

We Skoolhouse

Lunch Packet





The Importance of Lunch

Lunch is a critical component of a child's daily routine, serving essential physiological and developmental functions, especially as the mid-day meal. From a physiological standpoint, children are in a phase of rapid growth and development, requiring a steady intake of nutrients to support their expanding bodies and brains.

Whenever possible, always opt for nutrient-dense whole foods, as they are crucial for promoting both physical and psychological growth and development in children. Whole foods provide essential vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and other nutrients in their natural, unprocessed form, offering numerous health benefits that contribute to overall well-being.

Physically, nutrient-dense whole foods support optimal growth and development by providing the building blocks necessary for strong bones, muscles, and tissues. Nutrients such as protein, calcium, iron, and vitamins A, C, and D are vital for bone health, immune function, energy metabolism, and cellular repair.

Psychologically, the quality of the diet can also impact children's mental health and emotional well-being. Nutrient-dense whole foods provide the nutrients necessary for brain development and function, influencing mood regulation, stress response, and cognitive function. By nourishing their bodies and minds with a variety of nutrient-rich foods, we support optimal health, energy levels, cognitive function, and emotional well-being, setting the stage for a lifetime of health and happiness.

OUR TOP WHOLE-FOOD ITEMS

Eggs: Source of high-quality protein, with essential amino acids for muscle growth and repair, and contain nutrients like choline, which supports brain health.



Greek Yogurt: Rich in protein and calcium, it also contains probiotics, which support gut health and digestion.



Seeds: like chia seeds, flaxseeds, and hemp seeds are rich in omega-3 fatty acids, fiber, and protein. They support brain health, heart health, and digestion.



Nitrate-Free Meats: Such as nitrate-free bacon, ham, or turkey provide essential nutrients like iron, zinc, & B vitamins.



Fresh Fruit: like avocados, apples, berries, and oranges are nutrient-dense and provide vitamins, minerals, fiber, and natural sugars for energy & hydration



Wild Caught Fish: Rich in omega-3 fatty acids, promoting heart and brain health, while providing high-quality protein & vitamin D.



Cottage Cheese: is high in protein and calcium, supporting muscle growth, bone health and development.



Nut Butter: such as almond or peanut butter, is rich in protein, healthy fats, and vitamins. It provides sustained energy and promotes satiety.





Kitchen Health & Safety

Here are some health and safety tips for children helping in the kitchen while inspiring them to be involved in the process:

- **Wash Hands:** Teach children the importance of washing their hands with soap and water before and after handling food to prevent the spread of germs and bacteria.
- **Use Child-Friendly Tools:** Provide age-appropriate utensils and kitchen tools for children to use, such as plastic knives, mixing spoons, and measuring cups.
- **Supervision:** Always supervise children while they are in the kitchen to ensure their safety. Teach them how to safely use kitchen equipment under adult guidance.
- **Safe Cooking Practices:** Teach children safe cooking practices, such as using oven mitts when handling hot pots and pans, turning handles away from the stove edge to prevent spills, and keeping a safe distance from heat sources.
- **Knife Safety:** Demonstrate proper knife safety techniques, such as holding the knife securely with fingers away from the blade, using a cutting board on a stable surface, and cutting away from the body.
- **Taste Testing:** Involve children in taste testing and sampling ingredients to encourage them to explore new foods and flavors.
- **Positive Reinforcement:** Provide praise and positive reinforcement to children for their efforts in the kitchen, regardless of the outcome.
- **Have Fun!:** Make cooking and baking a fun and enjoyable experience for children by involving them in meal planning, recipe selection, and food preparation.

Ways To Include Your Child

Involving children in preparing, cooking, and serving snacks and meals is a valuable educational experience that promotes practical life skills essential for daily living. Through hands-on participation in meal preparation and serving, children develop skills such as nutrition knowledge, kitchen safety, and fine motor coordination. They learn to follow recipes, measure ingredients, and practice basic cooking techniques, all of which are important practical life skills. Preparing and serving food together fosters teamwork, communication, and cooperation, while also improving children's confidence and sense of responsibility.

