

PACKING A LUNCHBOX



jo kate nutrition



Packing a lunchbox can seem like a daunting process, especially once your child starts full time schooling and it becomes a daily task. Just remember this:

A lunchbox is just **one of your child's opportunities to meet their nutritional needs for the day.**

If they are eating breakfast and dinner at home, there are more opportunities to serve them foods that will balance their daily nutritional needs. For example, if you serve them porridge for breakfast and pasta for dinner, they will not require as many sources of wholegrains in their lunchbox.

DAILY SERVES OF MACRONUTRIENTS

BOYS	VEGETABLES	FRUIT	GRAINS	PROTEIN	FATS
4-8 YEARS	4.5 serves	1.5 serves	4 serves	1.5 serves	2 serves
9-11 YEARS	5 serves	2 serves	5 serves	2.5 serves	2.5 serves
12-13 YEARS	5.5 serves	2 serves	6 serves	2.5 serves	3.5 serves
14-18 YEARS	5.5 serves	2 serves	7 serves	2.5 serves	3.5 serves

GIRLS	VEGETABLES	FRUIT	GRAINS	PROTEIN	FATS
4-8 YEARS	4.5 serves	1.5 serves	4 serves	1.5 serves	1.5 serves
9-11 YEARS	5 serves	2 serves	4 serves	2.5 serves	3 serves
12-13 YEARS	5 serves	2 serves	5 serves	2.5 serves	3.5 serves
14-18 YEARS	5 serves	2 serves	7 serves	2.5 serves	3.5 serves

This is based off the National Health & Medical Research Council and is a guide only. It is difficult to come up with a national food standard that suits every person and their beliefs around food but if you use it as a general guide for what your child requires daily, it can be helpful. In my opinion, the grain servings are far too high, I would prefer to see more servings of fruit and protein and less grains. When choosing grains, opt for whole grains with the majority coming from gluten free sources, such as rice, quinoa, buckwheat, oats (choose gluten free oats if you are Coeliac, if you are not, regular oats are fine, they do not contain gluten but may have been contaminated during the processing). If you can handle gluten, opt for Ancient grains such as spelt, rye, khorasan (kamut) and millet as they are less processed and contain higher amounts of vitamins, minerals and fibre than standard wheat.

SERVING SIZES

VEGETABLES: 1 serve =

- 1/2 cup cooked green or orange vegetables (eg: broccoli, carrots, spinach, pumpkin)
- 1/2 cup cooked dried or canned beans, peas or lentils
- 1 cup green leafy or raw salad vegetables
- 1/2 cup sweet corn
- 1/2 medium starchy vegetable (potato, sweet potato)

FRUITS: 1 serve =

- 1 medium apple, banana, orange or pear
- 1 medium tomato
- 2 small kiwi or stone fruit
- 1/2 cup berries, mango, pineapple, watermelon
- On occasion: 30g dried fruit (preferably organic and sulphite free)

GRAINS: 1 serve =

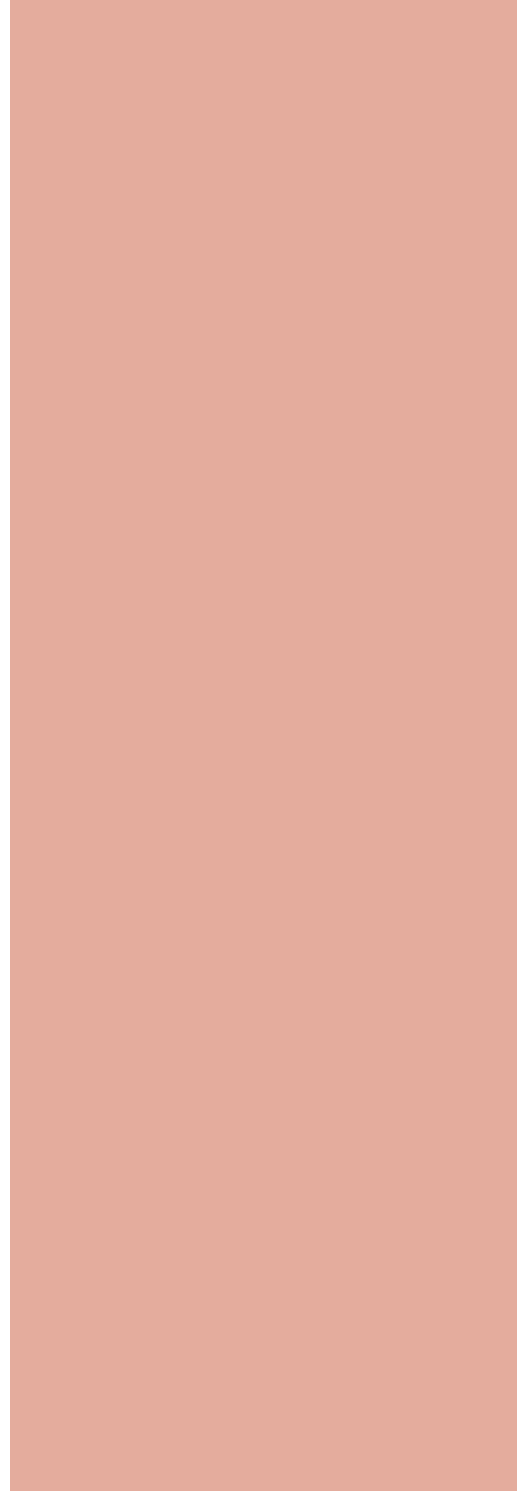
- 1 slice of wholegrain bread (preferably spelt or rye sourdough)
- 1/2 cup cooked rice, noodles, gluten free pasta, barley, buckwheat or quinoa
- 1/2 cup cooked porridge
- 2 brown rice thins

PROTEIN: 1 serve =

- 65g cooked beef, lamb, pork, veal, kangaroo
- 80g cooked chicken or turkey
- 2 large eggs
- 100g cooked fish or 1 small can of tuna or salmon
- 1 cup dried and cooked or canned beans, legumes or peas
- 170g tofu or tempeh
- 30g nuts or seeds, nut butter, tahini

FATS: 1 serve =

- 1 cup organic, full fat cows or goats milk
- 40g cheese (Cheddar, parmesan, goats, feta, mozzarella)
- 1/2 cup ricotta or cottage cheese
- 3/4 cup full fat, unsweetened Greek yoghurt or coconut yoghurt
- 20g nuts
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1/4 small avocado



