

Based on the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating¹, this guide shows practical and realistic examples of healthy lunches that follow the recommendations.

Best of all, these lunches are provided by Wishart parents who also share tips and advice on how to pack healthy lunches quickly and with confidence. Wishart kids love it!

Healthy Lunchbox Guide

The Wishart 6! 6 Steps to a Healthy Lunchbox

Pick something from each group, 1-6.

A healthy lunchbox consists of a main lunch item and snacks that provide something from each of the 5 food groups. The amount of food should be suitable for your child. Try to vary the colours and textures each day. The 6 steps below will help you check that each food group is offered along with a bottle of water.

1 FRUIT	2 VEGETABLES	3 DAIRY OR ALTERNATIVES	4 LEAN MEAT OR EQUIVALENT	5 BREADS OR CEREALS (preferably wholegrains)	6 WATER
 <p>Fruits provide a wide range of vitamins and minerals to improve health. Go for the fruits in season and try fruit salad using lots of colour!</p>	 <p>Vegetables are nutrient powerhouses that assist in metabolism and improve the immune system. Start healthy habits now by including a variety of vegies in the lunchbox.</p>	 <p>Dairy foods and their alternatives are rich sources of calcium which is important for bone growth and proper nerve and muscle function.</p>	 <p>Lean meats, fish, chicken, eggs and legumes are excellent sources of protein for growing bodies. Protein also helps keep tummies satisfied for longer.</p>	 <p>Breads and cereals are carbohydrate rich and wholegrain options will provide long-lasting energy to support learning and physical activity.</p>	 <p>Always include a bottle of water. It is the only recommended drink for rehydration throughout the day.</p>
 <p>orange mandarin watermelon nectarine apricot pear kiwi fruit blueberries strawberries pineapple dried fruits apple banana passionfruit rockmelon honeydew grapes plum</p>	 <p>capsicum spinach green beans cucumber celery corn snowpeas mushroom pieces tomatoes carrot vegetable slice vegetable muffins roasted vegetables coleslaw potato salad popcorn pumpkin soup potato and leek soup</p>	 <p>milk calcium rich soy milk and other plant based milks yoghurt custard cheddar cubes, slices or sticks cottage cheese cream cheese</p>	 <p>tinned tuna tinned salmon meat balls or patties lentil patties tofu lean meat -beef -chicken -lamb hommus dip deli meat boiled eggs baked beans falafel balls</p>	 <p>roll wrap sandwich toasted sandwich pitta bread rice sushi pasta noodle dishes sour dough couscous English muffins savoury muffins- with fruit or vegetables pizza (homemade)</p>	 <p>Tip: Create a list of foods from each food group that your child likes and keep it on the fridge for quick reference. Involve your child in preparing, choosing and packing their own healthy lunchbox so they are more likely to eat it all. Remember, it is their lunch!</p>

Images sourced from ¹⁶.

Wishart State School supports and encourages healthy eating because a healthy diet can improve behaviours critical to educational success and performance at school¹².

All children no matter what their age, size, gender or activity level, need to eat from the 5 food groups every day. By including each of these in the lunchbox, they are being provided an

excellent opportunity to consume the core foods they need to grow and develop, concentrate in classes and establish good health throughout childhood and into adulthood.

Real Wishart Lunches!

Here are some examples of lunches packed for children at Wishart State School! Each lunchbox presented has the five food groups included. Note the variation in types of foods, amounts and even designs! Every child has different tastes, appetites and energy levels, so the amount of food in the lunchbox will vary.

Disclaimer: Wishart State School does not endorse or promote, nor is it connected in any way to the manufacturers of, any commercial products that may be pictured in this document. Any products shown are: (i) choices made by the individual parent who helped pack the lunchbox, and (ii) used in this document by the author as examples only.