Wash Fruits & Vegetables



Counting and Sorting



Mixing & Pouring



Handing Utensils



Cutting Ingredients



Clean-up



LUNCH RECIPES



WE SKOOLHOUSE LUNCH MENU



CHICKEN + ROOT VEGETABLE SOUP



INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound boneless skinless chicken breast
- 8 cups bone broth
- 2 tablespoons of oil
- 1 onion finely chopped
- 4 cloves of garlic finely chopped
- 3 medium carrots finely chopped
- 2 potato or 2 butternut squash (cut into tiny cubes)
- 1 tablespoon of fresh parsley (finely chopped)
- 1 tablespoon of fresh dill (finely chopped)

DIRECTIONS

- Add 2 tablespoons of oil to the bottom of a large pot on medium heat. After the butter has melted, add the chopped onions and carrots. Simmer until onions are translucent. Begin to add the garlic, potatoes, parsley, and dill. Mix ingredients for one minute.
- Add chicken, then pour in the bone broth. Mix ingredients around.
- Reduce flame to medium-low and add lid.
- Let soup cook for about 45 minutes, stirring occasionally.

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TUNA FISH ROLLS-UPS & CHIPS



INGREDIENTS

- 1 can of tuna fish (in water), drained
- 1/2 cup of mayonnaise
- 1/2 teaspoon lemon juice
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Butterhead lettuce (amount of leaves vary based on size)
- Optional ingredients to add based on your child's taste: chopped carrots, chopped celery, chopped onions, dill.
- Optional: Serve with a handful or potato chips

DIRECTIONS

- In a large bowl, break up the tuna with a fork.
- Add and mix mayonnaise, lemon juice, and other ingredients of choice. Refrigerate until chilled.
- Add about a tablespoon of tuna to each piece of lettuce. Roll-up and enjoy. You can substitute bread if your child does not like lettuce.

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CHEESEBURGER SLIDERS



- Makes Approximately 6 sliders

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound of ground beef
 - Ideally grass fed or finished
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon oregano
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 6 slices of cheese of choice
- Mini slider rolls
- Optional toppings: sliced fresh tomato, ketchup, pickles, onions, lettuce or spinach

DIRECTIONS

- Mix ground beef with salt, oregano, and garlic powder, and shape 6 mini patties/sliders.
- Heat skillet on medium heat-high heat.
- Grill one side for approximately 5 minutes.
- Flip burgers, add cheese to each patty.
- Cover with lid for about 5 more minutes.
- Remove burgers from heat and add to bun.
- Add toppings of choice.

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PEANUT BUTTER SANDWICH WITH BANANA



INGREDIENTS

- Nut (Peanut/almond/cashew) or seed (sunflower seed) butter of choice
- 2 slices of sprouted whole grain bread
- 1 banana sliced
- Optional topping: Chia seeds, unfiltered honey (honey only for children 2+ years old)
- Optional side: Quartered grapes

DIRECTIONS

- Spread nut/seed butter over slice of bread - you can toast the bread for an extra crunch.
- Layer sliced banana on top
- Sprinkle with chia seeds and add second piece of bread to the top. Serve and enjoy!

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KIDDIE COBB SALAD



INGREDIENTS

- 1 hardboiled egg, chopped
- 1-2 slices of nitrate-free bacon, chopped
- 1/2 avocado, cut into small pieces
- About 3 cherry tomatoes, quartered
- About 3 cubes of cheese (e.g. provolone, cheddar, mozzarella, etc.)
- Salt & pepper to taste
- Optional additions: 1/4 cup of chopped grilled chicken or ham, cucumbers, lemon juice, lettuce as a "bed" for ingredients

DIRECTIONS

- Over a bed of lettuce, section-off a small space for each ingredient. For example:
 - Top left corner - chopped bacon
 - Bottom left corner - chopped tomatoes
 - Top right corner - chopped grilled chicken/hard boiled egg/ham
 - Bottom right corner - avocados
 - You may also use a bento box to help separate different foods.
- Add any salt/pepper as desired.

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CHEESE QUESADILLAS



INGREDIENTS

- 2 tortillas of your choice (corn, wheat, chickpea, almond - do not choose almond if opting for nut-free)
- Shredded cheese of choice (American, cheddar, Colby)
- Additional toppings: lettuce, tomatoes, onion, bell peppers, leafy greens, avocado, meat (ham, beef) if non-vegan/vegetarian
- Optional: side of sour cream, salsa, or guacamole

DIRECTIONS

- Heat a large skillet over medium heat.
- Place one tortilla over the skillet and let sit for one minute
- Flip tortilla and add cheese + toppings of choice.
- Place second tortilla on top
- Add lid and let sit for one minute
- Flip the quesadilla and leave until cheese is seemingly melted.