IDEAS FOR SERVING MACRONUTRIENTS

VEGETABLES

- Chopped veggie sticks (carrot, cucumber, capsicum, snow peas, edamame)
- Add vegetables to muffins, slices (eg: zucchini slice, savoury muffins, pikelets)
- Salad wrap or sandwich
- Vegetables added into smoothies
- Baked beans served in a thermos
- Leftovers served warm in a thermos: soup, dahl, pesto pasta etc

FRUITS

- Freshly chopped or served whole
- Cooked into muffins or cakes
- Added into smoothies
- On occasion, dried fruits such as sultanas, dates, figs etc
- Homemade gummies made with fresh juice and gelatin

GRAINS

- Sourdough or Mountain Bread wrap with a protein and salad, nut butter (if allowed), hummus or pesto
- Pesto pasta (made with legume based pasta or gluten free buckwheat or brown rice)
- Rice paper rolls with vermicelli noodles, a protein and vegetables
- Oat based cookies, or cakes or muffins made with an Ancient grain (spelt, rye, khorasan) or gluten free grain (buckwheat flour, oat flour, rice flour etc)
- Brown rice thins with avocado, nut butter or cheese
- Sushi

PROTEIN

- Poached chicken or turkey added onto sandwiches or on its own
- Nitrate free ham or organic sausages or meatballs
- Tin of tuna or salmon or sardine spread
- Boiled eggs, fritatta or egg muffins
- Tempeh or edamame if vegan
- Spirulina added to a smoothie or pikelets
- Baked beans, roasted chickpeas, hummus, lentil sausage rolls
- Nuts or seeds, nut butter, tahini

FATS

- Guacamole or 1/4 of an avocado spread on bread or wraps or served whole
- Nut butter or tahini
- Greek, coconut yoghurt or kefir served with fruit or blended up in a smoothie and served in a drink bottle
- Bliss balls
- Cubed or sliced cheese



CHILDHOOD NUTRITIONAL NEEDS

IRON:

Transports oxygen in the blood, essential for energy production, essential for growth and development in children, important in neurological development, assists with immunity, essential for blood production

Food Sources:

1 cup canned white beans: 8 mg
90g dark chocolate (50-70%): 7 mg
90g beef liver: 5 mg
30g pumpkin seeds: 4 mg
1/2 cup cooked lentils: 3 mg
1/2 cup cooked spinach: 3 mg
90g beef: 2 mg
90g turkey: 2.3 mg

Recommended Daily Intake

Boys:

4-8 years: 10mg
9-13 years: 8mg
14-18 years: 11mg

Girls:

4-8 years: 10mg
9-13 years: 8mg
14-18 years: 15mg

VITAMIN A:

Essential for bone formation and health, vision, mental stability, growth and immunity.

Food Sources:

90g beef liver: 6582 mcg
Cod liver oil: 750 mcg (depending on brand)
1 whole sweet potato baked in skin: 1403 mcg
1/2 cup cooked spinach: 573 mcg

Recommended Daily Intake

Boys:

4-8 years: 400ug
9-13 years: 600ug
14-18 years: 900ug

Girls:

4-8 years: 400ug
9-13 years: 600ug
14-18 years: 700ug

CHILDHOOD NUTRITIONAL NEEDS

ZINC:

Essential for immunity, required for normal development in infants and children, wound healing, enhances the action of insulin, necessary for the actions of over 300 enzymes that aid bodily processes, required for the senses of taste and smell

Food Sources:

90g oysters: 74 mg
90g beef: 7 mg
90g pork chop: 2.9 mg
1/2 cup beans: 2.9 mg
30g pumpkin seeds: 2.2 mg
1/2 cup cooked chickpeas: 1.3 mg

Recommended Daily Intake

Boys:

4-8 years: 4 mg
9-13 years: 6 mg
14-18 years: 13 mg

Girls:

4-8 years: 4 mg
9-13 years: 6mg
14-18 years: 7mg

VITAMIN D:

Maintains body levels of calcium and phosphorus, required for bone growth, reduces inflammation and increases immunity.

Food Sources:

1 tsp cod liver oil: 400-500IU
90g salmon: 447 IU
90g tuna: 154 IU
1 cup whole milk: 115 IU
1 egg: 41 IU

Recommended Daily Intake

Boys:

4-8 years: 600IU
9-13 years: 600IU
14-18 years: 600IU

Girls:

4-8 years: 600IU
9-13 years: 600IU
14-18 years: 600IU

CHILDHOOD NUTRITIONAL NEEDS

CALCIUM

Critical for bones and teeth, muscle function, blood clotting, hormone secretion, regulating heart beat and fluid balance within cells.

Food Sources:

220g Greek yoghurt: 415mg
90g sardines: 325mg
40g Cheddar cheese: 307mg
220g full cream milk: 299mg
90g salmon: 181mg
1 tbsp poppy seeds: 126mg
1 cup chickpeas: 90mg
1 tbsp sesame seeds: 87mg

Recommended Daily Intake

Boys:

4-8 years: 700mg
9-13 years: 1000mg
14-18 years: 1300mg

Girls:

4-8 years: 700mg
9-13 years: 1000mg
14-18 years: 1300mg

IODINE

Critical for thyroid function, which regulates body temperature, growth, nerve and muscle function and metabolism.

Food Sources:

Nori sheets: between 16-43 mcg depending on the origins
1 cup cooked Lima beans: 16 mcg
1 egg: 24 mcg
1 cup Greek yoghurt: 75 mcg
Small can of tuna: 17 mcg
1 cup milk: 56 mcg

Recommended Daily Intake

Boys:

4-8 years: 90mg
9-13 years: 120mg
14-18 years: 150mg

Girls:

4-8 years: 90mg
9-13 years: 120mg
14-18 years: 150mg

CHILDHOOD NUTRITIONAL NEEDS

B VITAMINS (B6, B9, B12)

For metabolism, immunity, energy production, nervous system health, growth and maintenance of all cells.

