

Parents and Guardians,

Thank you for your cooperation in providing a healthy sack lunch for your girl every day! The intention of this document is to help you with the process of choosing breakfast and lunch items for your girl that are easy, affordable, and delicious! As you know, at Girls Inc., we have an open-door policy, so please feel free to come to us with any questions you might have! Thank you!

**Use these four key ingredients when you fix your summer lunches:**

- **Include more whole foods and less processed foods.** Choose lunch items with higher amounts of fiber and nutrients children need (like calcium, protein, and vitamin C). Include fewer processed foods such as cookies, chips, and snack cakes, which have higher sodium, added sugar, and saturated fat. **Please do not include candy or soda with your girls lunches, as she will be asked not to eat them while at Girls Inc..**
- **Be creative.** Think outside the lunchbox. Does your child enjoy spanakopita or quesadilla triangles, Chinese chicken salad, or veggie/soy corn dogs at home? With a little forethought and a reusable cold pack, you can probably pack them for lunch, too.
- **Keep it cold.** For safety's sake, pack lunch with a reusable ice pack. Better yet, freeze a small water bottle or box of 100% juice. Your child will have a slushy drink to enjoy at lunch and won't have to worry about bringing an ice pack home. **Please do not send you girl with any lunch items that will need to be warmed up.**
- **Keep it fun.** Include items that kids can stack or mix up to their taste when they eat. Remember that kids like to dunk, and include healthy dips with vegetables or other items. Cut foods into fun shapes with cookie cutters.

**Healthy meal and snack combos**

- **Hardboiled egg** - The humble egg is a protein powerhouse! At only 75 calories, one hard-boiled egg packs in 6 grams of lean protein and is a good source Riboflavin, Vitamin B12 Selenium, and Phosphorus.
- **Pita chips & hummus** – A great snack on the go, whole wheat pita chips and hummus provide a good mix of whole grains and protein. Hummus is very low in Cholesterol and is a good source of essential nutrients like Dietary Fiber, Folate, Magnesium, Phosphorus Copper, and Manganese.
- **Trail mix** – Mix together your favorite dried fruit and nuts (and maybe even some chocolate chips!) for a filling, hearty snack that is high in fiber and protein.
- **Apples** – Fruit, its nature's candy! Apples are sweet, tasty, and easy to eat on the go. Pair them with your favorite nut butter for an added protein boost.
- **Baby carrots** – Crunchy, sweet, and a great source of Vitamin A and fiber, baby carrots are the perfect veggie snack on the go.
- **Unsalted nuts** – Nuts are a great source of protein and fiber, and have a nice crunchy texture. While they have no cholesterol, they are high in healthy fats so enjoy in moderation.

**Looking for more ideas?**

- Visit [www.parenting.com/gallery/on-the-go-breakfast-recipes](http://www.parenting.com/gallery/on-the-go-breakfast-recipes) to find 15 healthy on-the-go breakfast ideas!
- Visit [www.parenting.com/gallery/quick-healthy-lunch-ideas](http://www.parenting.com/gallery/quick-healthy-lunch-ideas) to find 11 healthy lunch ideas!
- Looking for some new, healthy dinner recipes? Visit [www.bettereats.com/recipes](http://www.bettereats.com/recipes) for inspiration & ideas!

## What To Pack?

by Debby Kaschner, MS, RD, LD - Parent Volunteer/Registered Dietitian

Packing lunch for parents and guardians can be overwhelming. *Where can I find re-usable lunch boxes? What makes up a healthy lunch?* The goal of this resource is to assist you with finding your way through the "maze" of packing your girls lunches.

**Searching for lunch boxes?** The good news is that lunch boxes/bags are popping up all over Santa Fe: Target, Walmart/ Sam's Club, The Gap, Children's Place, Cost Plus, and grocery stores. For health and sanitation reasons, buy new re-usable lunch bags each year. Purchasing re-usable small Tupperware-type bowls will also save Ziplocs by the hundreds.

**How does one pack a healthy lunch?** A "healthy" lunch for children should resemble healthy adult lunches. A variety of food provides necessary daily protein, carbohydrates, essential fats, and fluid. Accomplish this by packing a protein-rich food, bread/grain, fruit, and veggie or snack.

**Need breakfast & lunch menu ideas?** Clip out the "Mix & Match" tables below (or make your own), and tape it inside a kitchen cabinet. Many young children don't care for combination foods (i.e. sandwich) yet are perfectly happy to eat the parts of the sandwich separately: plain bread, sliced turkey, and a veggie.

**Trying to increase the "fun factor" of lunch?** Fun foods for kids may include frozen cut grapes/bananas, frozen containers of yogurt, and do-it-yourself "Lunchables" with healthier foods. Kids love to dip foods, and find pocket sandwiches or yogurt parfaits as their lunch. Depending on her age, your girl can even help to make her own lunch.

**What is a child portion size?** Typically, portions a little less than the size of adult portions lead to healthy growth in children when those children are active. For example, an adult may eat 1/2 - 1 cup of fruit at a time, while their child's needs are met with similar amounts.

**Don't forget fluids!** Despite the need to consume fluids with lunch, some kids fill up on milk/juice before they get to the rest of their food. Include water for lunch and save milk for snack time if needed.

### **Breakfast Mix & Match**

Choose one item from each column

BREAD/GRAIN	PROTEIN-RICH FOOD	FRUIT
Whole Grain Cereal/ Granola/ Oatmeal	Low-fat milk/ yogurt	Half a banana
Whole Wheat Bread/English Muffin	Cheddar/jack cheese or low-fat cream cheese	Berries
Whole wheat bagel	Lean ham or turkey	Apricot or plum
Corn or whole wheat tortilla	Pinto or black beans	Cherries
Brown rice cake	Hummus or tofu	Melon cubes
Multi-grain pancake/waffle	Hard boiled or scrambled egg	Apple or applesauce
Taco shell or pita pocket	Almond butter, peanut butter or nuts	A small juice

### **Lunch Mix & Match**

Choose one item from each column

BREAD/ GRAIN	PROTEIN-RICH FOOD	FRUIT	VEGETABLE
Corn or whole wheat tortilla	Pinto beans or chili	Melon	Cucumber
Taco shell	Chicken	Apple or applesauce	Tomato slices or cherry tomatoes
Whole wheat bread or pita pocket	Hard boiled egg	Grapes	Bell peppers slices
Cornbread	Deli meats	Pineapple	Salsa or guacamole
Whole grain crackers	Yogurt or Cheese	Peaches	Carrot sticks
Rice cake	Hummus or Tofu	Pears	Zucchini spears
Soup or rice	Almond or Peanut Butter or nuts	Orange slices	Celery sticks