



Pack Your Lunch Month

September 2018

Packing a lunch every day, whether it's just for you or for your family of five, can be extremely tough. Motivation is the first ingredient in successful lunch packing. If you find a good reason to pack your lunch, chances are, you will!

What motivates you to pack a lunch each day? Health goals? Budget constraints? Time constraints to go out during the work day? Find your motivation and use it to get inspired to pack a healthful lunch each and every day. Follow these tips to make bag lunches easy, flavorful, and less burdensome each morning (or evening):

- 1. Embrace Repetition:** Even though your meals don't have to be the same every day of the week, overlapping some aspects of your lunches will help you save time and stay sane!
- 2. Use muffin pans creatively:** Make a batch of baked omelets, baked oatmeal bites, whole wheat pizza bites, or mini meatloaves in your muffin pan. Not only will these travel well, but they also help with portion control.
- 3. Keep staple food items at your workplace:** Things like bread, peanut butter, a can of soup, or nuts are great to have at the office when you find yourself in a bind.
- 4. Use a rubber band to keep apple slices from browning**—there is nothing worse than biting into a piece of brown apple. Exposure to air is what causes the browning, but wrapping your apple slices with a rubber band or squeezing the juice from a wedge of lemon on your apple will prevent this from happening.
- 5. Mason jar meals:** Prepping and eating a mason jar meal is easy, they travel well and are usually something to look forward to. Parfaits, salads, soups or shakes are great mason jar options.

Food of the month:

Eggplant

The eggplant is thought to be of Indian origin and records show that it was being cultivated in China as early as the fifth century. From around the fifteenth century it became increasingly popular in Mediterranean Europe and has long been established in classic dishes such as moussaka (Greek) and ratatouille (French).

Choose eggplants that feel heavy with smooth, taut, unblemished skin and fresh-looking unwithered green stalks.

To prepare: Cut the eggplant into thick slices, salt them and let them stand in a colander for around half an hour to allow the juices to drain away. Rinse thoroughly and dry with a kitchen towel.

Eggplant is a good source of fiber and folic acid.

Eggplant Nutrition Facts:

(1 Cup, cubed)
20 Calories
0g Total Fat
5g Carbs
3g Fiber





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6. **Make a big bowl of quinoa or brown rice** for the week and refrigerate. Use this as a grain in salads or with leftover veggies and/or chicken for a quick lunch add in.

7. **Roast veggies in one large batch.** Turn on your oven once on Sunday evening and roast your lunchtime veggies for the week. Don't forget to roast enough for Sunday dinner too!

8. **Batch cook!** Pick a recipe on Sunday that you can re-heat all week for lunch. Crockpot meals and casseroles reheat well and there are plenty of healthy recipe options available online.

9. **Pre-portion your non-perishables:** Divide nuts, popcorn, crackers and other non-perishable items into sandwich bags at the beginning of the week for easy grab and go work day snacks.

10. **Utilize your freezer!** Soups, casseroles, taco meat, turkey chili, and grilled chicken all freeze well. Thaw frozen food in the refrigerator the night before you want to eat them.

12. **Don't forget about snacks:** Always pack a couple of snacks. Sliced or cubed cheese, whole or sliced fruit and vegetables (hint: if you like sliced carrots, celery, radishes, and/or jicama sticks, cut up a bunch and keep them in the fridge in an airtight container with cold water -- they'll stay crisp all week and will be ready when you need



them), raw or toasted nuts, and/or whole grain crackers.

13. **Create lunchtime toolkits.** Add napkins, wet naps, utensils, and a mint or piece of gum in a plastic bag and keep them handy.

Food of the month recipe

Broiled Eggplant w/ Parm

2 eggplants -3 inch diameter

4 Tbsp olive oil

2 tsp minced garlic

4 Tbsp Parmesan cheese

Salt and pepper to taste

1. Preheat oven to broil.

2. Trim eggplant into 16 round slices of equal thickness.

3. Arrange eggplant slices in one layer on a baking sheet. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and brush both sides with olive oil.

4. Place eggplant under broiler about 4 inches from heat source. Broil about 3 minutes, and turn slices and broil for 3 minutes more.

5. In a small dish, blend garlic with Parmesan, and sprinkle mixture evenly over eggplant. Place under broiler until bubbling. Serve immediately.

See attached recipe for:

Caponata Eggplant

October Sneak Peek:

National Apple Month