Food Sources:

90g Beef liver: 215 mcg B9, 70 mcg B12, 0.9 mg B6
1/2 cup cooked spinach: 131 mcg B9
4 spears asparagus: 89 mcg B9
1 serving nutritional yeast: 6 mcg B12
90g tuna: 0.9 mg B6, 2.5 mcg B12
90g chicken breast: 0.5 mg B6
90g salmon: 4.8 mcg B12, 0.6mg B6

Recommended Daily Intake

Boys:

4-8 years: 0.6mg (B6), 200ug (B9), 1.2mcg (B12)
9-13 years: 1mg (B6), 300ug (B9), 1.8mcg (B12)
14-18 years: 1.3mg (B6), 400ug (B9), 2.4mcg (B12)

Girls:

4-8 years: 0.6mg (B6), 200ug (B9), 1.2mcg (B12)
9-13 years: 1mg (B6), 300mg (B9), 1.8mcg (B12)
14-18 years: 1.2mg (B6), 400ug (B9), 2.4mcg (B12)

ESSENTIAL FATTY ACIDS (DHA, EPA, ALA)

For normal growth and development. The brain is made up of 70% fat (30% which is DHA)

Food Sources:

1 tbsp flaxseed oil: 7.26g ALA
90g salmon: 1.22g DHA and 0.35g EPA
90g Sardines: 0.74 DHA and 0.45g EPA
30g Chia seeds: 5.06g ALA
30g walnuts: 2.57g ALA

Recommended Daily Intake

Boys:

4-8 years: 0.8g (ALA), 55mg (DHA & EPA)
9-13 years: 1g (ALA), 70mg (DHA & EPA)
14-18 years: 1.2g (ALA), 125mg (DHA & EPA)

Girls:

4-8 years: 0.8g (ALA), 55mg (DHA & EPA)
9-13 years: 0.8g (ALA) 70mg (DHA & EPA)
14-18 years: 0.8g (ALA) 85mg (DHA & EPA)



SAMPLE WEEKLY MEALS & LUNCHBOXES

You may be wondering how to provide your child with their daily nutritional needs, here is a sample menu aimed at a 4-8 year old child. It covers their daily needs as outlined by the NHMRC, however, I have reduced the grains and increased the fruit and protein.

MONDAY

Breakfast: 1/2 cup oats, 1 cup organic full cream milk (or dairy free alternative), 1/4 cup berries, 1 tbsp chia seeds

Morning Tea: 1 piece fruit, 1/2 cup carrot sticks, 1 homemade healthy treat (muffin, bliss ball, pikelets etc)

Lunch: 1x organic beef sausage or some poached chicken served with 5 cherry tomatoes, 1/2 cup cucumber, 20g cheese

Afternoon tea: 2x rice & quinoa thins with nut butter, smoothie (see smoothie builder in recipe section)

Dinner: Some form of protein, 2x serves of vegetables, 1 serve of grains. For example: lentil pesto pasta or buckwheat pasta with chicken, broccoli & pumpkin

TUESDAY

Breakfast: Protein pancakes with Greek yoghurt, 1/4 cup blueberries or banana & pure maple syrup (if required)

Morning tea: 1 piece of fruit, 2x zucchini slice muffins

Lunch: Chicken, lentil & hidden veggie sausage rolls (omit meat if vegetarian)

Afternoon tea: Veggie sticks with hummus or dip, 1 homemade healthy treat (muffin, bliss ball, pikelets etc)

Dinner: Pumpkin soup with 1x piece of sourdough (or gf alternative)

WEDNESDAY

Breakfast: 1x slice of sourdough with butter and 2x soft boiled dippy eggs

Morning tea: 1 piece of fruit, carrot sticks with 1 tbsp hummus, cherry tomatoes

Lunch: Lentil pasta with tuna, tomato, cucumber & cheese

Afternoon tea: Smoothie (see smoothie builder), 1 homemade healthy treat (muffin, bliss ball, pikelets etc)

Dinner: Beef stir fry with rice & vegetables

SAMPLE WEEKLY MEALS & LUNCHBOXES

THURSDAY

Breakfast: 1/2 cup oats, 1 cup organic full cream milk (or dairy free alternative), 1/4 cup berries, 1 tbsp chia seeds

Morning Tea: 1 piece fruit, 1/2 cup carrot sticks with 1 tbsp hummus, 1 homemade healthy treat (muffin, bliss ball, pikelets etc)

Lunch: 2x rice paper rolls with a protein & salad

Afternoon tea: 2x rice & quinoa thins with nut butter, smoothie (see smoothie builder)

Dinner: Mexican beans, salad & corn chips

FRIDAY

Breakfast: Protein pancakes, Greek yoghurt, blueberries & pure maple syrup (if required)

Morning tea: Piece of fruit, 1 homemade healthy treat (muffin, bliss ball, pikelets etc)

Lunch: 3x meatballs, cucumber, tomato & capsicum

Afternoon tea: Carrot sticks with 1 tbsp hummus, 2x brown rice cakes with avo or nut butter

Dinner: Fish, sweet potato/potato wedges and salad

This sample menu is to show you how you can incorporate macro and micro nutrients into your child's daily meals. I like to focus on getting in the following daily as non-negotiables: fresh fruits and vegetables, some form of fermented food (yoghurt, kefir, fermented vegetable), nuts and seeds, good protein sources and fats.

It is not always possible to achieve the daily recommendations of the micro nutrients (due to fussy eating etc), to tackle this, ensure your child is having a variety of foods as well as taking a practitioner only multi vitamin supplement to meet any gaps in their diet.



DIETARY RESTRICTION SWAPS

No gluten

Wheat flour - rice flour, buckwheat flour, coconut flour, amaranth

Soy sauce - tamari or coconut aminos

Cous Cous - quinoa

Cereal - gluten free oats, chocolate puffed rice cereal, quinoa porridge, chia pudding

Pasta - rice noodles, lentil/pulse pasta, brown rice pasta, buckwheat pasta

Breadcrumbs - gluten free oats, quinoa flakes

Bread/wraps - rice paper rolls, corn tortillas, paleo wraps (Pete Evans has a good recipe), good quality gluten free bread with minimal additives/preservatives, brown rice thins

No eggs

Chia/flax egg: mix 1 tbsp chia or flax seeds with 3 tbsp water and mix until combined to replace one egg. Allow to sit for 5 minutes or until the paste thickens

Apple puree - apples contain pectin, so act as a thickener once they have been puree'd and cooled. Use 1/4 of a cup to replace one egg

Mashed banana: a 1/4 cup of mashed banana can replace an egg

Apple cider vinegar & baking soda: mix 1 tbsp of ACV with 1 tsp baking soda to replace one egg

Yoghurt or buttermilk: 1/4 cup can replace one egg. Make sure you use unsweetened yoghurt that contains cultures.

