

BUILD YOUR OWN LUNCH TEACHER GUIDE

How this activity helps students learn about eating well

No single food or type of food can provide us with everything we need. When children eat a variety of foods, they are more likely to get the nutrition their growing bodies and minds need. That's why it's important to choose foods from all three food categories and to choose many different foods from each category.

The Build Your Own Lunch activity encourages students to include foods they like to eat from each category in the Food Guide to create a tasty and nourishing lunch. At this age, students are ready to start sorting foods using *Canada's Food Guide*. Encouraging students to focus on foods they enjoy eating helps students build positive connections between *Canada's Food Guide* and their own world.

To learn more about how to engage your students in learning about *Canada's Food Guide* from kindergarten to grade 12, review the article [How to Teach Canada's Food Guide](#)



Introducing the activity

Sample introduction: *Today we are going to talk about one of my favourite topics. Food! Each of you will get your own copy of the Build Your Own Lunch activity as well as the Lunch Box Guide to take home. Today we are going to imagine and create our own lunch.*

Consider starting this activity with a discussion question.

- What is one food or meal you like to eat at lunch? Why?
- What is one food or meal you like to eat but not at school? Why?

Feel free to share a personal example as you explore these questions with students.

For example,

- “When I was growing up, one of my favourite things was when my family packed macaroni and cheese for my lunch.”
- “One food I really like eating at home but not always at school is sandwiches. My favourite sandwiches are made with freshly toasted bread.”

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Sample instructions: Take a minute to look at the lunch examples on the Lunch Box Guide before you start dreaming up your lunch creation. This is the guide we'll be using to make a delicious lunch today.

One thing you may notice is that there are spaces for different types of foods. For example, there are two spaces for vegetables or fruits you like to eat. Sometimes these foods can be by themselves or on the side of a meal – like when you have a piece of fruit (for example, the orange in the leftover beef and noodle bowl) or veggies and dip (for example, the pepper slices in the DIY Lunch Kit). But sometimes these foods are part of the meal or mixed in – like broccoli in the noodle bowl, tomato sauce on pasta, or cabbage inside dumplings.

Now think about what you want to include in your lunch. Your lunch idea can be a meal you really enjoy or a new idea for a lunch you'd like to try.

- Create a name and write it in the title section.
- Write down the names of the foods you will need to make your lunch. These are the ingredients for your lunch menu. Try to include at least two types of vegetables or fruits, one type of whole grain food, and two types of protein foods. Include any sauces and sides needed to complete your dish. Use the examples in the Lunch Box Guide for inspiration if needed.
- This activity sheet is a guide to get you started. If you need more ingredients than will fit in the space provided, that's okay; write them in! For example, if your favourite burger toppings are lettuce, tomato, mushrooms, and onions, you can include them all – you don't have to stop at two. Eating many different foods is not only delicious, it gives us energy to play, learn, and move our bodies.
- Once you have written the name of your lunch and your ingredients, start drawing or add images of the ingredients and of your final lunch



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Activity answer key

Students can share images for their lunch in many ways, such as drawing, collaging, using online images, or even taking their own photos. If you have a set of **Food Picture Cards** in your classroom, these could also be used for this activity.

The name of my lunch is: *Easy Pita Pizza*

3. Draw or add a picture of each item in your lunch (below) and what your lunch looks like once put together (right).

This is what is in my lunch

TWO TYPES OF
VEGETABLES AND FRUITS



Tomato sauce



Peppers

ONE TYPE OF
WHOLE GRAIN FOOD



*Whole wheat
pita*

TWO TYPES OF
PROTEIN FOODS



Chicken



Cheese

SAUCES AND SIDES: *Ranch dip*

My lunch looks like this



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Wrapping up

- **Think-Pair-Share:** After students have completed this activity, have them describe their lunch to a classmate. Invite students to share their idea with the whole class.
- **Wall Display:** Display students' lunch creations in the classroom.

Food for thought

Factors that influence students' food choices. The Lunch Box Guide supports students in making food decisions that respect the reality of their needs and resources. Food choices can be based on taste, hunger, food traditions, and health. The ability of students and caregivers to meet these needs is tied to access to resources such as money, time, space, skills, equipment, and support. Young learners and their families can personalize this resource and use it in ways that work for them.

Keep the learning going

Food Picture Cards: After completing this activity, students might be interested to revisiting the Food Guide categories. Introduce this topic in an engaging way with the [One of These Foods is Not Like the Others](#) online learning activity. To order a hard copy of this resource for free, visit [our store](#).

To learn more about how the Lunch Box Guide was created, read the [Teacher Guide](#)



TeachNutrition™

By Dairy Farmers of Canada's Registered Dietitians