*Parent tip!
Put yoghurt & blueberries in containers into the freezer the night before, to keep cool the next day.*



Stephanie Alexander's Muffin Recipe³

- 220g self-raising flour (wholemeal works well)
- approx. 1 ¾ cups
- ½ cup raw/caster sugar
- ¾ cup milk/buttermilk
- 1 egg
- ¾ cup vegetable oil (ricebran is a good option)

Preheat oven to 180°C and either grease muffin tins or use muffin papers. Mix flour with sugar. Add any additional dry ingredients such as spices or nuts (but not for school lunchboxes). In a separate bowl combine milk, egg and oil and whisk together. Stir in any wet ingredients, such as mashed banana. Make a well in the middle of the dry ingredients, pour in liquid and mix lightly. Don't over mix. Spoon batter into tin until 2/3rd full, bake for 20-25mins until golden on top.

Add these extra ingredients to create these tasty flavour combinations (the possibilities are endless):

- Apple (grated) and cinnamon
- Banana (with or without cinnamon)
- Banana and choc chip
- Raspberry
- Blueberry
- Banana and Blueberry
- Grated cheese
- Chopped ham, corn and cheese

*Parent tip!
Roll up the wrap in sandwich paper, twist the paper ends and cut through middle of both- this keeps the wrap together while it's eaten.*

*Parent tip!
I had trouble getting my child to eat what I gave him. I succeeded by enticing him with a daily non-food reward if he finished his food and another if he finished the water.*



DID YOU KNOW?

School lunches can contribute one third of a child's energy needs⁴! Strive to have the 5 food groups in the lunchbox.

More Wishart Lunches!



QUICK RECIPE:

Popcorn:
Place 1 tbsp popping corn kernels in a brown paper bag. Fold over open end. Microwave on high for a maximum of 1min 30sec.

Parent tip!
Definitely prepare the night before (can't stress this enough!) and I actually find if you make it while u r cooking dinner, it makes life easy as u r already chopping and doing food prep and it doesn't take much to then do the lunches as well.

Parent tip!
Cut more carrot sticks than you need and keep them in a container of water to stay fresh for the next day.



Extra Healthy Snacks:

In addition to the 5 food groups, some children may require an additional healthy snack for an extra energy boost throughout the day.

Healthy snacks are nutrient rich and based on fruit, vegetables, wholegrain cereals or dairy. Examples of healthy snacks include:

- air-popped popcorn,
- dried fruits,
- vegie sticks and hommus,
- wholegrain muffins with fruit or vegies and
- wholegrain crackers and cheese.

QUICK RECIPE:

Pita or Bun Pizza:
Take bread, spread with tomato paste, add meat, vege and cheese toppings, grill ~8 mins or until brown. Cool on rack. Once not steaming, cut and put into container and cool completely in fridge until time to leave for school.

More Wishart Lunches!



Parent tip!
I premake a lot of food and freeze for the main component i.e. cheesymite scrolls or vegetable muffins so when I am making lunch I can just grab one out of the freezer and put it in.



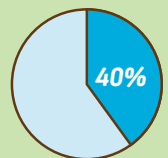
Treat Foods and Sweetened Drinks:

Sometimes we want to treat our children with foods that are high in sugar, fat and salt. Since these foods are not essential or necessary as part of our diet, they should be eaten only sometimes and in small amounts¹. Examples include chips, sweet biscuits, cakes, muesli bars, chocolate, pastries and sweetened drinks. The Australian dietary guidelines recommend saving these choices for special occasions only. Limit these treat foods to once a week (if at all). Try looking for "better" options or make your own.