Arrowroot powder: mix 2 tbsp arrowroot powder with 3 tbsp water and mix into a paste, use to replace one egg

Aquafaba: the leftover liquid from a tin of chickpeas. It has a similar consistency to an egg white. Use 3 tbsp to replace one egg

Nut butter: 3 tbsp of peanut, cashew or almond butter can be used to replace one egg. Use smooth, not crunchy.

No nuts

Simply swap for seeds or buckwheat groats. Sunflower seeds work well as a cashew replacement in bliss balls and buckwheat has a crunchy consistency so can also be a good replacement.

No dairy

Milk: almond, oat, cashew, hemp, goat's milk can sometimes be tolerated

Yoghurt: coconut yoghurt, almond milk yoghurt

Cheese: cashew cheese, sometimes goat's cheese can be tolerated

Butter: avocado, nut butter



RECIPE LIST

Mains

- Veggie Loaded Sausage Rolls
- Chicken, Lentil & Veggie Sausage Rolls
- Zucchini Slice Muffins
- Frittata Muffins
- Chicken Nuggets
- Poached Chicken
- Spring chicken sandwich mix
- Sardine Spread
- Rice Paper Rolls
- Baked Beans
- Dahl
- Nut Free Pesto
- Vegetarian Patties
- Sweet potato, brown rice & butter bean balls

Snacks

- Chocolate cereal
- Jam drops
- Smoothies
- Protein Pancakes
- Muffin Mix
- Oat Cookies
- Coconut Rice pudding
- Gingerbread cookies
- Raspberry coconut slice
- Sweet potato brownie
- Happy gut lovin gummies
- Mango, coconut muffins

VEGGIE LOADED SAUSAGE ROLLS

Suitable to freeze

Ingredients

500g organic beef mince
2 zucchini
2 carrots
1 onion
1/2 cup quinoa flakes or oats
1 egg
Fresh herbs: basil, oregano, thyme etc
Salt and pepper

Pastry: opt for a butter puff as it avoids nasty vegetable oils. There are gluten free pastry options available at most health food stores.

Method

Place all of the vegetables in a blender with the garlic and blitz until finely chopped. Add the mince, egg, quinoa flakes, herbs, salt and pepper and blend until combined.

Place on the defrosted pastry sheet in a line down the centre and roll the sides. Brush with some whisked egg or milk and cook in a preheated oven (200 C) for about 20 minutes.

If the under side of the pastry is soggy, flip them over and cook for a further 10 minutes.

These can also be made and frozen before cooking for an easy to grab lunch or dinner. Alternatively, they can be cooked and then frozen for lunchboxes.

CHICKEN, LENTIL & VEGGIE SAUSAGE ROLLS

Suitable to freeze

Ingredients

500g chicken mince (for a vegetarian option, replace with extra vegetables)
150g cooked lentils
2x carrots
1x zucchini
1x onion
2x cloves garlic
Fresh herbs such as thyme, basil, rosemary, parsley
1x egg or egg substitute
1x cup oats or quinoa flakes
Salt & pepper to taste

Pastry: opt for a butter puff as it avoids nasty vegetable oils. There are gluten free pastry options available at most health food stores.

Method

Place the onion, garlic, zucchini, carrots, and herbs into a blender and blitz. Add in the chicken, lentils, egg, oats salt and pepper and mix to combine.

Divide between puff pastry sheets (this amount usually makes 7-8 sheets worth).

Brush with a whisked egg or milk and cook for about 30 minutes.

Cool and slice up before freezing. Alternatively, you can prepare the sausage rolls and freeze before cooking, then cook from frozen.

ZUCCHINI SLICE MUFFINS

Suitable to freeze

Ingredients

1 1/2 cups grated zucchini
1 grated carrot
1 small onion, diced
3 rashers bacon (optional)
1 clove garlic
1 cup flour (spelt, gluten-free, buckwheat flour etc)
6 eggs
1 cup grated cheese
1/4 cup olive oil

Method

Cook the onion and garlic (and bacon if using) in a little olive oil until soft and cooked through. Set aside to cool.

Meanwhile, grate the zucchini, carrot and cheese. Mix in the flour. Whisk the eggs and olive oil and add in the onion, garlic, carrot, zucchini and flour. Season with salt and pepper.

Pour into a greased baking dish or muffin cases and cook for 30-40 minutes at 180 degrees or until cooked through.

Store in the fridge or freeze into zip lock bags.

FRITATTA MUFFINS

Suitable to freeze

Ingredients

Basic Frittata ingredients

12 eggs

3 tbsp milk of choice or cream

3 cups cooked and seasoned vegetables

1 cup grated or crumbled cheese (parmesan, goats cheese, feta, haloumi)

Salt and pepper to taste

Flavour combinations:

Tomato, basil & zucchini

Chicken, leek, mushroom

Mushroom, spinach & feta

Ham, tomato & parmesan

Roast pumpkin, feta & spinach

Salmon, beetroot & roasted pumpkin

Method

Preheat oven to 170 C

Grease an oven proof dish or muffin cases.

Whisk the eggs with the milk, cheese and salt and pepper.

Place the prepared toppings in the dish or molds and pour over the egg mixture.

Cook for 35-40 minutes or until the egg has set. For the muffin cases, cook for 20-25 minutes or until set.

Suitable for freezing once cooled.

CHICKEN NUGGETS

Suitable to freeze

Ingredients

700g chicken thigh
1 cup quinoa flakes or oats
1/2 cup flour of choice
1 tbsp hemp seeds (optional)
Zest of 1 lemon
Fresh herbs: oregano, thyme, basil, sage etc
2 eggs
Splash of milk of choice
Extra flour to coat the chicken

Method

Combine the quinoa flakes, flour, finely chopped herbs, salt, pepper, zest and hemp seeds into a bowl and mix. Whisk the eggs and milk together in a separate bowl.

