

the healthy  Mummy

# HEALTHY KIDS LUNCH BOXES

includes  
♥ Gluten free  
♥ Nut free  
♥ Dairy free  
♥ Egg free

NUTRITIOUS & PORTABLE FOOD  
IDEAS FOR HEALTHY KIDS LUNCH  
BOXES ON A BUDGET





# WELCOME

Here at the Healthy Mummy, we believe that food is our fuel. It powers and nourishes our bodies, and our children's bodies, to be the healthiest we can be. Ensuring our children's lunch boxes are filled with healthy, easy to prepare foods that the kids will actually eat is really important – a school lunch box can potentially make up 30-50 per cent of our child's daily food intake, so we want to make them count.

We hear a lot of parents complain that packing the kids' lunches is one of their least favourite tasks. We've put together this recipe pack to make preparing lunch boxes a breeze and help you avoid the headaches in the morning. The recipes are quick and easy to make, offering maximum nourishment and delicious flavours that the kids will actually enjoy. Plus, many of the recipes use leftovers, to save you time and money.

We hope you love this one-stop lunch box guide and that it gives you all the information and inspiration you need. With these tips and a little bit of planning, you'll be putting together nutritious lunch boxes in no time!

**Rhian & The Healthy Mummy team**





# WHY ARE LUNCH BOXES SO IMPORTANT?



School lunches fuel our children's learning and play, giving them the brainpower and energy to get through the day. Lunch boxes are also our children's connection to home, a portable love box fuelled with yummy morsels.

Yet, despite their importance in our child's day, they are the frustration of many parents and carers. For each child, we prepare on average 200 lunch boxes a year or 2600 in their school career – a frightening statistic, yet lunch boxes do not need to be the bane of our existence.

## WE BELIEVE THAT:

- delicious and nourishing food is for all members of the family.
- healthy food doesn't have to be complicated, fancy or expensive.
- you can use leftovers and save time, money and the environment.
- you can make food in bulk and freeze it in portions.
- with a bit of planning, you can make nutritious lunch boxes and put them together in 5 minutes in the morning.



# WHAT SHOULD GO IN A LUNCH BOX?



By aiming to tick off all the food groups within each lunch box, you'll ensure your child gets a nutritionally balanced lunch and that they'll enjoy sustained energy through the day.

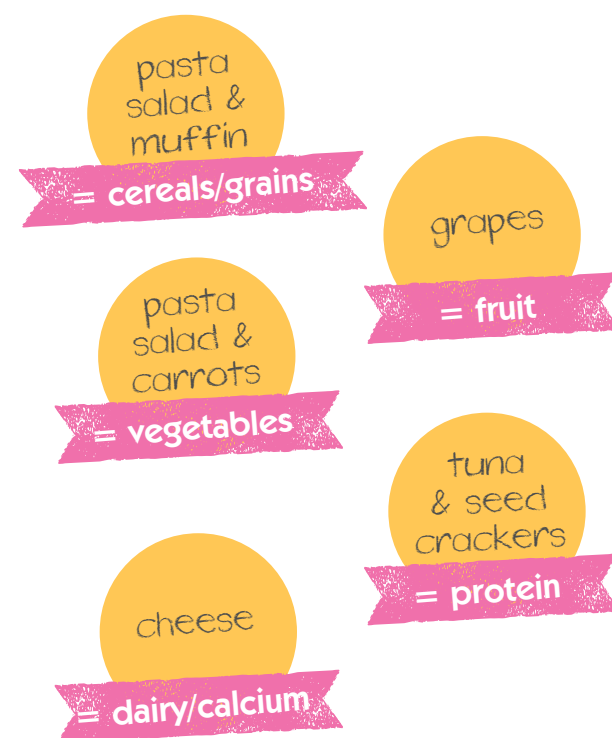
**How?** This is because there are adequate amounts of proteins, fats and complex carbohydrates, which assist in the release of energy from the food without any jagged spikes or troughs.

A child's lunch box constitutes such a high proportion of their daily intake of food, so covering multiple food groups can go a long way towards addressing these issues.

