

# Back to School

## Making School Lunches Easy!



By Abby Phon  
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It's Back-to-School time! For this whole month, I'll be sharing ways to make the transition easier ... for the kids, for you, and for the entire family!

This week: a school lunch meal plan! Make sure you stay tuned ... next week I have some great, fast, and easy weeknight dinner options, the week after ... well, I don't want to give it ALL away, but let's say a HAPPY Mama makes for a happy family!

Don't have kids? But maybe you DO have a demanding job, work long hours are an entrepreneur, or are a caretaker for someone else? I know the focus here is on school time, but really these tips and recipes are universal. So regardless of your current situation, I hope you enjoy them and they help make your life easier and healthier!

I often get asked for more family friendly meal plans. Well ... here are some awesome plant based, gluten free, and kid approved meals (that are mostly nut free too!). PLUS tips, ideas, and more.

If you're looking for quick, easy, and healthy meals for you or your family, this is for you!



# Weekly School Lunch Meal Plan

## Monday - Hummus & Avocado Pinwheels

Spread some hummus and ½ an avocado (smashed with a fork) on a tortilla or wrap, roll into a long tube and cut into 1" long segments.

You can add shredded carrot, julienned cucumber, or sprouts for a little crunch if your kid enjoys that. (It's how I sneak in more veggies!)

**Fruit:** Stone fruit slices (e.g. nectarine, apricot or peach)

**Veggie:** Cucumber sticks

**Crunchy:** Baked Root Chips

**Snack/Treat:** Lemon balls/bites (recipe below!)

**\*Bonus dessert version:** banana & vegan chocolate nut butter spread on a crepe or thin wrap make a yummy dessert pinwheel!

## Tuesday - Green Pancake Sandwiches

Leftover [green pancakes](#) from the weekend make a yummy sunflower seed butter sandwich! (Or almond/peanut if your school has no restrictions.)

**Fruit:** Grape halves

**Veggie:** Leftover steamed green beans

**Crunchy:** Veggie puffs

**Snack/Treat:** Fruit leather (recipe below!)

## Wednesday - Vegan Cream Cheese & Jam Sandwich

This was my hubby's favorite growing up. Me? Not so much. So feel free to swap the vegan cream cheese for your nut butter or sunbutter of choice! :)

I always use a low-sugar jam, like my yummy homemade no-sugar-added [strawberry chia jam](#) or Fiordifrutta organic fruit spread (sweetened with apple juice).

**Fruit:** Fresh blueberries

**Veggie:** Leftover steamed or roasted broccoli

**Crunchy:** Organic Pea Crisps

**Snack/Treat:** Cookie dough balls (Recipe below!)

## Thursday - Pesto Pasta

Cook pasta, add frozen peas in last 2 minutes, drain, and then add pesto.

You can make your own pesto (I have an [avocado pesto](#) recipe here!), or buy dairy free pesto at your grocery store or farmers market.

**Fruit:** Apple wedges

**Veggie:** Leftover steamed or roasted asparagus

**Crunchy:** Air popped popcorn

**Snack/Treat:** Green muffins (Recipe below!)

## Friday - Eggless Salad Wrap

Using a fork, gently mash together:

¼ cup organic non-GMO (preferably sprouted) tofu

About 1 tbsp soy-free mayo

¼ tsp turmeric

Pinch salt

Spread on a sandwich or wrap.

**Fruit:** Clementine

**Veggie:** Raw sugar snap peas

**Crunchy:** Baked tortilla chips

**Snack/Treat:** Apricot coconut balls (Recipe below!)

# Snack Recipes

## Green Muffins



Do you also find it challenging getting 'greens' into your child's diet? Or are you bored with the usual morning breakfast that you make EVERY SINGLE DAY?

Although my toddler is perfectly happy with oatmeal every day, or leftover green pancakes from the weekend before, I was getting bored with her weekday breakfast options. I think it's important to have variety in everyone's diet! Maybe it's because I'm not a 'morning person,' but getting something green into her in the AM was getting challenging. :) I wanted to make something new that would be easy for me to serve without a lot of prep time early in the morning when we are trying to get out the door to preschool (while getting myself ready and nursing/taking care of the baby too!). Here they are: super yummy Green Muffins! She devoured them, and I have to say ... so did I!

If you're looking for a fast and easy breakfast or a great on-the-go snack for your kiddos or yourself ... try these delicious (gluten-free & vegan) muffins! Lightly sweet, and filled with healthy goodness like chia, spinach, and coconut oil. These didn't last long in my house! (And yes, I meant to use past-tense. They're gone already!) [Recipe is on the blog.](#)

## Fruit Leather



If you're raising a plant-based or health-focused family, it's great to have fun snacks, so the kids don't feel like they're missing out on something their peers and friends get. If you ever looked at the ingredients on fruit roll-ups or fruit-by-the-foot, you might not feel so good about giving it to your child. But the good news is that it's super easy to make it yourself! This recipe only has TWO ingredients!