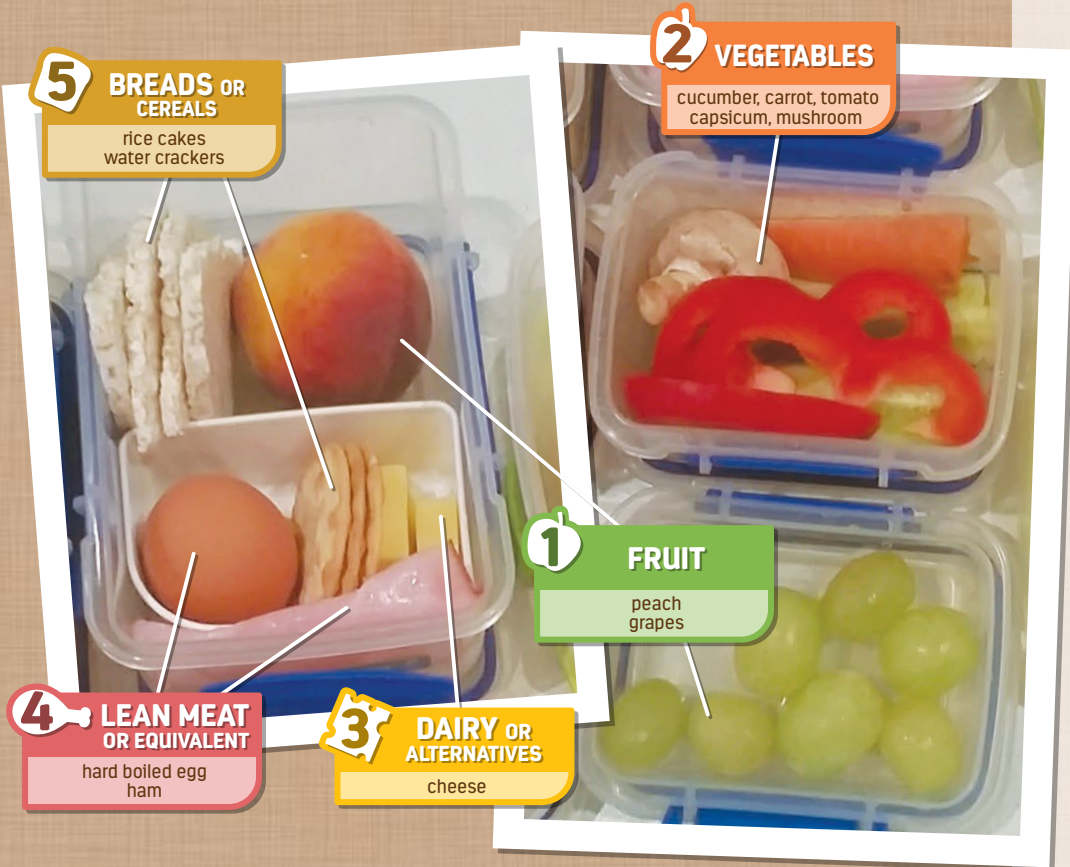
Parent Tip!
Get rid of all the "junk food" in the house so you aren't tempted to put it in! If it's not there you can't use it!

DID YOU KNOW?



Currently, Australian children aged 4-13 years obtain up to 40% of their daily energy intake from treat foods⁵! This can be reduced by limiting treats in the lunchbox!

More Wishart Lunches!



DID YOU KNOW?



95% of children are meeting their daily fruit intake! WooHoo!



However, only 31% reach their vegetable targets⁵.

Include more vegies wherever you can!



GOOD NEWS: There are now reusable squeeze containers available to solve this dilemma! eg Little Mashies

Parent tip!
I do have trouble with having a 'nude' lunch box especially with dairy. The girls prefer the squeeze yoghurts and find if I put yoghurt into a container with a lid and a spoon it's too messy and difficult for them.

Sustainability:

By following the 6 steps to making a healthy Wishart Lunch, you will more than likely create a "nude" lunchbox which is in alignment with our environment sustainability policy at our school. A nude lunchbox is a lunch using only reusable containers and no wrappers!

DID YOU KNOW?

Excluding packaged foods every day will reduce landfill at school by 31%⁶.

More Wishart Lunches!



Parent tip!
Try new recipes on the weekend or in the afternoons before adding to lunchboxes; you'll know if the kids like them and therefore if they'll be eaten!



QUICK RECIPE:

Sushi Rolls:
Use left over rice from the night before spread over a nori (dried seaweed) sheet, ensuring the rice used has been refrigerated. Add filling and roll up. Use tuna or chicken plus any salad your child will eat! Seriously, sushi is quick!

Parent tip!
Get a lunch box that has the different compartments - it seems easier to see what you've packed so you remember to pack 1 fruit, 1 vege, 1 dairy, main lunch, 1 healthy snack.