## HERE'S AN EXAMPLE OF A WELL BALANCED LUNCH BOX!

Carrots and grapes  
Low sugar fruit muffin,  
cheese with seed crackers  
Tuna pasta salad

These meals and snacks represent the following food groups:





# MORNING TEA & RECESS

## JELLY CUPS



**Making your own jelly is so ridiculously easy, you'll never use a packet mix again!**

Choose a juice for the base; you can either squeeze your own, or choose a healthier option from the supermarket – a mix of veg and fruit is even better.

Note, you should steer clear of kiwifruit and pineapple, which have an enzyme that interferes with the setting of the jelly.

Heat the juice, add gelatine and stir to dissolve. Normally the ratio is around 1 tbsp of gelatine (16g) to ½ cup of juice (120ml), but check the packet instructions.

Allow jelly to set in the fridge for at least a few hours. It is best to do this the night before, so it is firm enough to take to school in the morning.

## Homemade Gummies



**There's no need for store-bought sweets when you can make these healthy gut-loving beauties!**

- Making firm gummies requires a higher ratio of gelatine than normal jelly – usually 1 ½ tbsp of gelatine (24g) to ½ cup of liquid (120ml), but check the packet for directions.
- For creamy gummies, combine ¼ cup of yogurt (60g) and ¼ cup of juice (60ml) with 1 ½ tbsp of gelatine (24g).
- Make super-powered gummies by adding extra probiotics or other powdered vitamins to the yogurt.
- When adding the yogurt to the gummies, heat the juice, not the yogurt, then stir through the gelatine and yogurt, so the yogurt and probiotics are not heat affected.
- Pour the mixture into little rubber or silicon moulds to set. Even mini silicon cupcake moulds are great. Get creative and choose shapes your kids will love.
- Refrigerate gummies for at least 4 hours to set.
- Pop them out of the moulds and store in the fridge until ready to be eaten or added to a lunch box (with an ice pack).

**DID YOU KNOW: A  
GOOD-QUALITY GELATINE  
IS GREAT FOR GUT-HEALING  
AND GENERAL HEALTH.**







### SWEET CREPE COMBOS

You can prepare these at home or older children can roll them at school.

#### Apple Delight

Spread 2 tbsp of **Stewed Apple** (30g) over a crepe and sprinkle with chia seeds for extra crunch and omega-3 fatty acids. Roll up and enjoy.

#### Banana Bites

Spread a crepe with 1 tsp tahini or peanut butter (4g), top with 1/2 sliced banana (45g), 1 chopped date (15g) and 2 tbsp shredded coconut (15g). Roll up and serve, or cut into smaller pieces for little fingers to handle.

### SAVOURY CREPE COMBOS

#### Beefy Crepes

Spread a crepe with 2 tbsp of **leftover Bolognese** (30g) and sprinkle with 1 tbsp of grated cheese (7.5g). Roll up and serve.

#### Hulk Crepes

Stir 1 tbsp of cooked peas (10g) through 2 tbsp of homemade or store bought pesto (32g). Spread pesto and pea mixture over a crepe, then roll up and serve.

### SWEET PIKELET IDEAS

Try these delicious flavour combos on a pikelet:

1. 1 slice of banana and a sprinkle of coconut
2. 1 tsp of **Low Sugar Chocolate Spread** (4g) and a slice of banana
3. 1 tbsp of **Pureed Raspberry** (15ml)
4. 1 tbsp of **Stewed Apple & Raspberries** (15g)
5. 1 slice of pear and 1 tsp of **Low Sugar Chocolate Spread** (4g)
6. 1 tbsp of plain yogurt and 1 tsp of **Pureed Raspberry** (5ml)

### SAVOURY PIKELET COMBOS

Pikelets are a perfect platform for these savoury combinations:

1. 1 tsp of ricotta (5g), 1 sliced cherry tomato (5g) and 1 tsp of grated cheese (2.5g)
2. 1 tbsp of cream cheese (15g) and 1 tsp of grated cheese (2.5g)
3. 1 slice of tomato (10g) and 1 tsp of grated cheese (2.5g)
4. 1 tbsp of homemade or store bought pesto (16g)
5. 1 tsp of cream cheese (5g) and 1 piece of shredded ham or other deli meat (20g)





## HONEY SEED SLICE



**This slice is a yummy, sweet option with the health benefits of protein-rich seeds. Although it tastes mighty delicious, try to limit little ones to one slice per day, as the seeds, sultanas and coconut add up to a lot of fibre; while fibre is incredibly important, too much could be rough on a young digestive system.**

- 1/2 cup pumpkin seeds (100g)
- 1/2 cup flaxseeds (100g)
- 1/2 cup sunflower seeds (100g)
- 1/2 cup shredded coconut (60g)
- 1/2 cup sultanas (or other dried fruit) (85g)
- 1/2 cup honey (120g)
- 100g coconut oil or butter

Preheat oven to 150°C / gas mark 2. Combine seeds, coconut and sultanas in a large bowl.