I add in beets because they are a way to naturally sweeten it while adding beneficial vitamins and minerals. Your kids will never know you snuck in a power veggie in their snacks! My daughter used to love beets, but now won't eat them (no idea why). However she LOVES these fruit rolls and gets very excited when I give them to her. [Recipe is on the blog.](#)

## Cookie Dough Balls



Cookie Dough Balls! These little guys are one of our favorites! We (toddler, my hubs & I!) pop these in our mouth for a snack, dessert, and they're great for sharing with friends!!! These yummy treats taste just like raw cookie dough, but no dairy, no gluten and nothing but healthy protein, healthy fats, and naturally

sweetened yummy goodness your kids (and YOU!) will LOVE! You can whip these up in a pinch since they only have just a few ingredients.

They're also great to get your kids involved with since kids love squishing and rolling dough, and it's fun to get to eat your own creations! A great tip is to ask your kids to help in the kitchen, or even at the grocery store, and in the garden! Seeing where the food comes from, how it's made, having them HELP make it ... makes them more interested and excited to eat it!

This recipe is nourishing for postpartum Mommies too! And also ... health coach approved! :) Hope you like [my cooking video!](#) You'll see just how EASY and FAST this one is! :)

## Lemon Bites



These lemony cookies are easy and fun to make with kids, and have great healthy fat from the coconut oil. And they're peanut free! [Recipe is on the blog.](#)

## Apricot Coconut Balls



These easy cookie balls are yummy and nut-free. Perfect for an afternoon snack!  
[Recips is on the blog.](#)

## Quick Tips & Tricks

### Run out of bread?

No problem! Use lettuce or collard green wraps instead!

### Make it fun!

Cut sandwiches into shapes with a cookie cutter!

### Keep them interested!

Stock your child's lunchbox with the healthiest stuff imaginable, but you can't stop them from trading with their friends. If it's something they like, or helped pick out, they'll be more excited to actually eat it!

### Make it easy!

A little extra prep work can make some things more kid-friendly, like peeling clementines and wrapping in saran.

### Stay simple.

Use fresh foods as much as you can (as opposed to pre-packaged food) to cut down on preservatives and salt.



## Pack it the Day Before

Although I think it makes sense to pack their lunch when you are actually making lunch, I honestly can not think even THAT far in advance! I do however like packing lunch after dinner, when I'm putting leftovers away (that might even become lunch the next day) since cutting boards and knives are already out. This way you don't have to clean the kitchen again or think of another meal at another time! I find this works best for me, but find what works best and saves YOU the most time!

## Keep a Well Stocked Pantry

This tip is for everyone in general! If you keep your pantry stocked you should never really stress over lunch, because you'll ALWAYS have something you can throw together like beans, wraps, and frozen broccoli? You can have a bean & broccoli burrito! GF bread, green beans in the freezer, and your nut butter of choice in the cupboard becomes a sunbutter sandwich and side of green beans! Do you have pasta in the pantry with pesto and frozen peas? Presto! You have pesto pasta! Do you have frozen vegan dumplings and bean pupusas ... No? Just me. Ok, anyway, you get the idea! :)

## Cook Once, Eat 2 or 3 Times!

This is easily one of my mottos and all my clients know it! Again, this rule applies to everyone in general but also works great for making kids lunches!!! When you are cooking well, really ... ANYTHING, make at least double! Freeze half or use the other half or whatever portion you don't eat for that meal for other dishes during the week! Like LUNCH! This rule works especially good for grains (pasta, rice, quinoa), potatoes (leftover sweet potatoes in our house become mac n cheese or chocolate ice cream!!!), soups, stews and baked goods like muffins.

This is probably my biggest secret weapon to packing lunch! Leftover broccoli? That's her veggie in her lunch box the next day! Leftover veggie burgers? That just became crumbled in a wrap for lunch the next day! (Or on bread for a sandwich!) You get the idea ... :)

## Getting Kids Involved

So to be honest, I don't get my daughter involved with school lunches (yet!) because she is very young. However, I do this with lunch at home on the weekends for sure and if your kids are a little older this is a great way to A.) do an activity together B.) teach them C.) cook with them D.) give them power and let them CHOOSE what they want to eat!

Recently, my daughter had the day off of school, so we made our own pizzas! I used almond flour GF wraps (it's what I had on hand, but you can use any bread as a base!) - put some warmed up tomato sauce/marina in a small bowl for her, along with toppings in separate bowls - vegan mozzarella in one and leftover chopped up broccoli and zucchini in another. She had a blast and ate it all! (Even if it didn't make it onto the 'pizza!') :) Tacos are another great thing kids can assemble and put sides on - from mashed up avocado, guacamole, shredded vegan cheese, chopped tomatoes, cut up lettuce, etc!

Make kabobs with whatever you have leftover - grilled mushrooms, wedge of grilled zucchini, cherry tomatoes, tofu cubes (grilled, sauteed or baked) or vegan cheese cube.  
This works great if you have leftovers from grilling, but works with anything just cut up. Make it fun!



**I hope these tips make  
Back to School season easier!**

xo,

*Abby*

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