



## School lunch ideas

### Tips for school lunches

Do you struggle with or feel frustrated by the task of packing school lunches? You're not alone! From picky eaters, food choices, and finding the time there can be a lot to consider. Here are a few tips to let you know you're on the right track to ensuring your child has a nutritious lunch and a positive relationship with food.

#### Food choices and decisions

Encourage children to explore their food preferences and eat mindfully by paying attention to their hunger and fullness cues. Parents are responsible for *providing food* for children. Children are responsible for deciding *if* they are going to eat and *how much*. Some days your child may eat all of their lunch and some days they may only eat some. This is normal.

#### Picky eaters and exposure

*Exposure* to a food is important to develop curiosity, build trust, and witness other family members role modeling healthy behaviours. For school lunches, it's ok to be considerate of children's likes and dislikes, while continuing to provide nutritious choices. At home, offer familiar food together with new food (or less well liked food) as part of a meal or snack. It may take multiple exposures before a child feels comfortable trying a new food and is open to including it in their lunch. Remember every exposure counts, even if children don't try the food!

#### Teachable moments

Mornings can be rough! Get into the *routine* of packing lunch the night before. Include your child in the packing process. Show what makes up a nutritious lunch by offering choices from each of the four food groups (see table inside). Take advantage of your school's Milk Program and include cold milk as your child's nutrient packed beverage.

For easy lunch ideas →



For these recipes and more visit [dairybest.ca](http://dairybest.ca)

SCHOOL LUNCHES  
**MADE  
EASY**





# Saskmilk An easy choice!

Your child’s school supports nutrition and that includes having a School Milk Program. Milk at lunch helps provide the energy and nutrients children need to grow and perform their best physically and mentally.

## Here’s how the School Milk Program works:

The School Milk Program encourages students to develop the healthy habit of drinking milk every day at school by making it fun and rewarding.

Everyone plays an important role in the School Milk Program. The school makes cold refreshing milk available to students, parents help their children purchase milk, and students drink milk and have a chance to win cool milk rewards!

## The benefits:

- 1. Cold milk is available to students
- 2. It’s easy and convenient for parents
- 3. It’s fun for students and encourages life-long healthy eating habits

Participate in the School Milk Program today. For more information, call your school and ask for the school’s Milk Coordinator.

# No other drink compares to milk.

When it comes to quenching thirst, water is a great choice. With a meal, include milk to provide your growing student with energy and nutrition to fuel their potential.

							
NUTRIENT	WHITE 2% MILK	CHOCOLATE 1% MILK	100% JUICE	FRUIT DRINK	SPORTS DRINK	POP	WATER
Calcium [% DV]	24	24	2	1	-	1	-
Vitamin D [% DV]	17	18	-	-	-	-	-
Vitamin A [% DV]	27	28	4	1	-	-	-
Vitamin C [% DV]	1	-	291	253	2	-	-
Protein [g]	9	9	2	-	-	-	-
Fat [g]	5	3	-	-	-	-	-
Added sugar [g]	-	13	-	30	14	28	-
Total sugar [g] (naturally occurring + added)	13	26	22	30	14	28	-

All beverages are based on a 250 mL serving from the Canadian Nutrient File. Percent daily value (%DV) is based on Dietary Reference Intakes for children ages 9-13.

# 1, 2, 3, 4 Aim for four!

When packing school lunches there is one simple phrase to remember “Aim for Four!” These “four” make up the categories known as the four food groups.

To plan a meal, offer an item from each of the four food groups. Including food from each group ensures the presence of a variety of nutrients required for good health. Mix and match the examples of foods below to create a school lunch.

## Offer item(s) from each of the four food groups

### Vegetables & Fruit

- cut carrots, celery
- snap peas
- bell pepper slices
- cherry tomatoes
- cucumber slices
- mushrooms
- cauliflower, broccoli
- lettuce, spinach, kale
- salsa
- vegetable soup
- canned fruit
- applesauce
- grapes
- cut melon
- apple, orange, pear, banana
- peach, nectarine, plum
- berries
- pineapple, kiwi, mango
- avocado



### Grain Products

- bread, bun, bagel, wrap, flatbread, pita
- bannock
- cooked quinoa, barley
- cooked rice
- pasta, couscous
- oatmeal
- granola
- cereal
- muffin
- granola/cereal bars
- crackers
- rice cakes/crackers
- pancakes, waffles

### Milk & Alternatives

- milk
- cheese stick/string
- sliced/cubed hard cheese
- cottage cheese
- yogurt
- yogurt tubes
- yogurt drinks
- kefir
- fortified soy beverage



### Meat & Alternatives

- chicken, turkey, pork or beef
- tuna, salmon, or other fish
- hard-boiled egg
- deli meat
- egg salad
- legumes— chickpeas, beans, lentils
- hamburger patty
- meat loaf
- veggie burger (made with legumes)
- hummus
- nuts/seeds
- nut/seed butter
- tofu



Many great lunch foods represent 2 or more food groups: Yogurt parfait, pizza, salad, sandwich/wrap/pita, tacos/burritos/ quesadillas, spaghetti, chili, stew, soup, casserole etc.

\*Note: when packing lunches keep in mind classroom or school food allergy policy.

The School Milk Program is courtesy of