Melt honey and coconut oil/butter in a saucepan and pour over the seed mixture. Stir to combine.

Spread the mixture evenly over a lined baking tray and press down until flat and around 1 inch thick. Bake for 10 minutes or until browning on top.

Remove from the oven and allow to cool, then break or slice into 21 pieces. Store in an airtight container in the fridge.

## POPCORN SLICE



**Packed with wholefood ingredients and nothing artificial, this high-fibre delight has health benefits, but it's tasty enough that the kids will never know!**

- 1 cup honey (240g)
- 1/4 cup tahini or peanut butter (50g)
- 2 tbsp coconut oil (30g)
- 6-7 cups popped & cooled popcorn (60g)  
(approximately 1/4 to 1/2 cup unpopped kernels)

Preheat oven to 150°C / gas mark 2. Melt the honey, coconut oil and tahini/peanut butter in a saucepan on the stovetop or in the microwave, until mixture reaches a pourable consistency.

Pour honey mixture over the popcorn and stir through. Spread popcorn mixture over a lined baking tray and press down until it is flat and around 1 inch thick. Bake for 10 minutes or until browning on the top. (Alternatively, you could spoon the mixture into small paper patty cases and place on a tray.)

Remove from the oven and allow to cool, then slice into small pieces. Store in the fridge in an airtight container.

**NOTE:**  
For a chocolate treat, add a tablespoon of cocoa/cacao powder to the honey mix.



## SEED CRACKERS

These are little more complicated, but are worth the time they take to make, as they're a high-fibre, low-salt and nasties-free alternative to the usual supermarket options.



(makes around 24 crackers)

- ½ cup chia seeds (100g)
- 1 cup water (240ml)
- ½ cup pumpkin seeds (100g)
- ½ cup sesame seeds (100g)
- ½ cup flaxseeds (100g)
- ½ cup sunflower seeds (100g)
- 1 cup puffed rice (25g)
- 2 tbsp olive oil (30ml)
- 1 tbsp salt (4g)

Preheat oven to 120°C / gas mark 0.5.  
Soak chia seeds in the water for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Place soaked chia seeds and all other seeds in a food processor and blitz for 30 seconds. Scrape seeds into a bowl and mix through puffed rice, olive oil and salt.

Spoon tablespoons of mixture onto lined baking trays. Press down with a wet hand to make cracker-sized rounds.

Bake for 1 hour until crackers are crisp. Allow to cool before serving with dip or toppings of choice.

## SPICY CHEESE STRAWS

These tasty, savoury morsels are made with plain, simple ingredients and no artificial additives, so you can serve them to your kids with confidence. Serve with some of the lovely veggie-based dips on the following page.



(makes 12 straws)

- 1 cup wholemeal plain flour (120g)
- 1 tsp cumin (1g)
- ¼ cup diced butter (50g)
- ½ cup grated cheddar or parmesan (60g)
- 1 egg, beaten (50g)

Preheat oven to 200°C / gas mark 6.

In a food processor, pulse together flour, cumin and butter until it looks like breadcrumbs.

Tip the mixture into a bowl and stir through the cheese and the egg. Bring the dough together with your fingers to form a dough ball.

Flour the benchtop and roll out the dough to around 1cm thick. Cut into sticks for straws, or use cookie cutters to make any other shape you like.

Lay straws on a lined baking tray and bake for 10 minutes. Cool on a wire rack for 20 minutes to firm.

Note: A simple alternative to this recipe is to use store-bought pastry. Cut out shapes, then sprinkle with grated cheese before baking.





# DIPS

Dips are a fun, textural way for children to get involved with healthy food by dipping in crackers and veggie sticks.