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STUFFED PEPPERS



- Makes 3 servings - double recipe for 6 servings

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup of cold water
- 1/4 cup uncooked rice
- 1/2 pound of ground beef
- 3 medium peppers (choose from red, yellow, or green)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil (divided)
- 1/4 teaspoon of fresh parsley
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon onion powder
- salt & pepper to taste
- Optional: 1/2 cup of tomato sauce to add to mix

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
- In a medium saucepan, bring water to a boil & add 1/2 tbsp. of olive oil and a dash of salt - stir in rice.
- Reduce heat to low, simmer, and cover with lid.
- After 17 minutes, check rice to see if absorbed - you may let it sit for longer if water is not absorbed.
- Remove lid and fluff with fork.
- Meanwhile, heat oil in a skillet over medium heat, then add ground beef and cook for approximately 8 minutes.
- Hollow out bell peppers (you can poke a small hole in the bottom to let liquid drain out - you can also slice the bottom of the peppers to help them stand up).
- Discard the pepper tops & seeds.
- In a large bowl, combine & mix beef, rice, parsley, garlic, onion, salt, & pepper (and optional tomato sauce).
- Arrange open peppers in a baking dish & stuff with filling.
- Bake in preheated oven for about 1 hour.

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BUTTERNUT SQUASH SOUP WITH CINNAMON TOAST



*THIS RECIPE CALLS FOR A BLENDER OR IMMERSION BLENDER

INGREDIENTS

- 1 large butternut squash, peeled, seeded, and cubed
- 1 sweet potato, peeled and cubed
- 1 carrot, chopped
- 1 stalk of celery, finely chopped
- 1/2 onion, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic
- 4 cups bone broth/chicken broth
- 2 tablespoons of olive oil
- 1 & 1/2 tablespoons butter
- 1 teaspoon fresh thyme
- 1 pinch ground cumin
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 slice of whole grain bread
- Cinnamon to garnish over toast

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Combine olive oil, butternut squash, and sweet potato and bake in oven for about 30 minutes.
- Meanwhile, melt butter in a large pot over medium heat and cook the onion, garlic, carrot, celery, and thyme for approximately 7-8 minutes.
- Remove butternut squash and sweet potato from the oven and add to the pot, before adding broth.
- Add cumin and salt and pepper to taste.
- Simmer the ingredients for approximately 15 minutes.
- Carefully mix the ingredients in the pot using an immersion blender.
 - If you do not have an immersion blender, blend small batches of the soup in a blender (filling about halfway) for each batch. Repeat until the entire soup is fully blended. Reheat the soup if necessary.
- Toast a slice of whole grain bread, add a thin layer of butter and sprinkle with cinnamon.

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CHICKEN AND VEGETABLE STIR-FRY



INGREDIENTS

- Boneless, skinless chicken breasts, sliced
- Assorted vegetables (such as bell peppers, snap peas, carrots, broccoli)
- Garlic cloves, minced
- Soy sauce
- Honey
- Sesame oil
- Cornstarch
- Rice or noodles (optional)

DIRECTIONS

- In a large skillet or wok, heat sesame oil over medium-high heat.
- Add the sliced chicken and cook until browned and cooked through. Remove from the skillet and set aside.
- In the same skillet, add minced garlic and the assortment of vegetables. Stir-fry until crisp-tender.
- In a small bowl, whisk together soy sauce, honey, and cornstarch to make a sauce.
- Pour the sauce over the vegetables in the skillet. Add the cooked chicken back into the skillet and stir until everything is coated and the sauce has thickened.
- Serve the chicken and vegetable stir-fry over rice or noodles, if desired.

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OPEN FACE PB & J



INGREDIENTS

- Peanut butter
- Preserves, jam, or jelly of child's choice:
 - Preserves contain the highest amount fiber/seeds
 - Jam contains the second most amount fiber/seeds
 - Jelly contains the least amount fiber/seeds
- In place of preserves/jelly/jam, you can serve peanut butter over bread with whole fruit on the side.
- 1-2 slices of whole grain bread
- Optional: side of fresh fruit and/or cup of milk of child's choice.