Place 1/2 cup of extra flour into another bowl.

Chop up the chicken to the desired size and coat in the flour followed by the egg mixture and finally in the crumb mixture.

Heat a frypan with olive or coconut oil and cook the chicken in batches until crisp (be careful not to burn the crumb mixture!) Place in an oven at 180 C and finish the cooking or a further 10 minutes.

Store in the freezer for an easy lunchbox addition or dinner

SARDINE SPREAD

Prepare fresh - store up to two days in the fridge

Ingredients

1 tin sardines
1/2 large avocado
2 tbsp lemon juice
1 tbsp lemon zest
1 tbsp chopped mint
1 tbsp chilli flakes (optional)
Pepitas and sunflower seeds to serve

Method

Place the avocado in a bowl with the lemon zest and juice and mash with a fork.

Add in the sardines and mint and mix,

Add to a sandwich or wrap and top with the pepitas and sunflower seeds.

POACHED CHICKEN

Suitable to freeze

Ingredients

2 chicken breasts
1 lemon, zest and juice
1 clove garlic
6 sprigs thyme
Salt & pepper

Method

Place the chicken into a saucepan and cover with water. Add the thyme, garlic, zest, juice and salt and pepper.

Bring to the boil then reduce, cover and simmer for 15 minutes. Turn off the heat and allow the chicken to sit for 10 minutes to continue cooking.

Remove and allow to cool before shredding. Store in the fridge to use during the week.

SPRING CHICKEN SANDWICH MIX

Prepare fresh - store up to three days in the fridge

Ingredients

3 chicken thighs or 1 large chicken breast, poached
3 tbsp good quality mayonnaise
3 tbsp Greek yoghurt
2 stalks celery, thinly sliced
1/4 cup pine nuts, toasted (optional, remove if nut free)
2 tbsp chopped mint
Zest of 1 lemon
1 tbsp lemon juice
Salt & pepper.

Method

To make the chicken mix, combine the mayonnaise and yoghurt in a bowl and add the lemon zest, lemon juice, celery, mint and pine nuts. Add the chicken (once cooled) and mix. Store in the fridge for up to 3 days.

RICE PAPER ROLLS

Prepare fresh

Ingredients

1x packet rice paper rolls
1x packet vermicelli rice noodles

Fillings:

Protein: boiled egg, chicken, ham, tuna, salmon, beans

Salad: carrot sticks, cucumber sticks, capsicum sticks, spinach leaves, snow peas, avocado, purple cabbage, freshly chopped herbs

Dipping sauce: (optional)

Peanut Dipping Sauce:

1/2 cup smooth peanut butter
2 tablespoons hot water
1 tbsp lime juice
1 tablespoon raw honey
1 1/2 tablespoon cilantro leaves
1 tablespoon mint leaves
1 tablespoon tamari sauce
1/2 chilli flakes (more or less to taste)

Method

Prepare all of your fillings: finely slice the vegetables, cook the protein.

Boil some water and pour over the vermicelli noodles and allow to soak for 5 minutes.

Drain and return to the bowl.

Fill a bowl or shallow dish with warm water. Place one rice paper roll at a time in the water and soak for about 15 seconds, or until just soft.

Place flat on a plate or board and fill with the noodles, protein, vegetables and herbs.

Roll one side to the middle, followed by the other side, followed by the two ends. Gently press until it has been sealed.

Store in the fridge until required with a layer of baking paper between or a damp tea towel to avoid them sticking together.

BAKED BEANS - 2 WAYS

Suitable to freeze

Mexican:

- 1 BPA free tin of tomatoes
- 1 BPA free tins red kidney beans
- 1 BPA free tin of black beans
- 1 BPA free tin of corn, drained and rinsed
- 1 tbsp onion powder
- 1 tbsp garlic powder
- 1 tbsp oregano
- 2 tbsp paprika
- 2 tbsp cumin
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1/2 cup water

Method

Drain and rinse the beans and corn and add to a saucepan. Add spices and stir to combine. Add the tomatoes, corn, water and simmer for 20 minutes on low. Season with salt and pepper.

Serve with corn chips, tacos or rice with grated carrot, spinach leaves, diced cucumbers, tomato, or any other salad ingredient, guacamole and sour cream or yoghurt.

Traditional:

- 2 tins BPA free beans of choice (navy, cannellini, butter etc)
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves
- 2 BPA free tins of chopped or whole Italian tomatoes
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tbsp pure maple syrup
- 2 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1/2 cup water or bone broth

Method

Drain and rinse the beans. Finely chop the onion and garlic and add to a frypan with the olive oil. Cook on medium heat until soft. Add the rest of the ingredients and cook on low for 30 minutes. Store in the fridge or freeze up to 3 months.

RED LENTIL DAHL

Suitable to freeze

Ingredients

1 cup red lentils
1 onion, diced
1 tomato, diced
4 garlic cloves, minced
1 tbsp ginger, minced
¼ tsp cumin seeds
¼ tsp mustard seeds
¼ tsp fenugreek seeds
¼ tsp turmeric
¼ tsp garam masala
1 to 2 green chillies
Salt and pepper to taste
Coriander leaves for garnishing
4 cups of water or vegetable broth
1 tsp ghee or oil

Method

Heat the ghee or oil in a large pot. Once the oil is hot, add the seeds. When the seeds start to smell fragrant, add the diced onions. Cook the onions until they turn golden brown and then add in the ginger and garlic.

Add the turmeric, garam masala and salt and allow to cook for about 5 minutes. Add the lentils and water and mix well. Reduce heat and simmer for about 10 minutes. Add the chopped tomatoes, green chillies and more water for desired consistency.

Simmer for another 10 minutes or till the lentils are thoroughly cooked. Garnish with chopped coriander and serve.

NUT FREE PESTO

Suitable to freeze - or can last in the fridge up to 1 week (cover top layer in olive oil)

Ingredients

2 cups basil
1 clove garlic
60g Grana Padano or Parmesan cheese
50g pumpkin seeds
50g sunflower seeds
70g olive oil
1/8 cup water
Salt & pepper

Method

Place all of the ingredients, minus the water, into a blender and mix until all combined. Season with salt and pepper and add in the water if needed for the consistency.

Store in a jar and cover the contents with some more olive oil to allow it to stay fresh. This can be frozen into ice cube trays for later use.