Dips with veggie sticks or crunchy pitta crisps are a quick and easy option for morning tea, or served alongside a lunchtime sandwich or wrap for a healthier spread.

## ROASTED SWEET POTATO DIP



- 1 medium sweet potato (160g)
- 1 garlic clove, diced (3g)
- 1/4 cup pepita or sunflower seeds (50g)
- 3 tbsp olive oil (45ml)
- Juice of 1/2 lemon (30ml)
- Salt & pepper

Preheat oven to 200°C / gas mark 6. Wrap the sweet potato in foil and bake for 30-40 minutes, until soft. Remove from the foil and rub off some of the skin. Allow to cool slightly.

Meanwhile, dry-fry garlic and seeds.

Place all the ingredients in a food processor and pulse until smooth. Serve with veggie sticks or pitta bread.

**NOTE:**  
Store dip in the freezer, or in the fridge with a drizzle of olive oil on top to preserve it.

## ZESTY WHITE BEAN DIP



So quick to make, this is one dip you can whip up when there's nothing in the fridge to eat. And it counts as a serve of veg!

- 400g tinned white beans, rinsed & drained
- 2 garlic cloves, diced (6g)
- 2 tbsp lemon zest (24g)
- 2 tbsp lemon juice (30ml)
- 3 tbsp olive oil (45ml)
- Salt & pepper

Dry-fry garlic until lightly toasted.

Place all ingredients in a blender and pulse until smooth. Serve with veggie sticks or pitta bread.

Note: This dip is also great as an accompaniment to lamb chops or steak.

Or mix it together with some of the roast sweet potato dip for a creamy mash.







## Roast Potatoes (one serve)

Roast potatoes are a great alternative to store-bought chips, as they don't have the extra fillers and salt, and you can keep them chunkier for a better ratio of potato to oil. Keep the potatoes unpeeled for extra fibre, a crisper potato and less food waste.

- 1 medium potato (100g)
- 1 tsp olive oil (15ml)
- pinch of salt

Preheat oven to 200°C / gas mark 6. Wash and scrub the potato and dice into 2cm cubes. Steam potato for around 3 minutes or until just slightly tender, so you can stick a fork in them but they don't fall apart. Toss the potatoes in a pan or colander to rough up the edges.

Place in a baking tray, drizzle over oil and season with a little salt. Roast for 10 minutes. Toss the potatoes around a bit and return to the oven for another 10 minutes or until golden and crunchy.

## Guacamole (one serve)

- ½ an avocado (60g), diced
- pinch of chopped coriander
- squeeze of lemon or lime juice
- 1 cherry tomato, diced
- salt

Mash avocado with a fork and combine with coriander, lemon/lime juice and diced tomato. Season with a tiny pinch of salt.

## Roast Potatoes with Guacamole



Potatoes are a fabulous source of carbohydrates and surprisingly high in vitamin C. Teamed with a good quality monounsaturated fat in the avocado, this lunch box option has substance and flavour.

This is a great plan-ahead lunch; any time you make roast potatoes for dinner, throw in a few extra to use for lunches throughout the week. If cooled and stored in the fridge properly, roast potatoes will last for around 2-3 days.



# MAIN LUNCH MEALS

## Green Pesto Rice with Chicken & Tomatoes



- 50g chicken, chopped
- 1/2 cup rice (90g), cooked and cooled
- 2 tbsp homemade or store bought pesto (32g)
- Cherry tomatoes (50g) or 1/2 medium tomato, chopped
- grated parmesan, to serve

Pan-fry chicken until cooked through.  
Allow to cool and slice.

Toss together rice, pesto, chicken and tomatoes until well combined. Sprinkle with parmesan.

Refrigerate until well cooled, then pop in a lunch box with an ice pack and a fork.

### NOTE

This recipe is great for using up leftovers. With some rice or pasta and a little meat from last night's dinner, you can assemble lunch in a flash!

This main meal is packed full of green healthy veggies and herbs, as well as a fabulous balance of carbohydrates and protein. The chicken could be substituted with any other protein you like - sausages, sliced beef, tofu, kidney beans, or whatever you have in the fridge. Ensure that the pesto you choose is made with pine nuts to make it safe for nut free schools.