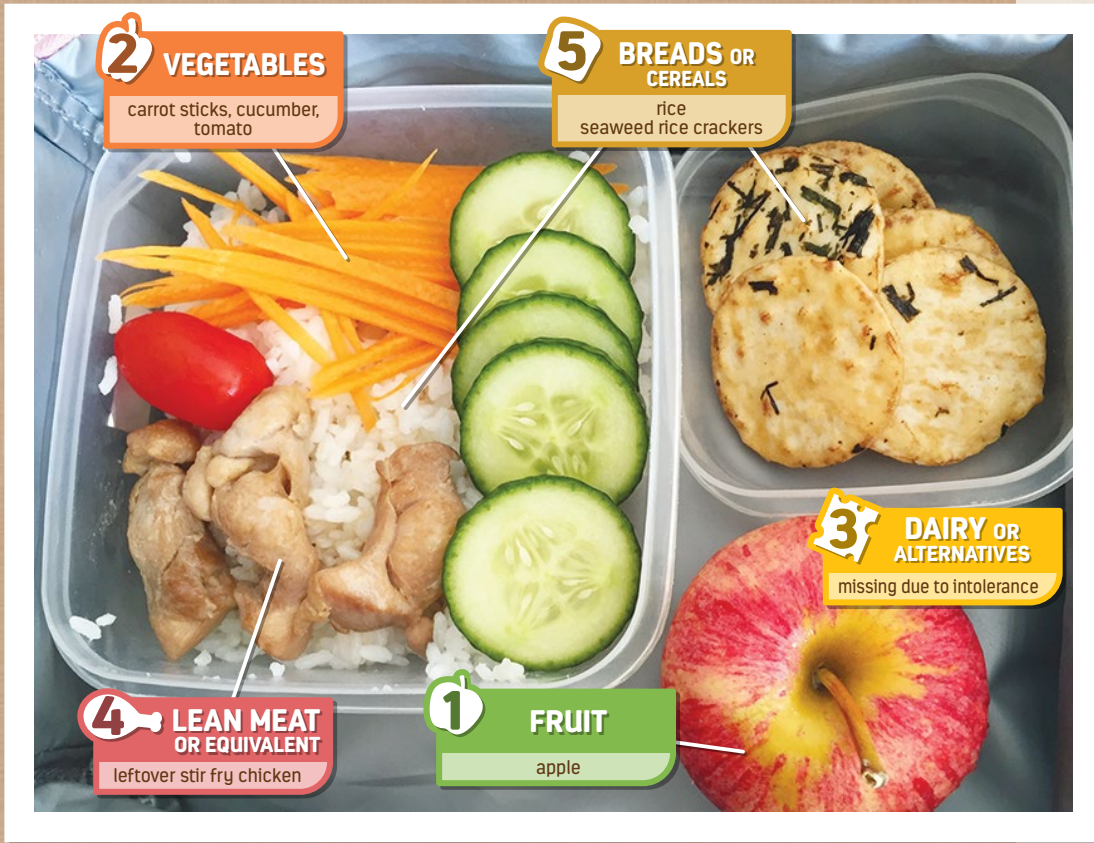
Food Safety:

Always include an ice brick or frozen water bottle in an insulated lunch bag. This will keep food cool for longer and prevent any nasty bacteria from growing too fast. The Food Safety Information Council recommends keeping lunches cool in the fridge until time to leave for school, and to clean lunch bags thoroughly at the end of the day⁷.

DID YOU KNOW?

Without an ice brick, the lunchbox can rise up to room temperature in 1½ hours⁸! Ooh, Nasty!

More Wishart Lunches!



Special dietary requirements:

Be aware of the special needs of children with severe allergies at our school. If advised by your teacher, it is considerate to avoid sending food items, such as peanuts, tree nuts, dairy, eggs or shellfish in the lunchbox in order to minimise risk. Educate your child that they should wash hands before and after eating and they should not share foods⁹.

When it's not possible to include the 5 food groups in the lunchbox because of allergy considerations be sure to include the missing groups at other meal times!