VEGETARIAN PATTIES

Suitable to freeze

Ingredients

500g sweet potato
1/2 cup quinoa
1/2 cup lentils
1/4 cup sunflower seeds
1/4 cup walnuts (can be swapped for pepitas for a nut free version)
2 tsp Dijon mustard
2 tsp cumin
2 cloves garlic
1/4 tsp paprika
1/2 tsp cinnamon
Salt & pepper

Method

Soak the quinoa, lentils (if dried) and sunflower seeds.
Peel and chop the sweet potato and roast in an oven until caramelised.
Mash the sweet potato and add in the spices, chopped walnuts, garlic, mustard and salt & pepper.
Drain and rinse the quinoa and lentils and cook in a saucepan for 15 minutes.
Cool slightly before adding to the sweet potato mix.
Form into 8 patties and place on a tray lined with baking paper.
Cook for 30 minutes, flip over and cook for a further 20-30 minutes.
Suitable for freezing, make a double batch and freeze for an easy addition to a lunchbox.

SWEET POTATO, BROWN RICE & BUTTER BEAN BALLS

Suitable to freeze

Ingredients

Ingredients:

- 2 cups roasted sweet potato
- 1 tin butter beans (drained and rinsed)
- 2 cups cooked brown rice
- 1 onion, diced
- 1 tbsp Garam Masala spice blend
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tbsp coriander, chopped
- Sesame seeds (to roll the balls in)

Method

Preheat oven to 200 C.

Mash the roasted sweet potato, cooked rice and butter beans in a bowl. In a frypan, cook the onion in a little olive oil until soft, then add the Garam Masala. Add the onion to the bowl along with the lemon juice and coriander. Roll into 15 balls, the mixture will be sticky, then roll in the sesame seeds. Place on a tray lined with baking paper and cook in the oven for 25-30 minutes.

Serve with a fresh salad and some Greek yoghurt with lemon zest, juice and coriander. The balls also work well served in a wrap with hummus and fresh salad. Store in the fridge for up to 5 days. Also suitable for freezing.

CHOCOLATE CEREAL

Prepare during weekly meal prep - store for up to 2 weeks (if it lasts that long!)

Ingredients

2 cups organic rolled oats
2 cups puffed brown rice
2 tbsp chia seeds
2 tbsp sunflower seeds
1 cup shredded coconut
1/4 cup cacao powder
1/2 cup coconut oil, melted
3/4 cup raw honey or pure maple syrup
1 tsp vanilla

Method

Preheat the oven to 160 C.

Place all of the ingredients into a large bowl and mix to combine.

Place onto a tray lined with baking paper and cook for 20 minutes, turning half way.
Allow to cool and store in an airtight jar.

JAM DROPS

Suitable to freeze

Ingredients

Version 1

2 cups spelt flour
1 tsp baking powder
125g butter
1/2 cup pure maple syrup
1 egg
1 tsp pure vanilla extract

Version 2: Gluten & Dairy Free

1 cup buckwheat flour
1 cup rice flour
1 tsp baking powder
125g coconut oil, not melted
1/2 cup pure maple syrup
1 egg
1 tsp pure vanilla extract

Chia Jam

2 cups frozen or fresh raspberries
2 tbsp chia seeds
1 tbsp lemon juice
1-2 tbsp pure maple syrup or raw honey

Method

Preheat an oven to 180 C.

Mix the butter, vanilla and pure maple syrup until creamed. You can use a blender, mix-master or wooden spoon.

Add in the egg and combine. Mix through the baking powder and flour.

Place the dough on a floured bench top or silicone mat and roll into a sausage shape and wrap in cling wrap or baking paper and place in the fridge to set for 30 minutes.

Remove from the fridge and cut into 1 cm rounds. Place facing up on a tray lined with baking paper and press down in the centre with your thumb.

Top with some of the chia jam and place in the oven and bake for 10-12 minutes or until the biscuits are slightly browned.

Place the raspberries and lemon juice in a saucepan and cook over medium heat until the raspberries start to break down. Stir through the chia seeds and remove from the heat. Have a taste and add the maple syrup or honey if required for sweetness. Allow to cool and store in an airtight jar in the fridge for up to a week.

JAM & COCONUT SLICE

Suitable to freeze

Ingredients

2 cups spelt flour
125g unsalted butter
1/2 cup coconut sugar
1 egg
1 tsp vanilla

Coconut topping

1/2 cup coconut sugar
2 eggs
2 cups desiccated or shredded coconut

Chia Jam

1 cup frozen or fresh raspberries
1 tbsp chia seeds
1/2 tbsp lemon juice
1-2 tbsp pure maple syrup or raw honey

Method

Preheat an oven to 180 C.

Mix the butter, flour and sugar until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs. Add the vanilla and egg and combine. Press into a lined baking tin and cook for 20-30 minutes or until the base is lightly browned. Spread over the chia jam (instructions in Jam Drop recipe). In a separate bowl, mix the eggs and sugar until combined and then stir through the coconut. Spread over the jam and place in the oven for 25 minutes or until golden brown. Allow to cool in the tin, then slice and store.

SPICED COOKIES

Suitable to freeze

Ingredients

3 cups white spelt flour
1 tbsp ground ginger
1 tsp cinnamon
1/2 tsp nutmeg
1/2 tsp ground cardamom
1/2 tsp bicarb soda
1/4 tsp baking powder
1/2 cup coconut oil or unsalted butter
1/2 cup pure maple syrup
1/2 cup coconut sugar
1 egg

Method

Preheat oven to 180 C.

Combine dry ingredients in a medium sized bowl and set aside. Heat a saucepan to medium heat and melt the coconut oil. Once melted, stir in the maple syrup and coconut sugar until combined and the sugar has dissolved. Whisk the egg in a separate bowl and add to the dry ingredients followed by the coconut oil mixture. Stir to combine then place on a pastry mat or floured surface and knead until a smooth dough forms. Place in the fridge for 30 minutes.

Remove and use a rolling pin to roll dough out until 5mm thick. Cut into cookies and bake in the oven for 8-10 minutes and cool completely on a wire rack before icing.

