

4 steps for PACKING LUNCH

Choose one from each group

1 <u>Protein</u>	2 <u>Fiber</u>	3 <u>Fat</u>	4 <u>Color</u>

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How to fill out your form

1. Print the “4 steps for packing lunch” form.

2. To make your form reusable: laminate it, place it in a glass frame, or put it in a clear protector sheet.

3. Write down what foods you have on hand in each of the categories with a wet erase marker (see the reference sheet for ideas).

5. Encourage (not force) your child to choose at least one food from each category when they pack their lunch.

4. When foods in each category run out, erase them. When you buy or make new foods, add them to the category lists they fall into.

Tips:

- **Teach your child the amazing benefits each food category offers their body. Encourage them to choose at least one food from each category.**
- **Don't force your child to take something from a category if they don't want to. The goal of this system is to help them understand how to plan a balanced meal and feel desirous to do it on their own.**
- **Some foods will be part of multiple categories. Teach your child that they can count these for all of the categories they fall into if they want.**
- **The “color” category should be reserved for fruits and vegetables only. Encourage them to choose multiple colors to make their lunch beautiful.**
- **While fiber is found in most fruits and vegetables, I prefer to keep the “fiber” category focused on grains, nuts, seeds and legumes and keep fruits and vegetables in the “color” category. This encourages a more varied and balanced diet.**
- **Talk to your child about foods they would like to have in each category. They'll feel more excited about it, if they are part of the planning process.**
- **Try to offer both familiar foods and new ones. They will be more likely to try a new food if they have familiar foods to pair with it.**

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Examples for each group

<u>Protein</u>	<u>Fiber</u>	<u>Fat</u>	<u>Color</u>
chicken nuggets	whole grain bread	olive oil	berries
lunch meat	whole grain tortillas	olives	carrots
fish	whole grain pasta	tuna/salmon	leafy greens
tofu	oats	tofu	apples
eggs	quinoa	eggs	pears
yogurt	brown rice	full fat yogurt	citrus
cheese	popcorn	cheese	bell peppers
milk	avocados	avocados	snap peas
beans	beans	avocado oil	broccoli
soybeans	soybeans	soybeans	tomatoes
lentils	lentils	dark chocolate	cauliflower
nuts & nut butters	nuts & nut butters	nuts & nut butters	cucumbers
seeds	seeds	seeds	kiwis

