

BROWN BAG MAKEOVER

Healthy, easy lunch ideas for you & your family

If you're looking to improve your eating habits, focusing on lunch is a great place to start. Bringing your own lunch typically means healthier food choices, and saves money. If you're tired of leftovers or bored with your current go-to sandwich or salad, read on for 3 healthy, easy lunch options that can be customized based on your food preferences to help you stay energized & satisfied all day.



Build a Better Sandwich

Simple and satisfying, a sandwich can easily be a template for a balanced meal. Use these 5 steps to optimize the nutritional benefits of your sandwich, whether you're making it yourself or ordering it out:

1. Choose whole grain bread, wrap or pita for extra fiber and nutrients
2. Fill with lean protein, such as turkey breast, grilled chicken, or tuna
3. Pile on the veggies – lettuce, spinach, tomato, peppers, onions, sprouts, cucumbers – the more the better!
4. Choose mustard over mayo for less saturated fat
5. Include a small amount of cheese, avocado, hummus or oil-based dressing for healthy fats, boosting flavor and increasing satiety



 *Pro Tip:*

If you're used to eating chips with your sandwich, try apple slices, berries or grapes on the side instead for additional vitamins & minerals

Satisfying Salad

Salad is often a go-to meal when you're trying to eat healthy, but it completely depends on how you build it. Instead of a high calorie salad loaded with toppings or a skimpy salad that will leave you hungry a few hours later, make your salad into a nutritionally balanced, satisfying meal by following these guidelines:

- Start with a base of greens (at least 2 cups of lettuce, spinach, or arugula) Add as many non-starchy veggies as you want (i.e. tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, mushrooms and carrots) for volume, plus vitamins and minerals
- Include a lean protein (i.e. grilled chicken, turkey, eggs, tofu, salmon, shrimp, or lean beef) for satiety
- Add a complex carb (i.e. black beans, lentils, chickpeas, corn, quinoa, or fresh fruit) for energy and fiber
- Choose one or two higher-fat toppings for flavor and texture (i.e. nuts, seeds, cheese, olives, or avocado)
- For dressing, stick to heart-healthy olive oil plus vinegar, or an oil-based vinaigrette. Limit to a couple tablespoons.



Create a Bento Box

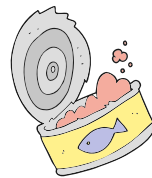
Lunch doesn't have to look traditional salad or sandwich in order to provide a nutritionally balanced meal. The "bento box" concept of combining several different finger-friendly foods is a great option for busy people with limited time to prep- and perhaps even eat! Simply select a food from each of the groups below:



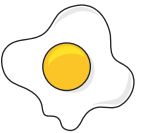
Veggies



Raw veggies such as baby carrots, snap peas, cucumbers, bell peppers, celery, or baby tomatoes
Roasted, grilled or sautéed veggies such as broccoli, asparagus, string beans or zucchini
Side salad made with arugula, spinach and/or romaine lettuce



Protein



Hard-boiled eggs
Slices of deli turkey, ham, lean roast beef
Canned tuna
Greek yogurt or cottage cheese
String cheese or sliced cheese
Roasted chickpeas or edamame



Fiber-Rich Carbs



Whole grain crackers, pretzels, bean chips or air-popped popcorn
Whole grain cereal or a grain-based granola bar
Fresh or dried fruit
Pita bread or mini pitas



Healthy Fats



Avocado
Nuts and seeds, such as cashews, almonds, walnuts, or pumpkin seeds
Olive oil (use as a salad dressing, or to cook veggies)
Guacamole
Hummus