SWEET POTATO BROWNIE

Suitable to freeze

Ingredients

1 cup sweet potato puree (roasted sweet potato blended up)
1 cup natural peanut or almond butter
1/2 cup pure maple syrup
1 tsp vanilla
1/2 cup almond meal
1/4 cup cacao
1 egg
1 tsp baking powder
Pinch of salt

Method

Preheat oven to 160 C.

Place all of the ingredients into a blender and mix until smooth, or you could mix in a bowl. Add the mixture into a tin lined with baking paper. Bake for 20-25 minutes.

Cool in tin before slicing up.

GUT LOVIN GUMMIES

Suitable to freeze

Ingredients: Choc-coco

1 tin coconut milk
2 tbsp natural peanut butter (optional)
2 tbsp raw cacao powder or cocoa
2 tbsp pure maple syrup
1 tbsp maca (optional)
Pinch of Himalayan salt or Celtic sea salt
4 tbsp grass fed gelatin (such as Nutra Organics or another brand from a health food store)

Method

Place the coconut milk, peanut butter, maple syrup, cacao and maca in a saucepan over low heat and stir until combined. Add the gelatin and whisk until it has dissolved into the mixture. If any lumps form, strain it out at the end before pouring into a greased tin or silicone moulds. Set in the fridge for at least 4 hours. Cut into 3x3cm squares and store in the fridge.

Ingredients: Kombucha

Juice from 2x oranges
1 cup kombucha
4 tbsp grass fed beef gelatin
4 tsp raw honey

Method

Place half the orange juice in a saucepan over medium heat and warm up just before it boils. Place the gelatin in the remaining orange juice and stir to combine. Add in the warm orange juice and stir until the gelatin dissolves. When the liquid is room temperature, add in the honey and slowly pour in the kombucha (to avoid it frothing up too much).

Pour into silicone molds and place in the fridge to set.

SMOOTHIES

Ingredients

Smoothie builder:

1 cup fruit: mango, banana, berries etc

1-2 serves vegetable: spinach, cucumber, kale, frozen cauliflower, frozen zucchini (it's tasteless in smoothies!)

Good fat: 1/4 avocado or 1 tbsp nut butter (almond, cashew), or 1 tbsp hemp seeds/flaxseeds/chia seeds

20-30g protein: protein powder, nuts, seeds

2 tbsp fermented food: Greek yoghurt, 1x probiotic capsule, kefir

1-1.5 cups liquid: cows/goats milk, almond milk, coconut milk, coconut water etc

Method

Place the ingredients into a blender and blitz until smooth

Two of my favs:

Peanut Butter Banana

1 frozen banana

1/4 avocado

1 cup milk of choice

1 tbsp peanut butter

1 tbsp chia seeds

2 tbsp Greek yoghurt

1 serve vanilla or chocolate protein powder

Green

1 cup frozen mango

1 cup spinach leaves

1/4 avocado

1 tbsp hemp or chia seeds

1 serve protein powder

2 tbsp Greek yoghurt

1-1.5 cups milk of choice

PROTEIN PANCAKES

Prepare during weekly meal prep - a batch can last in the fridge for up to 5 days. You can also make the mixture into pikelets and freeze them

Ingredients

2 cups milk of choice
2 cups flour (spelt or mixture of tapioca and buckwheat for GF)
4 tsp baking powder
4 eggs (or egg replacer)
6 tbsp protein powder (optional)
2 tbsp hemp or chia seeds

Method

Place all of the ingredients in a blender and blitz until smooth.

Serve with Greek or coconut yoghurt, fresh fruit, cinnamon and pure maple syrup (if required) for a protein packed breakfast.

Make into little pikelets for lunchboxes.

Optional add-ins:

Green: blend in 1 cup spinach leaves or add 2 tsp spirulina

Purple: blend in 1 cooked beetroot

Pink: blend in 1 cup raspberries

Blue: add in 2 tsp blue spirulina powder

Yellow: blend in 2 tsp turmeric powder

MUFFIN MIX

Suitable to freeze

Ingredients

120g butter or coconut oil
125g rapadura or coconut sugar
2 eggs or egg free options (see above on the dietary restrictions page)
1 tsp vanilla
2 cups spelt flour or a mixture of buckwheat flour and tapioca flour or gluten free flour
2 tsp baking powder
3/4 cup choice of milk

Method

Preheat oven to 180 C.

Grease muffin tin/moulds.

Place the butter, sugar, eggs and vanilla into a bowl and beat until combined. Add in the rest of the ingredients and mix until smooth.

Place into the muffin tin or cases and bake for 20-25 minutes.

Optional mix-ins:

Pear, apple, berries, banana, dark chocolate chips, sultanas, dates

OAT COOKIES - 2 WAYS

Suitable to freeze

Ingredients

1 medium sized banana
1 cup rolled organic oats
2 tbsp pure maple syrup or raw honey
1 tbsp melted coconut oil
1/2 cup dark chocolate chips, cacao nibs or carob

Method

Preheat oven to 170 C.

Mash the banana and add the other ingredients to the bowl. Mix to combine and place in the fridge for 15 minutes to thicken up.

Take out of the fridge and roll into balls and gently pat down. Place on a tray lined with baking paper and bake for 15 minutes.

Store in an airtight jar or freeze for later use.

Ingredients

125g melted butter or melted coconut oil
1/4 cup pure maple syrup
1 tsp vanilla
1.5 cups rolled organic oats
3/4 cup dessicated coconut
1/2 cup buckwheat flour
1/2 tsp bicarb soda
1 tbsp boiling water
2 tbsp chia seeds

Method

Preheat oven to 150 C.

In a saucepan, melt the butter or coconut oil, then add the maple syrup, vanilla, water and bicarb soda. Stir until it fizzes up then remove from the heat.

Mix the oats, flour, chia seeds and coconut into a bowl and add in the wet ingredients. Stir to combine. Roll into balls and flatten, then place on a tray lined with baking paper and cook for 15 minutes. Allow to cool before storing in a jar or placing in the freezer.

MANGO & COCONUT MUFFINS

Suitable to freeze

Ingredients

2 cups spelt flour
4 tsp baking powder
1/4 tsp bicarb soda
2 eggs
4 tbsp unsalted butter, melted
1/2 cup milk of choice
1/2 cup Greek yoghurt
1 tsp vanilla
1 cup mangoes, diced
1/2 cup macadamia nuts, chopped
2 tbsp shredded coconut

Method

Preheat oven to 180 C

Whisk the eggs and add the milk, yoghurt, vanilla, melted butter and mango and stir to combine. Add in the flour, baking powder and bicarb soda. Mix to combine. Pour the mixture into 12 muffin cases and sprinkle with the coconut. Cook for 30 minutes before cooling on a wire rack.

