



# BUDGET FRIENDLY LUNCHBOXES

Packing a lunchbox every day can be tough, especially with rising food prices. The good news is you don't need fancy ingredients or expensive snacks to pack a healthy lunchbox. Many better value foods are just as nutritious, giving kids the energy they need to learn and play. A "good enough" lunchbox, filled with easy, affordable options—is more than enough to keep children happy and healthy.

## SOME LOW-COST LUNCHBOX HEROES INCLUDE:

- Tinned fruit in juice— great alone or with yoghurt\*
- Tinned beans – mash into wraps or mix with rice
- Tinned tuna or salmon – add to sandwiches or pasta
- Frozen vegetables – peas, corn, and mixed veggies are great in rice or pasta dishes
- Rice cakes and corn thins – have a long shelf life and are filling with nutritious toppings

Tinned fruit in juice



Rice thins with cheese and tuna


Tinned and frozen items are often better value than fresh and won't spoil quickly. They are great for sandwiches, wraps and snacks. Look for supermarket home brands or specials to reduce cost further!

## USE WHAT YOU ALREADY HAVE

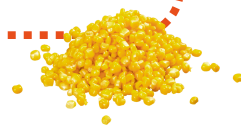
Planning lunches around what's already in your pantry or freezer can help stretch your food budget.

### Pantry-friendly lunch ideas:

- Rice or pasta with tinned beans and frozen veg
- Tinned tuna mixed with corn and mayo in a wrap
- Baked beans on wholemeal bread
- Tinned fruit with yoghurt\* or custard\*
- Tinned tuna and rice crackers



**TIP:** Cook tinned beans, rice, and tinned tomato to make a simple Mexican-style rice bowl. Add frozen corn or capsicum for extra flavour!



## BATCH IT, FREEZE IT, GRAB IT!

**Batch cooking** can save time and money. Make extras when cooking dinner or snacks and freeze them in lunchbox-sized portions.

### Freezer-friendly lunchbox ideas:

- [Vegetable muffins](#) – use grated carrot, zucchini, or frozen corn
- [Zucchini slice](#) – bake in a tray, cut into squares, and freeze
- Sandwiches – freeze with fillings like cheese\* or Vegemite
- Cooked pasta or rice – freeze in small tubs and add tinned beans or tuna



**Tip:** Freeze in reusable containers or zip-lock bags. Label with the date and defrost overnight in the fridge.



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## SIMPLE LUNCHES ARE ENOUGH

Simple lunches can help kids stay full and focused.

### Try packing:

- A sandwich with cheese\*, Vegemite, or ham
- A piece of fruit (fresh, frozen, or tinned)
- A small snack like a boiled egg, yoghurt\*, or baked beans

### Tips:

- **Use what you have**—simple is okay! For example, tinned tuna and rice crackers.
- **Add any leftovers from breakfast.** For example, crumpets with melted cheese\* or pikelets.
- **Yoghurt\* from a large tub is often better value** than single-serve packs.



Ham and cheese\* sandwich



Apple



Hard boiled eggs



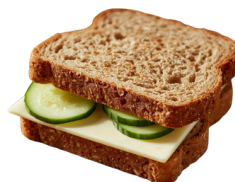
Yoghurt\*

## QUICK AND EASY LUNCHBOX IDEAS

You don't need lots of time or ingredients to make a healthy lunch.

### Try these combos:

- Wholegrain bread + hummus + grated carrot
- Rice cakes + cheese\* + tomato
- Wrap + tinned tuna + frozen corn
- Wholegrain bread + cheese + sliced cucumber



Frozen peas



Rice cakes with cheese & tomato

**Tip:** Add a handful of tinned peas or corn as a snack—they'll add extra veg and a pop of colour.

## MONEY SAVING TIPS:

- **Buy in bulk** when items are on special (e.g. rice, pasta, yoghurt\*) and package into reusable containers
- **Use leftovers** from dinner in the lunchbox
- **Choose home brands** – they're often better value and just as nutritious
- **Cook once, eat twice** – double dinner recipes and save portions for lunch
- **Use reusable containers** – saves money on cling wrap and reduces waste
- **Plan meals** around weekly specials at your local supermarket
- **Use seasonal fruit and vegetables** – they're better value and fresher

\*The Australian Dietary Guidelines recommend low or reduced fat milk, yoghurt and cheese choices for most people two years and over. We do not warrant that the information we provide will meet individual health, nutritional or medical requirements, or individual school policy.