Vegie Ideas to Try

Vegies in baked items

- Roasted chickpeas (recipe next page)
- Grilled or roasted vegies
- Baked potato filled with: corn & reduced fat cheese
- Wholemeal vegie muffins
- Vegie slice (with zucchini or carrot)
- Popcorn
- Vegie pikelets (recipe next page)
- Corn fritters (recipe next page)
- Rice, bean and carrot balls (recipe next page)
- Cheese puffs -incl. zucchini (recipe next page)

Vegies in salads

- Coleslaw
- Potato salad
- Mexican bean, tomato, lettuce and cheese
- Pesto pasta salad

Fresh and crunchy

- Celery/carrot/cucumber sticks/snow peas served with:
 - Hommus
 - Tomato salsa
 - Tzatziki
 - Natural yoghurt
- Butterbean dip (recipe next page)
- Pumpkin dip (recipe next page)
- Beetroot dip (recipe next page)

Vegies in soup (served in thermos)

- Pumpkin soup
- Potato and leek soup
- Chicken and corn soup

Ideas from Vegie Smugglers, NAQ Nutrition and HEAS ^{11,12,13}

DID YOU KNOW?

In Qld in 2015...



Only 1 in 5 lunchboxes contained vegetables¹⁰!

Let's improve that statistic at Wishart State School and include more vegies every day!

Sandwich Ideas

Ideas to fill a sandwich, roll or wrap^{14,15}

Lean Meats

- Lean roast meat, chutney, lettuce and tomato
- Corned beef, creamed cheese, spinach and mustard
- Leftover roast lamb and tzatziki
- Roast beef with tomato, avocado and lettuce
- Meat pattie or rissole with tomato and lettuce



Lean Ham

- Tomato, lean ham and low fat cheese
- Lean ham, avocado, carrot and pineapple
- Lean ham, grilled eggplant and pesto* (contains nuts)
- Lean ham, hommus, grated carrot and shredded lettuce
- Lean ham, cream cheese and grated carrot

Fish

- Tuna with lettuce and beetroot
- Salmon, cream cheese, lettuce and grated carrot
- Tuna, hommus and spinach
- Salmon pattie with mayo and lettuce
- Tuna, corn, lettuce and mayo

Chicken or Turkey

- Low fat turkey slices with cranberry sauce and salad
- Chicken, grated apple and celery and ricotta
- Steamed chicken lettuce and mayo
- Roast chicken, avocado, lettuce and cucumber
- Chopped pesto chicken with avo and sundried tomato

Vegetarian

- Hardboiled egg (mashed) with lettuce
- Freenut butter and banana
- Baked beans and cheese
- Roast vegetables with hommus
- Grated cheese, grated carrot, avocado and hommus
- Cheese, tomato and tahini
- Mashed banana with thinly sliced dates or sultanas
- Low fat cheese, lettuce, tomato, beetroot, cucumber, alfalfa sprouts, pineapple and grated carrot

Remember:

1 Aim to provide all 5 food groups in the lunchbox every day

Healthy Lunchbox
and always include a bottle of water

2 Find more ways to include vegetables

3 STOP Limit treat foods & sweetened drinks

Wishart State School encourages healthy lunchboxes and provides a supportive healthy environment. By working together, there is potential to improve the health of our children and enhance concentration and learning throughout each and every school day.

Cheese puffs (includes zucchini)¹²:

- ½ cup milk (soy is fine)
- 1 egg
- ½ tsp smoked paprika
- 1 zucchini, grated (peeled first if your kids hate green)
- 2 spring onions, finely chopped
- 2 cups grated cheese (cheddar is best)
- 1 cup self-raising flour

Preheat the oven to 190°C. Line a baking tray. In a large bowl, whisk together the milk and egg. Add the paprika, zucchini, spring onions and cheese. Sift over the flour. Mix well. Dollop out portions. Bake for 20-25 minutes until deep golden brown and cooked through. Store in the fridge in an airtight container for several days. MAKES 16



The Healthy Lunchbox Guide has been developed by Wishart State School parents, **Tash McGregor** (student dietitian - tashmcgregor@hotmail.com) and **Sam Wilson** (graphic designer - greeneeggsdesign@yahoo.com), for Wishart State School parents, 2016.

Many thanks to the Wishart parents who contributed photos of lunchboxes and provided tips even if they did not appear in this document. Your time, effort and interest was most appreciated!

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Recipes¹¹

Butterbean Dip:

Use wherever you would use hummus – as a dip, sandwich spread or as part of a mezze plate.