COCONUT RICE PUDDING

Prepare during weekly meal prep to use for breakfast or snacks

Ingredients

1 cup arborio rice or brown rice
1 cup coconut cream
1 cup water
Pure maple syrup to taste
1 tsp cinnamon
1 tsp nutmeg
1 tsp vanilla

Method

Place the rice, coconut cream and water into a saucepan and bring to the boil. Reduce heat and cover. Cook for 10-12 minutes (longer if you are using brown rice) or until the rice is al dente.

Stir through the pure maple syrup, spices and vanilla. This is delicious served warm or cold.

Additional toppings:

Fresh fruit
Stewed fruit
Nuts/seeds



WEEKLY/MONTHLY MEAL PREP

Benefits of meal prepping

- Reducing food wastage
- Saving money
- Saving your sanity (if you have young kids!)
- Saving time in the morning when it comes time to pack the lunchboxes

How to make the most out of your time

Categorise your recipes into:

- Freezable
- Store in fridge
- Store in pantry
- Make fresh on the day

Monthly Meal Prep

Select sweet and savory items each month and cook up a big batch of each to store in the freezer

Freezable items

- Baked goods: cakes, muffins, slices, biscuits, bliss balls, cooked pikelets or pancakes, sliced up sourdough bread
- Meats: sausage rolls, poached chicken, cooked meatballs or sausages
- Savory lunch options: zucchini slice or savory muffins, fritatta or egg muffins, baked beans or lentil dishes, mini homemade pizza's or scrolls
- Other: pesto (try freezing in ice cube trays for an easy daily portion size), yoghurt and berries,

Tips on how to freeze

- If the food was hot, allow it to cool completely before freezing
- Freeze into glass storage containers, glass jars (if it is a liquid, ensure it has completely cooled and has about an inch of space to expand), silicone storage bags, zip lock bags, any airtight container

In regards to food temperature

- Always aim to keep hot food hot and cold food cold
- Always ensure that raw foods are stored away from cooked foods
- Always allow food to cool completely before placing in the freezer
- Ensure you don't overfill your freezer so that cold air can circulate properly. This helps keep the temperature steady
- Properly wrap food or put it in a sealed container to keep it from suffering from freezer-burn
- When thawing frozen food, do it on the fridge
- Do not refreeze food that has already been frozen and thawed
- Place liquid foods such as stews and casseroles in shallow containers no more than 5 cm deep

WEEKLY/MONTHLY MEAL PREP

Store in pantry

- Granola, chocolate cereal, porridge/overnight oats dry mix (oats, chia seeds, hemp seeds, coconut)
- Portioned out nuts, seeds and dried fruit
- Dry goods such as brown rice cakes, popcorn, Mountain Bread wraps

Weekly Meal Prep

Store in fridge: (prep in advance and store up to 5 days, depending on item)

- Sardine spread or other homemade dips or dressings
- Protein pancakes mix: store up to 5 days
- Coconut rice pudding: easy breakfast or snack
- Overnight oats, chia pudding or bircher
- Chopped up fruit and vegetables (store carrot sticks and celery in water in a jar with a lid, cucumber and capsicum wrapped in paper towel, snow peas and tomatoes in airtight jars)
- Yoghurt portioned out with berries and honey in tubs (to avoid single use yoghurt pouches)
- Boil eggs
- Roast veggies for lunches or snacks
- Poached chicken, cook a batch and freeze half and use the other for the week
- Sushi
- Meatballs: cook up a batch and freeze some for the following week

Make fresh on the day: (or night before)

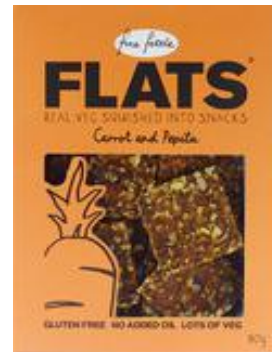
- Rice paper rolls
- Smoothies
- Salad sandwich or wrap

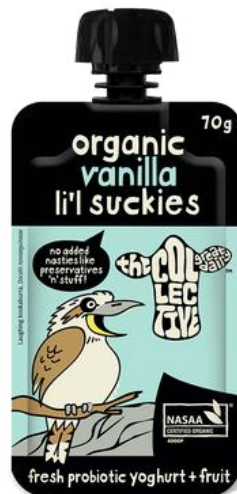
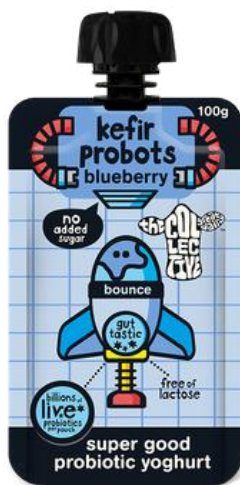


BRAND SUGGESTIONS FOR PACKAGED FOODS

It is not always possible to cook everything from scratch! Here are some brands I recommend for when you aren't as prepared: (nothing is sponsored, these are products I genuinely use and love). Some of them contain nuts as some schools and preschools allow them, just check the ingredients before purchasing.







ALDI

Made Real Paleo Bars
 Smooshed Wholefood Balls
 Crispy coconut rolls
 Organic yoghurt pouches
 Gluten free quinoa pasta penne
 Gluten free Buckwheat pasta spirals
 Brown Rice & quinoa thin rice cakes
 Organic sun dried raisins

THANK YOU!



I hope you have found this Lunchbox PDF to be helpful for you. It would mean the world to me if you shared it with your friends and family as well as on your social media channels. Tag me if you create any of the recipes or find the information helpful.

Happy cooking and packing lunchboxes - only 205 lunchboxes on average (per child) left to pack this year! (insert crazy face here)

As always, I am very happy to answer any of your questions, send me a message over on Instagram or an email at hello@jokatenutrition.com

Jo xx

Instagram: [jokate_nutrition](https://www.instagram.com/jokate_nutrition)

Website: jokatenutrition.com

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