dairy products for children over the age of 2.

Remember to keep food safe - see our Lunchbox Food Safety Factsheet for tips.



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Weekly Menu Planning Tool - Healthy Lunchbox Combinations

Tip: Get the family to assist with menu planning by writing in their favourite foods throughout the week:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Morning Tea	Home-made apple and cinnamon muffin	Example Lunch Box <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cold rice and vegetable salad • Rice Cakes • Yoghurt • Orange • Bottle of Water 	Scone with banana	Example Lunch Box <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ham and salad wrap • Dried apricots • Small milk popper • Baked beans • Bottle of water 	Reduced fat yoghurt and mandarin or grapes
Lunch	Multigrain Roll – tomato, cucumber, lettuce, reduced fat cheese		Pita pocket with lean ham and salad		Chicken and salad sandwich
Afternoon Tea	Yoghurt Almonds		Crackers & reduced fat cheese Apple		Wholegrain crackers Celery, cucumber, carrot, capsicum sticks with hummus

This table provides different examples for each day of the week. Try to repeat some foods a few times over the week. Lunches are a great way to use up some 'Leftovers' from the night before. Make sure you keep food in lunchboxes safe – include a small freezer brick/frozen drink.



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