

Lunch Packing

FROM DREAD TO...DOABLE

By Heather Lee Leap

It's that time again, and as kids head back to school, parents everywhere commit themselves to packing nutritious, delicious lunches their kids will love. Here are some answers to some of your most troubling lunch-packing questions.

HOW CAN I GET MY KIDS TO EAT MORE OF WHAT I PACK?

Create a list of favorite foods. Ask how they like them prepared. You may think your kids hate carrots, when in fact they only dislike them raw and are willing to gobble them up steamed.

Cut fruit into wedges. A child confronted with a whole apple will take a few bites and toss the rest. Smaller bites are less daunting, will result in your child eating more and won't hurt wiggly teeth.

Go for variety. Small quantities of different foods will have more appeal than a large amount of one thing.

Be strict. After school, require kids to finish their lunch before having a snack.

HOW CAN I SAVE TIME PACKING LUNCHES?

Store all of your lunch-packing equipment in one location. Designate one drawer for all sandwich and snack containers, wraps or bags, thermoses and stray water bottles.

Assign a style of storage container to each child. This helps if you provide kids with different foods, or prepare them differently.

Keep frequently used non-perishable lunch items on the same shelf. Even better, store them in a tub that you can pull off the shelf in one move and bring to the counter.

Reserve a refrigerator shelf for lunches. In the morning, grab items from the shelf and pop them into lunch boxes.

Have child to pack their own lunch. You will save time while they learn responsibility and a necessary life-skill.

HOW CAN I MAKE LUNCH-PACKING MORE AFFORDABLE?

Include leftovers. As you put food away, divide portions directly into single serving containers or thermoses to be reheated in the morning.

Buy in bulk and repackage into individual servings. Don't limit this concept to snack foods. Buy the family-sized tub of yogurt and serve it in half-cup sized containers.

Avoid processed, pre-packaged lunch foods. Not only are they expensive, they contain excess sodium, sugar and chemicals kids don't need.

Invest in reusable containers, bags and wraps.

Finally, resist the pressure to have every meal be a work of art. Instead, keep your goals modest and manageable. You can do it!

LUNCHBOX ACCESSORIES!

Kids and Moms love Nalgene's NEW dishwasher safe stickers included inside select Nalgene bottles at Target. The stickers are designed to be nearly indestructible (even in the dishwasher) and to permanently hold ink.



Nalgene is not just for water! The same great leakproof, durable and simple properties are in food storage containers. Great for lunch packing.



Nalgene products are Made in the USA, BPA Free, Have Lifetime Guarantee and are leakproof and easy to close for all ages. Visit www.nalgene.com for more options.