HOW DO YOU GET A NOURISHING  
MEAL INTO YOUR CHILD'S DAY?  
MAKE IT BITE SIZED!

## Lasagne Bites



THIS  
RECIPE  
MAKES 16  
BITES

- 2 tbsp olive oil (30ml)
- 1 medium onion, diced (100g)
- 2 garlic cloves (6g), diced
- 400g beef mince
- 750ml tomato passata
- 1 red pepper (100g), diced
- 9 fresh lasagne sheets (360g)
- 300g ricotta cheese
- 1 cup grated cheddar cheese (120g)

Heat oil in a saucepan over a medium-high heat. Sauté garlic and onion for 1-2 minutes or until onion is translucent. Add mince and cook until browned, breaking up any lumps with the back of a spoon.

Add the passata and red pepper. Stir to combine and cook for 10 minutes. Remove from the heat and set aside.

Preheat oven to 200°C / gas mark 6. Allow the lasagne sheets to come to room temperature. Use a standard drinking glass to cut as many circles as possible out of the lasagne sheets. Tear any remaining pasta scraps into pieces.

Use a silicon muffin tray and line each hole with two strips of baking paper in a cross pattern (this will make bites easier to lift out). Fill each hole with 1 tbsp of meat sauce, topped with 1 circle of pasta (or a few pasta scraps), 1 tbsp of ricotta and a sprinkle of cheese. Repeat to make three layers, finishing with ricotta and grated cheese on top.

Bake for 20-30 minutes or until the tops are golden.

Allow to cool for 15 minutes, then use a knife to carefully loosen the edges of the lasagne bites and remove them from the tray.

Serve warm by storing in a thermos, or cool completely and serve cold in a lunch box. Leftovers can be stored in the fridge for 3 days, or frozen in individual portions.



# SANDWICHES

Sandwiches get a bad rap, with people thinking they are boring and not particularly healthy, but there's really nothing wrong with a good sarnie.

To give your kids' sandwiches a healthy makeover, choose a more nutritionally dense bread – wholemeal or sourdough bread – and fill them with fun and healthy fillings, such as the following.

**TIP:** Check the nutrition information panels on the bread packets and aim for one with at least 4g of dietary fibre per serve.

## Beetroot & White Bean Dip



- 1 tinned beetroot (or 1 fresh beetroot, roasted) (50g)
- 400g tinned butter beans, rinsed
- 1 tbsp olive oil (15ml)
- Salt & pepper, to taste

Place all ingredients in a blender and blitz until well combined. Store in the fridge in a sealed container with a drizzle of olive oil on top to preserve it.

Spread 2 tbsp of dip over bread of choice. Serve as is or top with some colourful grated vegetables.

## Roast Pepper, Tuna & Pesto



- 1/4 red pepper (25g)
- 1/2 tsp olive oil (2.5ml)
- 2 tbsp homemade or store bought pesto (32g)
- 50g tinned tuna (drained weight)

Preheat oven to 200°C / gas mark 6, and place pepper on a lined baking tray. Drizzle with olive oil and roast for 15 minutes. Spread pesto over bread and top with tuna and sliced peppers.

## Marmite & Avocado



- 1/2 avocado (60g)
- 1 tsp Marmite (4g)

Spread bread with Marmite and top with sliced or spread avocado.

For extra nutrition and satisfying crunch, add a little salad of shredded lettuce and grated carrot.

**TIP:** IF YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT SOGGY SANDWICHES, TOASTING THE BREAD BEFORE ASSEMBLING THE SANDWICH WILL HELP IT LAST THE DISTANCE TILL LUNCH.





# MEATBALLS & FALAFELS

## FALAFELS



- 400g tinned chickpeas, rinsed & drained
- 1 brown onion (100g), diced
- 1 garlic clove (3g), diced
- 1/4 cup mint leaves (15g), chopped
- 1 tsp ground cumin (1g)
- 1 tsp ground coriander (1g)
- 2-4 tbsp plain flour (20-40g)
- 2 tbsp olive oil (30ml)

Place chickpeas, onion, garlic, mint leaves and spices in a food processor and pulse until well combined.

Roll mixture into walnut-sized balls. Roll in the flour and place on a lined baking tray. Refrigerate for 30 minutes to firm up.

