

PLANNING WITH KIDS

# LUNCH BOX GUIDE & IDEAS

*Includes gluten free, dairy free and refined  
sugar free recipes*



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**Disclaimer: I am not a nutritionist or dietitian. The recipes and lunch box ideas are for informational purposes only and should not be treated as professional advice.**

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When putting together the kids' lunch boxes I am mindful to include food items representing all macronutrients. The three macronutrients of protein, fat, and carbohydrates all perform essential roles in the human body and for little brains and bodies to perform at their best, they need to be fuelled well with them.

For the lunch box ideas, the main lunch box item included is generally protein based, fruit and veg provide carbohydrates and the home baked treat or extra item will include fats.

These ideas are meant to be a base from which you can work on – if your kids don't like pear, but are happy to have apples every day, then go with what you know works. But every now and again, try something new – kids' taste buds change over time and it is always worthwhile to keep offering up diversity in what they take in their lunch boxes.

## 5 Tips For Easier School Lunches

1. Establish how much food your kids need.
2. Create a template for lunch box items.

Having a template of the types of items that go into the lunch box, takes the bulk of the thinking out of putting them together. The lunch box ideas in the calendar work on:

- 1 main lunch item
- 1 whole piece of fruit or veg
- 1 container cut fruit or veg
- 1 home baked treat
- 1 extra item - rice cakes / dried fruit and seeds/ eggs / yogurt and fruit

3. Prepare as much as you can the night before.
4. Have a regular baking day

Take out a couple of hours on the weekend and try making one sweet and one savoury item for the kids' lunch boxes. There are plenty of recipes that you can whip up pretty quickly and will have enough quantity to last for most of the days of the week.

5. Buy in season fruit and vegetables. Not only is this cheaper, but it also helps keep variety in the lunch boxes throughout the year.

## Lunch box template

<b>Lunch box item</b>	
1 main lunch item	
1 whole piece of fruit or veg	
1 container cut fruit or veg	
1 home baked treat	
1 extra item - rice cakes / dried fruit and seeds/ eggs / yogurt and fruit	

<b>Lunch box item</b>	
1 main lunch item	Rice paper rolls
1 whole piece of fruit or veg	Frozen oranges
1 container cut fruit or veg	Melon melody
1 home baked treat	Nut free choc peppermint balls
1 extra item - rice cakes / dried fruit and seeds/ eggs / yogurt and fruit	Trail mix

<b>Lunch box item</b>	
1 main lunch item	Egg muffins
1 whole piece of fruit or veg	Banana
1 container cut fruit or veg	Sugar snap peas
1 home baked treat	Choc banana muffins
1 extra item - rice cakes / dried fruit and seeds/ eggs / yogurt and fruit	Sweet potato chips

## Lunch box recipes

### *Sweet chilli chicken rice paper rolls*



#### Ingredients:

- 1 kg chicken breasts
- 1 tbsp coconut oil
- 3 tablespoons [homemade sweet chilli sauce](#) or you could use store bought check the ingredients list if you do not want gluten
- 3 tablespoons Tamari soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon dried coriander leaves
- 12 - 15 rice paper sheets

#### Method:

1. Heat oil in a large frying pan on a medium heat, add chicken and cook until browned.
2. Add the Tamari soy sauce, sweet chilli sauce and coriander to the chicken and cook for another couple of minutes, until the sauce has heated all the way through and thickened slightly. Once the sauce is ready turn the heat off.
3. Next set yourself up on a space with some room. You will need a dish of warm water, a clean dry tea towel, a container to place the spring rolls into and your chicken mixture.
4. Place the rice paper into the warm water for a couple of seconds. Drain off excess water then place on the tea towel. Place  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of mixture close to one end of the rice paper.
5. Once the rice paper is soft, fold the end over the meat, then fold in each side, then roll it up tightly.
6. Place it in the container and repeat the process until you have made up all of your spring rolls. We made 12 large spring rolls.
7. Store in an airtight container in the fridge. If you are going to keep them in the fridge over night, wet a clean tea towel, wring out excess water and place on top of the rice paper rolls. This will help them not dry out.

**Notes:** My kids love to take these in their school lunch box. If the weather is very warm I will wrap them with a damp cloth, then place them in the reusable wrap and make sure they have an ice brick in their lunch box.

## *Frozen oranges*



### **Ingredients:**

- Oranges – as many as you like!

### **Method:**

1. Cut oranges into quarters, then using either plastic wraps or reusable wraps, wrap the orange together and place in the freezer. Wrap either together as a whole, or wrap half an orange at a time.
2. Place in the freezer for 4 – 5 hours (or overnight).
3. Add to the chill pocket in the lunch box or wrap in a cloth to keep other food items dry and cool.