DIRECTIONS

- You may toast the bread if your child prefers
- Over each slice of bread, add a layer of peanut butter, then add another layer of preserves/ jam/ jelly on top.
- Repeat for another slice if your child want's more.

NUT FREE OPTION

- Replace peanut butter with sunflower seed butter or coconut butter

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BAKED LEMON HERB SALMON



INGREDIENTS

- 4 salmon fillets
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 teaspoon dried rosemary
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Lemon slices and fresh herbs for garnish (optional)

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C).
- In a small bowl, whisk together the olive oil, lemon juice, minced garlic, dried thyme, dried rosemary, salt, and pepper.
- Place the salmon fillets on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper or foil.
- Pour the lemon herb mixture over the salmon, ensuring that each fillet is well coated.
- Bake in the preheated oven for about 12-15 minutes, or until the salmon is cooked through and flakes easily with a fork.
- Remove from the oven and let it rest for a few minutes before serving.
- Garnish with lemon slices and fresh herbs, if desired. Serve hot.

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PIZZA BAGELS



INGREDIENTS

- 1 bagel (or two mini bagels)
- 1/4 cup of pizza sauce
- 1/4 cup of shredded whole milk mozzarella
- Optional Toppings:
 - Basil (dried or fresh)
 - Oregano (dried or fresh)
 - Pepperoni
 - Mushrooms

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 425 degrees Fahrenheit
- Cut bagel into half.
- Scoop and spread pizza sauce over the the flat sides of the bagel.
- Sprinkle shredded mozzarella over the sauce.
- Gently sprinkle the cheese with basil or oregano.
- Bake for approximately 5-10 minutes, or until the mozzarella cheese is completely melted.

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SOUTH WEST FLAVOR BAKED SWEET POTATO FRIES WITH CHICKEN BREAST



INGREDIENTS

- 1 sweet potato
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- ¼ cup roasted red peppers
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 2 tbsp orange juice
- 1 tsp sugar, brown
- 1 tsp molasses (optional)
- 1 tbsp salt, Kosher
- 1 chicken breast

DAIRY FREE+VEGAN OPTION

- Replace chicken with a plant-based protein

DIRECTIONS

Cook Sweet Potatoes & Sauce

- Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Cut sweet potato into sticks or cubes.
- To make the sauce, add all remaining ingredients to a blender until smooth.
- Toss sauce with the sweet potatoes.
- Arrange sweet potatoes on a sheet pan lined with parchment paper.
- Bake in hot oven for 10-15 minutes.
- Rotate the pan and agitate the potatoes on the pan.
- Bake until cooked through.

Cook Chicken

- Rub the chicken with olive oil.
- Seasoned with salt and pepper and a dash of paprika for color
- Place on a baking sheet lined with parchment and covered with aluminum foil bake in the oven simultaneously with the sweet potatoes.
- Remove foil after the first 9 minutes.
- Cook until internal temp reached 165 degrees. Remove from oven, allow to cool enough until it is comfortable to handle, and slice into strips.
- Serve with sweet potatoes

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TOMATO SOUP WITH TOAST & CHEESE



INGREDIENTS

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1/2 cup onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 28-oz can diced tomatoes
- 1 cup vegetable broth
- 1/2 tsp dried basil
- 1/2 cup plain greek yogurt
- salt & pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

- Spread nut/seed butter over slice of bread - you can toast the bread for an extra crunch.
- Layer sliced banana on top
- Sprinkle with chia seeds and add second piece of bread to the top. Serve and enjoy!

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AVOCADO BOAT WITH TUNA SALAD



INGREDIENTS

- 2 cans of tuna, drained
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1/4 cup diced celery
- 1/4 cup diced red onion
- 2 tablespoons sweet pickle relish
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 avocado
- 1 toothpick

DIRECTIONS

- In a mixing bowl, combine the drained tuna, mayonnaise, celery, red onion, sweet pickle relish, and lemon juice.
- Mix all ingredients together until well combined.
- Season with salt and pepper to taste.
- Slice the avocado in half
- Fill the avocado with tuna salad.
- Place the toothpick in the middle of the tuna salad

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GRILLED HAM & CHEESE SANDWICH WITH PICKLES & CARROT STICKS



INGREDIENTS

- 2 slices of bread
- 2 slices of ham
- 2 slices of cheddar cheese
- 2 dill pickle slices
- Handful of fresh carrot sticks
- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon butter

DIRECTIONS

- In a small bowl, mix together the mayonnaise and Dijon mustard to make the spread.
- Lay out the slices of bread and spread the mayonnaise and mustard mixture on each slice.
- On two of the slices of bread, layer ham and cheddar cheese
 - Depending on taste you can add pickles inside the sandwich or place on the side
- Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat and add butter
- Place the sandwiches on the skillet and cook for about 2-3 minutes on each side.
- Remove the sandwiches from the skillet and cut in half.
- Serve the sandwich with carrot sticks on the side.

