

## Must Have Essentials For Packing Lunches

These days we are all looking for ways to save money, one of the ways you can save money is by taking your own lunches to work or by 'packing" your children's lunches for school.

When it comes to taking lunches on the go, there are some essentials that you will need.

1. A good insulated lunch bag. I do not recommend metal children's lunch boxes because they don't do anything to keep your food warm or cold plus they dent and rust over time.

I recommend that you purchase a soft-bag or better known as a insulated lunch bag. These types of bags are light weight, feature a carrying strap and are insulated to keep your hot foods warm or your cold foods cool.

2. If you like to pack sandwiches, you will need a square plastic sandwich keeper to protect your sandwich from getting smashed. There are a variety of manufacturing companies that make them.

I don't recommend using plastic zipper close bags as they do nothing to protect your sandwich and they are harmful to our environment, not to mention expensive.

3. Plastic microwave-safe container with an air tight and liquid tight seal. You can use these types of containers to carry left-overs from the night before in your lunches.

I don't recommend using cheap empty containers from margarine, yogurts, and other plastic food containers. Just because a container is made from plastic, doesn't mean its microwave safe.

4. Small plastic snack container with seal. These type of containers are perfect for carrying yogurt, fruit cocktail, canned fruits, pudding, jello and other small amounts of desserts and snacks and fit nicely into a lunch bag.

5. A medium-sized round microwave safe container. If you like to take soups, stews, spaghetti, chili and other foods that contain a liquid sauce or broth, I recommend buying a round microwave safe container to fit into your lunch bag. You will want to make sure that this container has a liquid tight and air tight seal.

6. Reusable Plastic Utensils. You will need a few spoons, forks and a knife. I recommend buying the sets that come with plastic carrying cases that way they will be held together within your lunch bag. Using reusable utensils instead of the one-time use utensils is better for our environment.

7. Cloth Napkins or Paper Napkins. I always recommend that you pack 2 with every lunch.

8. Insulated Drinking Tumbler Cup or a Insulated Plastic Sports Bottle. There are various companies on the market that make some really nice lunch tumblers and sports bottles. You will want to buy one that holds around 12 ounces as you want it to be able to fit nicely in your lunch bag.

9. Condiment Container. These types of containers are often over-looked when it comes to shopping for lunch on the go products. When buying a small or mini container to use for your condiments, I recommend one that is no larger than 4 ounces in size. You will want to make sure that its reusable and has a liquid tight seal so that you don't have to worry about any spills.

10. Ice Packs. I also recommend that you buy 2-3 ice packs if you are going to be carrying food that is meant to be kept cold.

\*ice pack tip\* I like to take zipper close pint size bags and place my ice pack inside the bag and zipper it shut. As the ice pack thaws through out the day, all the condensation from the ice pack will be kept inside the bag and not all over your lunch containers.

If you keep these 10 things on hand, you will always be ready to take lunch on the go with you. If you are getting ready to do some school shopping for the children, then I recommend you print out this article and take it with you on your school shopping trip.

Having the proper lunch bag essentials will ensure that you enjoy your next freshly packed lunch.

## About the Author

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