To cook, heat the oil in a frying pan over a medium-high heat and fry falafels for 1-2 minutes on each side, turning frequently, until golden and heated through.

Allow to cool before packing in a lunch box with a serve of dip and some sliced vegetables.

You can also freeze cooked falafels and pop in lunch boxes, frozen.

## BAKED MEATBALLS



- 200g pork mince
- 200g beef mince
- 2 garlic cloves (6g), crushed
- 1 medium carrot (70g), grated
- 1/3 cup breadcrumbs (20g)
- 1 tbsp tomato paste (15ml)
- 1 tbsp olive oil (15ml)

Preheat oven to 180°C / gas mark 4.

Combine all the ingredients, except the oil, mixing with your hands until everything is well combined. Roll mix into walnut-sized balls and place on a lined baking tray. Lightly brush with olive oil. Bake for 25 minutes, turning halfway through the cooking time.

Allow to cool before packing in a lunch box with a serve of dip and some sliced vegetables.

Meatballs can be frozen before or after cooking.

KIDS LOVE BITE-SIZED FOODS AND MEATBALLS AND FALAFELS ARE JUST PERFECT FOR LITTLE HANDS. THEY'RE ALSO GREAT FOR MAKING IN BULK AND FREEZING – FROZEN FALAFELS CAN BE POPPED IN THE LUNCH BOX, DEFROSTING JUST IN TIME FOR LUNCH! COMBINE WITH DIPPING SAUCES TO BRING THEM TO LIFE.

THESE RECIPES  
BOTH MAKE  
4 SERVES





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## 100+ NUTRITIOUS & PORTABLE food ideas for healthy kids lunch boxes on a budget!



the healthy Mummy

# GET IT NOW



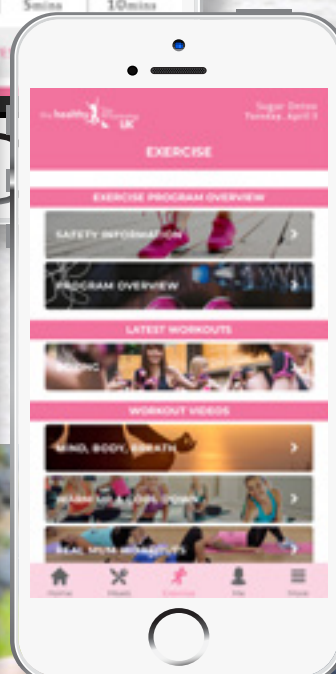
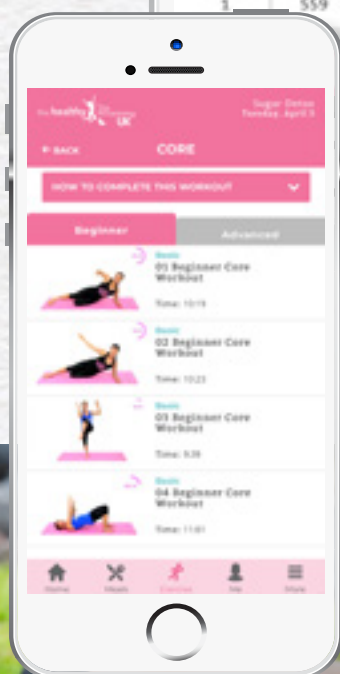
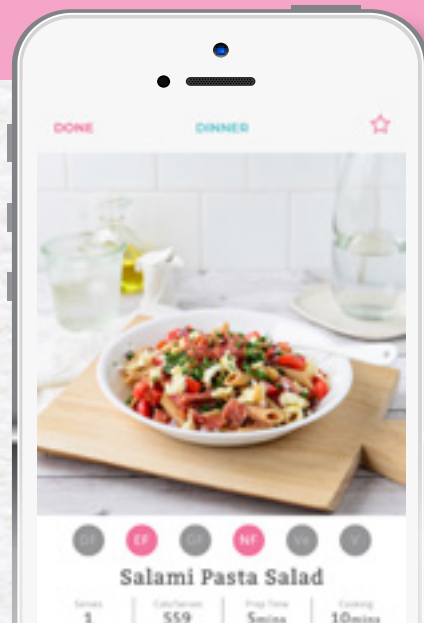
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