- 420g tin butter beans, rinsed, drained
 - 1 clove garlic, crushed
 - Juice ½ lemon
 - ¼ tsp smoked paprika
- Put everything into a blender or mini-food processor and blitz until smooth.

Pumpkin Dip:

- 500g pumpkin, diced (about 4 cups)
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ¼ tsp curry powder
- 50g mild feta cheese

Boil a saucepan of water. Add your pumpkin for 10-15 minutes until soft (time will depend on the size of your chunks). Drain. Toss through the garlic while still hot. When cool, blitz well until smooth, adding the curry powder and cheese.

Beetroot dip:

- 2 medium beetroots
- 125g low-fat cream cheese
- 2 tsp red wine vinegar
- 1 tsp caster sugar

Preheat oven to 180°C. Wash beetroot gently. Trim stems leaving about 3cm. Wrap each one in foil. Place on tray and bake for 1 hour until skewer can easily slide through. Unwrap, cool slightly then peel and roughly chop. Pop into a stick blender (or food processor). Blitz. Add rest of ingredients and blitz until smooth and well combined.

Roasted Chickpeas:

- 400g can chickpeas
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- ¼ tsp cumin powder
- ¼ tsp smoked paprika

Preheat the oven to 200°C. Line a tray with baking paper. Rinse and drain the chickpeas. Remove any loose skins. Leave them to totally dry or roll them over paper towel. Pour them onto the tray. Drizzle over the olive oil and sprinkle over the spices and toss to combine. Bake for 20-25 minutes until slightly crunchy. Experiment with this recipe and find flavours that suit your family – other spices to try include garam marsala, garlic granules, chilli powder or sumac.

Veggie pikelets:

Serve with : Tomato chutney & cream cheese

- 1 cup English spinach
- 1 cup self-raising flour
- 1 tsp sumac
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- Salt & pepper
- Just over ¾ cup milk
- Butter or spray oil for frying

Blitz or finely chop spinach. Sift flour into a large bowl. Add in sumac and spinach. Mix in the egg and season well. Stir through enough milk to make a batter. Heat a frying pan over medium heat. Grease with oil or butter then dollop in 1 tbsp amounts of mixture. Turn once bubbling and cook 1-2 minutes either side until brown and cooked through. MAKES 20

Corn Fritters:

- ½ cup milk
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup self-raising flour
- 400g tuna in water, drained
- 125g corn kernels, drained
- 1 zucchini, grated (peeled if need be)
- ¼ red capsicum, finely diced
- ½ cup cheddar cheese, grated
- 1 tsp herbs (parsley, dill, chives all good)

Whisk the milk & eggs together in a large bowl. Sift over the flour. Mix through with the tuna, vegies, cheese and herbs. Heat some oil in a non-stick frying pan over medium heat. Add ¼ cup dollops of mixture and cook until starting to bubble. Flip and cook on the other side (total cooking time 4-5 minutes). MAKES 20

Rice, beans and carrot balls:

- 200g white rice
- 125g can 4-bean mix, rinsed and drained
- 1 carrot, peeled, grated
- 3 tbsp tomato chutney
- ½ cup grated cheese
- 1 egg
- 1 cup packet breadcrumbs

Preheat the oven to 200°C. Line a tray with baking paper. Cook the rice according to packet directions. Add to a food processor (or a stick blender bowl). Also add the rest of the ingredients (except breadcrumbs) and blitz to combine. Remove the blade, roll bite sized amounts in your hands and coat in breadcrumbs. Place on the tray, spray with oil and bake for 15 minutes. Turn and bake for another 10 minutes until crunchy. MAKES 28

Zucchini muffins/slice (recipe supplied by parent)

- 5 eggs
- ½ cup oil
- 4-6 grated zucchini (placed in a tea towel to squeeze out juice)
- 1 cup grated cheese
- 1 chopped red onion
- 3-6 pieces of chopped raw bacon
- 1 cup self raising flour

Beat eggs and oil together in bowl. Place all other ingredients in another bowl- make a well and add egg mix. Put in a small muffin pan and bake at 180°C (~20 mins).