

# NUTRITION BITS AND BITES

## Lunch Box Mix and Match



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Packing lunches can seem repetitive throughout the school year. Try the lunch box mix and match for new ideas!

**PROTEIN (CHOOSE 2)**

- LEFTOVER (CUT-UP, GROUND, SLICED) MEAT - CHICKEN, FISH, BEEF, PORK
- NUT BUTTER OR SEEDS
- HOMEMADE GRANOLA BARS
- BEANS, LENTILS, CHICKPEAS
- CHEESE OR COTTAGE CHEESE
- MILK, YOGURT
- TOFU OR TEMPEH
- HARD BOILED EGG

**GRAIN OR STARCH (CHOOSE AT LEAST 1)**

- RICE, QUINOA, BARLEY
- WHOLE GRAIN PITA OR WRAP
- NAAN BREAD
- WHOLE GRAIN CRACKERS
- WHOLE GRAIN PASTA
- HIGH FIBRE GRANOLA BAR
- HOMEMADE MUFFIN
- OATMEAL

**FRESH OR FROZEN VEGGIES (CHOOSE AT LEAST 1)**

- CUCUMBERS
- CARROT AND CELERY STICKS
- SNAP PEAS
- LEFTOVER COOKED VEGGIES
- TOMATOES AND PEPPERS
- SALAD GREENS
- VEGETABLE SOUP
- TOMATO SAUCE

**FRESH OR FROZEN FRUIT (CHOOSE AT LEAST 1)**

- APPLE
- ORANGE
- BANANA
- MELON
- BERRIES
- PEACH
- KIWI
- MANGO

**snack (CHOOSE 1)**

- HOMEMADE COOKIE
- SMALL PIECE OF CAKE
- SMALL BROWNIE
- ANYTHING THEY LOVE
- FRUIT SAUCE/POUCHES
- PEAR

## A+ Lunch Packing Tips

Packing lunches can seem uninteresting and time consuming. Here are 5 ideas to making lunches more fun with less stress:

1. Get the little ones involved! While it is the caregiver's job to provide the food, kids can help with washing the fruit and vegetables, filling the containers and water bottles.
2. Use leftovers for lunches. Use leftover vegetables, roast meats or pasta in lunches. This can help reduce food waste and save time in making more food.
3. Prep and plan beforehand. Having a rough idea of a meal plan or food items to pack can be helpful. This can make grocery shopping and packing lunches a lot quicker.
4. Use convenience foods. Packaged foods can be a great option to make packing lunches quicker and easier. Look for higher fiber and lower sugar options. Some examples include high fibre granola bars, individual yogurts, fruit sauce pouches, individual cheese portions.
5. Make it fun for the kids! Cut fruit or vegetables into different shapes or sizes. Use different color containers to make a rainbow. Add a cute note or picture to show your love.

*Disclaimer: Some recipes or food suggestions may not be suitable for people with allergies. Please check with your local school to identify foods that are acceptable or unacceptable in the classroom.*

# Easy Whole Grain Pumpkin Spice Muffins

Pumpkin spice and something nice to add to a lunch or try as a snack with some yogurt!

## Ingredients:

- 2 1/2 cups whole wheat flour
- 1 cup bran cereal (bran flakes, regular all bran or rolled oats work best)
- 4 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1 tbsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp ground nutmeg
- 1 tsp ground ginger
- 3 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1.5 cups buttermilk
- 2 ripe bananas mashed
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1 can (14 oz) pure pumpkin puree
- 1/4 cup melted coconut oil



## Kids can help by:

- ✓ Mixing ingredients together
- ✓ Scooping into muffin pan
- ✓ Mashing bananas
- ✓ Older kids can measure ingredients

## Instructions:

1. Gather two 12-cup muffin tins, lightly greased or lined with paper cups and preheat oven to 375 F (or 350 F if you have a super hot oven).
2. In large bowl, combine whole wheat flour, bran or oats, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, and salt.
3. In another large bowl, combine eggs (or chia eggs), buttermilk (or vegan alt), pumpkin, banana and oil.
4. Make a well in the centre of the dry mixture and pour in wet mixture all at once. Gently fold together until just combined- do not over-mix.
5. Spoon batter into muffin tins and bake in pre-heated oven for 18 minutes.

Recipe from: sarahremmer.com

Want more tips for packing school lunches? Check out [www.unlockfood.ca](http://www.unlockfood.ca) and search "school lunches".

\*\* Refer to the Allergy Newsletter (September issue) for substitution ideas.

For more information on nutrition and healthy eating, visit:

<https://www.southernhealth.ca/finding-care/health-info-for-you/nutrition-and-healthy-eating/>

To access previous school nutrition newsletters, visit:

<https://www.southernhealth.ca/whats-happening/nutritional-newsletters/>

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