## *Melon melody*



### **Ingredients:**

- 1 rock melon
- ½ honey dew
- ½ watermelon

### **Method:**

1. Either ball or chop up fruit and place in airtight containers.
2. Keep refrigerated until ready to eat.

## *Nut free choc peppermint balls*



### **Ingredients:**

- 1 cup raw pepitas
- 1 cup raw sunflower seeds
- 2 cups dates pitted
- 2 tbsp cacao powder
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 5-7 drops of Pure Peppermint Essential Oil
- Optional: 2 tbsp cacao nibs (my kids didn't like them during testing, so omitted them for the final recipe)

### **Method:**

1. Add seeds, dates, vanilla and cacao powder to the food processor and pulse until it forms a dough like consistency. To test it is ready you should be able to squeeze the dough easily to form a ball which stays together well.
2. Add peppermint oil to the mix and pulse for 10 - 15 seconds or until well combined.
3. Using a heaped tablespoon of mixture, make into balls.
4. Place in an airtight container in the fridge and let set for 2 hours.

### **Notes:**

These can be stored in the freezer. Makes 24



## Trail mix



### Ingredients:

- 3 cups coconut flakes
- 1 ½ cups pumpkin seeds
- 1 cup sunflower seeds
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 cup goji berries
- ¼ cup coconut oil

### Method:

1. Preheat oven to 85 degrees Celsius. This needs to be baked slowly on a low temperature so as to not burn it and keep in the goodness.
2. Line two large trays with baking paper.
3. Add the coconut flakes, pumpkin seeds and sunflower seeds into a large bowl and mix.
4. Combine the coconut oil and cinnamon and then pour over the seeds. Mix well with a large metal spoon.
5. Pour the seed mixture onto the trays and place into the oven. Bake for around 10 - 15 minutes. The coconut flakes will start to turn golden brown.
6. Remove from the oven and allow to cool on the tray for about an hour.
7. Sprinkle with goji berries when cool, then store the trail mix in an airtight glass container.

## Egg muffins



### Ingredients:

- 12 eggs
- 1 tbsp coconut oil (or olive oil)
- 8 rash short cut rindless bacon
- 1/2 onion
- A couple of handfuls of baby spinach
- 1 cup mashed sweet potato
- Salt and pepper to taste

### Method:

1. Preheat oven to 170 degrees Celsius.
2. Whisk eggs.
3. De-stem and roughly chop baby spinach.
4. Finely chop onion and cut bacon into small strips.
5. Add oil to frying pan and heat. Add bacon, fry for a couple of minutes and then add onion. Fry for a few more minutes until onion is transparent.
6. Add everything but bacon to eggs, whisk again.
7. Cut squares of baking paper.
8. Place a square of baking paper into the muffin space and then spoon egg mixture into it.
9. If using bacon add bacon to each muffin, then give a little push down with a fork, so it becomes slightly submerged in the egg.
10. Bake for 15-20 minutes or until golden on top.
11. Remove from trays and cool on rack. You can leave them in the baking paper or remove them if you prefer.

## Choc banana muffins



### Ingredients:

- 6 eggs
- ⅓ cup Pureharvest Coco Quench (or other milk alternative)
- 3 tbsps rice malt syrup
- 1 tsp pink Himalayan salt
- 1 cup mashed bananas (2 quite large bananas and the riper the better)
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ¼ cup coconut oil (melted)
- ¾ cup coconut flour
- 2 tsps baking powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 2 tbsps cacao powder

### Method:

1. Preheat oven to 175 degrees Celsius
2. In a medium bowl or jug add eggs and whisk.
3. Mash the banana and add it to the eggs.
4. Add to the eggs the Coco Quench, rice malt syrup, salt, coconut oil and vanilla, then whisk until well combined.
5. Sift coconut flour, baking powder, baking soda and cacao powder into a large mixing bowl.
6. Make a well in the middle of the dry ingredients, then pour the egg mixture into the well. Using a wooden spoon, fold the ingredients to combine. (Do not freak out about the difference between the volume of the wet ingredients to the dry. Coconut flour absorbs a great deal of liquid)
7. Spoon mixture into cupcake cups (or lined muffins trays) and bake for about 18 - 20 minutes.
8. Muffins will spring back when you press lightly down on them when they are ready. Makes 10 – 12

## Sweet Potato Chips



### Ingredients:

- 1 large sweet potato (approx 600 grams)
- 1 tbsp coconut oil
- 1 -2 tsp Himalayan pink salt

### Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 180 degrees.
2. If using a mandolin, make sure you have the crinkle cut blade installed and set the dial for 3mm.
3. Cut the sweet potato into 4 - 5 pieces depending on the size of the sweet potato.
4. Attach a piece of sweet potato to the guard and start slicing! Alternatively you could use a knife and slice the sweet potato into 3mm chips.
5. Rinse the sweet potato slices under cold water and then pat dry with paper towel.
6. Place the sweet potato slices into a large container, brush with liquid coconut oil and toss gently so they are lightly covered in oil.
7. Line two large trays with baking paper and spread out sweet potatoes onto the trays in a single layer. Sprinkle with salt.
8. Bake in the oven for approximately 20 minutes, turning once around 10 minutes.
9. As soon as you take them out of the oven, remove the sweet potato from the trays and allow to cool on a cake rack. This helps them crisp up.
10. Store in an airtight container.