



Lunch on a Budget

When trying to eat healthy, one of the best ways to stay on track is to prepare your own food. Packing your own lunch can help you eat balanced, well-portioned meals and save money and time. And it is a great way to add immune-boosting nutrients to your meals.

Here are some tips to make lunch-on-the-go an easy option! To ensure you are eating a balanced meal follow this guideline: Fill half of your plate with non-starchy vegetables, one quarter with lean protein, and one quarter with whole grain or starchy vegetables. Add a low-fat dairy and/or fruit serving, along with some healthy fats, and you're good to go!

Here are some healthy things to make part of your lunch:

Fruits and Vegetables

- Fruit that packs well: apples, bananas, oranges, melon and berries.
- Sliced veggies: baby carrots, celery, peppers or cucumbers with low-fat dip.
- Leafy green salad with two tablespoons of dressing on the side.

Lean Protein

- Chicken, turkey, lean beef or fish.
- Beans, legumes (lentils) or tofu.
- Nuts and nut butter.
- Eggs (hardboiled, scrambled, egg salad or quiche).

Low-Fat Dairy

- Greek yogurt or plain yogurt (add your own fruit).
- Sliced, shredded or string cheese. Add to a sandwich or on top of your salad.

Healthy Fats

- Avocados (up to 2 oz).
- Almonds, walnuts or cashews (up to 1 oz).
- Sesame, pumpkin or sunflower seeds (unsalted).

Other Quick Budget-Friendly Lunch Options

- Leftovers: Make extra at dinnertime and save portions in containers to pack with you the next day.
- Soups: Soups can be made ahead of time and portioned into single-serve containers. Store them in the freezer and rotate them into your lunch.
- Salads: Add lean protein to a leafy green salad with veggies for color and taste.
- Smoothies: Blend together fruit, a protein (Greek yogurt or nut butter), leafy greens and a healthy fat such as a sliced avocado.



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