

Lunchbox ideas for 0-2 years



From around 6 months, your baby will need extra nutrients from solid food. This includes while your baby is at childcare. It's important to remember, the amount and types of food will vary from child to child as they navigate the journey of starting solids.

Here are some ideas for what to pack in your child's lunchbox.

Under 6 months



- Breastmilk or infant formula is all that is needed
- Exclusive breastfeeding (or provision of breastmilk) to around 6 months is encouraged where possible
- Develop a feeding plan with your baby's childcare centre

6-7 months

Solid foods can be introduced at around 6 months.

- What you pack in the lunchbox and how much will depend on what stage your child is at in starting solids and what foods they are having outside of care.
- Include iron-rich foods and vegetables.
- Start with 1-2 teaspoons and increase the amount based on their appetite.
- Start with packing one meal, around 1-2 teaspoons and increase this over time.
- Most babies will start with puree foods while some will start with soft finger foods (e.g. baby-led weaning).



Lunchbox ideas:



1 Tbsp infant cereal (mixed with breastmilk or formula) + 1 Tbsp puree fruit



1 Tbsp puree vegetables + 1 Tbsp puree cooked legumes



1 Tbsp finely mashed vegetables + 2 Tbsp puree cooked meat and pasta

Small amounts of cooled boiled tap water can be provided

7-9 months

Progress to mashed and grated foods and foods with soft lumps.

Children progress through textures at different rates, with most able to manage soft finger foods at around 8 months.



Lunchbox ideas:



1 Tbsp yoghurt + 1/4 of a banana mashed



1/4 boiled egg + 1/3 cup cooked quinoa + 1 slice avocado

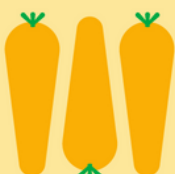


2 Tbsp mashed sweet potato + 2 Tbsp cooked mince



1 Tbsp grated cheese + 2 rice rusks

Add more meals and snacks as your child is ready



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10-12 months

Lunchbox ideas:

Progress to foods with lumps that need chewing, chopped foods, finger foods and food with mixed textures as your child is ready.

Move towards packing one main meal and two snacks.



Main: Sandwich pieces with spread (e.g. cottage cheese, ricotta cheese or hummus), soft avocado pieces, corn kernels

Snack: Cheese slices, squashed blueberries

Main: Kofta, cooked carrot sticks, avocado toast pieces

Snack: Strawberries and yoghurt



Main: Tuna in Springwater, cooked broccoli, grated cheese and pasta

Snack: Watermelon



1-2 years

Offer family foods with a variety of textures and sizes. Your childcare service will have information on how many meals and snacks need to be packed for the day.

Lunchbox ideas:

Aim to include something from each of the 5 food groups in the lunchbox:

- Fruit
- Vegetables
- Dairy
- Meat/meat alternatives
- Bread/cereals

Continue to be mindful of choking hazards by avoiding:

- small hard foods (e.g. nuts, popcorn)
- very chewy foods
- round slippery foods (unless squashed or cut lengthways)

Chicken sandwich

Continue to steam hard veg like carrot

Full fat yoghurt for under 2's

Canned fruit in juice

Salt reduced baked beans

Choose wholemeal breads and cereals

Pumpkin and lentil soup with yoghurt

Leftover meatloaf

Bulgur

Full cream milk for under 2's

Raisin bread

Ice brick to keep food at a safe temperature

Zucchini slice

Leftover roast vegetables

Cut grapes & cherry tomatoes in quarters lengthways

The lunchbox suggestions provided in this resource may not be in line with your childcare service's individual allergy policy or nutrition guidelines. Please check with staff at your childcare service regarding suitable foods.



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