

Easy Lunches for Work

Instead of relying on fast food or the same Chinese takeout, consider taking a healthy lunch with you to work. It's better for you and less expensive. Certain foods are more portable than others, and with the help of a couple of re-sealable plastic bags, some microwavable Tupperware, and a little bit of advance prepping, you and your lunch will be good to go. Try the following ideas:

Stockpile soups.

If your workplace has a microwave and you keep a soup bowl and a can opener at work, this is the easiest lunch to pull together. Stroll down the soup aisle of your local supermarket, and you'll find an almost dizzying array of choices. Keep an eye out for soups that feature all-natural and filling ingredients, such as three bean, minestrone, chicken noodle, and beef with barley. But be sure to choose reduced-sodium and low-fat or no-fat varieties — these are far easier to find than they were years ago. Pair your favorite soup with an ounce or two of crusty, whole-grain bread and you've got a terrific meal.



Put it in your pocket.

Your pita pocket, that is. Pitas are especially well-suited for brown bagging because you can stuff them with almost anything, and the ingredients will stay in place. Look for the whole-wheat versions and fill them with leftover chicken; chopped lettuce, tomato, and onion; and your favorite low-fat salad dressing. Or you can try sliced avocado with hummus and your favorite chopped vegetables.

Get freezer friendly.

If you have time on the weekends, do batch cooking, then divide your culinary creations and put them in single-serving Tupperware containers to use whenever you wish. Meals such as beef or vegetarian chili, stews, and soups are relatively easy to make in large quantities and are freezer friendly. Heat them in the microwave at work and have a serving of fresh or canned fruit for dessert. No time to cook? Bring a frozen dinner to work. Check out the brands in specialized grocery stores that sell ethnic varieties containing more whole grains and vegetables. Always check the label for sodium content, and try to stay within 200 mg per 100 calories.