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BANANA SUSHI WITH FRESH FIGS



INGREDIENTS

- 1 large banana
- 2 tablespoons peanut butter
- 2 tablespoons honey or maple syrup
- 2 tablespoons raisins or chopped nuts (optional)
- 2 large tortillas or flatbreads
- Optional: Fresh fruit such as figs or berries to compliment the meal

DIRECTIONS

- Peel the banana and place it on a clean cutting board.
- Spread a layer of peanut butter evenly over the entire surface of the banana.
- Drizzle honey or maple syrup over the peanut butter.
- Sprinkle raisins or chopped nuts (if using) over the peanut butter and honey.
- Carefully roll the banana up in the tortilla or flatbread, starting from one end and rolling tightly until fully wrapped.
- Use a sharp knife to cut the rolled banana into bite-sized sushi-like pieces.
- Repeat the process with the second tortilla or flatbread and the remaining ingredients.

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SHRIMP TACOS



INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound medium shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon cumin
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Small tortillas (soft or hard, based on preference)
- Shredded lettuce
- Diced tomatoes
- Shredded cheddar cheese
- Optional toppings: diced avocado, sour cream, salsa

DIRECTIONS

- In a bowl, toss the shrimp with olive oil, chili powder, cumin, salt, and pepper until the shrimp are coated in the spices.
- Heat a skillet over medium-high heat. Add the seasoned shrimp to the skillet and cook for about 2-3 minutes on each side, or until the shrimp are pink and cooked through.
- Warm the tortillas according to the package instructions.
- Assemble the shrimp tacos: Place a layer of shredded lettuce on each tortilla, followed by a few cooked shrimp.
- Add diced tomatoes and shredded cheese on top of the shrimp.
- If desired, add optional toppings such as diced avocado, a dollop of sour cream, or a spoonful of salsa.
- Serve the shrimp tacos with a side of rice, beans, or tortilla chips.

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VEGGIE AND BEAN QUESADILLA



INGREDIENTS

- 4 large flour tortillas
- 1 can of black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 red bell pepper, thinly sliced
- 1 green bell pepper, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup diced red onion
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Optional toppings: avocado, salsa, sour cream

DIRECTIONS

- Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat.
- Add the sliced bell peppers and diced red onion to the skillet and sauté for about 5-7 minutes
- Add the black beans to the skillet and stir to combine with the vegetables.
- Remove the skillet from the heat and set aside.
- Place a large skillet or griddle over medium heat.
- Place a flour tortilla on the skillet and sprinkle with shredded cheese.
- Spoon the bean and vegetable mixture over the cheese and top with more shredded cheese.
- Place another tortilla on top and press down gently with a spatula.
- Cook for about 2-3 minutes on each side

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GREEK CHICKEN PITA



INGREDIENTS

- 2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 teaspoons dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 4 small whole wheat pitas
- Tzatziki sauce
- Sliced cucumber
- Sliced tomato Sliced
- Red onion
- Optional toppings: crumbled feta cheese, chopped fresh parsley

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C).
- In a small bowl, mix together the olive oil, dried oregano, garlic powder, salt, and pepper to create a marinade.
- Place the chicken breasts in a baking dish and brush them with the marinade on both sides.
- Bake the chicken in the preheated oven for about 20-25 minutes or until cooked through.
- Remove the chicken from the oven and let it cool for a few minutes.
- Then, slice the chicken into thin strips.
- Warm the pitas in a toaster or on a skillet for a few seconds per side.
- Open the pitas and spread a generous amount of tzatziki sauce inside.
- Fill the pitas with the sliced chicken, cucumber, tomato, and red onion.
- If desired, sprinkle crumbled feta cheese and chopped fresh parsley.