And not only is eating out brown-bag for the health of it. Information that will help you have more control over the menu, brown-bagging allows you to kick your mid-day meal up a notch. The Health Of It
Brown Bag For Mid-Day Made Easy

Brown Bagging Benefits
The Benefits Of Brown Bagging

#1: Brown Bagging Is Healthier
Have you ever wondered what's actually in a typical fast food burger and fries? The answer is a lot—a lot of calories, and tons of fat. Consider this. A double Whopper with cheese, king size fry and king size coke at Burger King rings in at almost 2,100 calories and 100 grams of fat. That's all your calories and more than your share of fat for the day in just one meal! Conversely, a home packed turkey sandwich on wheat bread with baked potato chips and a diet soda totals about 500 calories and about six grams of fat. Brown bagging will almost always beat the fast food competition hands down when it comes to nutrition.

#2: Brown Bag And Get More Done
When you consider travel time—and the time it takes to get your food once you get seated—going out to lunch each day can take too much time. By packing your lunch and eating at your desk, you'll be able to catch up on email, return voice mail messages, and sew up all the loose ends that accumulate during the week. Don't feel like working through lunch? Take some time for yourself by reading a book, surfing the day's headlines, or just daydreaming at your desk. Plain and simple, if you're not rushing to make it to a restaurant during your lunch hour, you'll have much more time to concentrate on more important things.

#3: You'll Save Big Bucks
Here's a newsflash, eating out is expensive! Have you ever really considered how much you spend on eating out for lunch? The calculation is pretty simple. Take an average meal price of seven dollars and multiply it by 20 (the approximate number of working days in a month). That's $140 a month, and almost $1,700 per year. That's enough money to buy two round trip plane tickets to Europe or lease a brand new economy car. When you sit back and consider it, that's a lot of money to save just by packing a lunch to work.

For More Information
US Department of Agriculture
www.usda.gov

American Dietetic Association
www.eatright.org

National Institutes of Health
www.nih.gov

For More Information

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lunch on the run

Brown Bag For The Health Of It

Mid-Day Made Easy

Brown Bagging benefits

Packaging A Healthy Lunch

The information contained in this brochure has been carefully reviewed for accuracy. It is not intended to replace the advice of your physician or health care provider.
Maximizing Your Mid-Day Meal

Brown Bagging With Ease

There’s no doubt that brown-bagging your lunch requires a little more effort than hitting a local drive through, or standing in line at the company cafeteria. But as we’ve seen, brown bagging—because it’s cheaper and healthier—pays big dividends in the long run. Given the extra effort required, the following tips can help you brown bag it better.

Plan a weekly lunch menu in advance.
Pack your lunch the night before.
Remind yourself to take your lunch.
Be sure to keep cold foods cold.
Read the Food Facts labels on items you pack.
Try using frozen bread to make your sandwich—this can help keep your lunch cool and at a safe temperature.

Kick Your Mid-Day Meal Up A Notch!

Tired of the same old Tuna on Rye with baked chips and water? Well, if you’ve been brown bagging like this for any length and time, it’s easy to see why. Not only does brown bagging allow you to eat healthier and save money, but it also allows you to get a lot more creative with your mid-day meal.

Check out these ideas to kick your brown bag up a notch.

Lovely Leftovers—Leftovers, especially if they’re healthy, can make your midday meal—literally. When preparing your dinners in the evening, try planning ahead and making an extra chicken breast or serving of seafood that you can pack for lunch sometime that week. There’s no reason you should have to settle for the typical sandwich when it comes to your brown bag lunch. Have fun and be creative.

Think Outside the Bun—Especially if you’ve settled on a wonder bread, trying thinking outside the bun. Choose lower-fat, high-fiber breads such as whole wheat, or a tasty multi-grain or whole-wheat pita. Not only will you find a whole new world of flavors with these breads, you’ll be getting a whole host of nutrients important to a nutritious diet.

See the Green—Most people forget about salads when it comes to brown bagging. And by being creative with your greens, you can create a healthy masterpiece that’ll make your colleague envious. One thing to watch out for, however, is those creamy salad dressings that add fat and calories along with their flavor. Try using reduced fat dressings or take some of the fat out of your current dressings by using mild vinegar such as balsamic or rice wine, or combine wine vinegar with fruit juice or stock.

Super Soups—Soups can make for a tantalizing lunch with low calories, but plenty of punch. There are literally thousands of soup ideas floating around, and they’re a great way to use your leftovers. Don’t have access to a microwave? Don’t worry. Heat your soups before heading off to work and use a thermos instead of your brown bag.

Trash the Brown Bag—Using and tossing those brown bags is just another expense you can do without. Invest in a thermal lined lunch bag. Using it with a small ice pack at the bottom of your bag will keep your food colder and safer, for longer period of time.

Brown Bag Ideas Made Easy

The suggestions here are included to help take some of the work out of packing a healthy, yet exciting lunch each day. Each of the lunches shown here contains 500 to 700 calories and less than 15 grams of fat. Use them to plan your menu in the days ahead and give your favorites a regular rotation on your lunch schedule.

Menu #1
- Turkey (three ounces), mustard, and lettuce on whole wheat bread
- One small bag of baked potato or nacho chips
- One medium banana
- One, 12-ounce diet soda

Menu #2
- Whole wheat pita stuffed with tuna, low-fat dressing, celery, sprouts, and diced tomato
- One small can of bean soup with six saltine crackers
- One medium orange
- One Large glass of water

Menu #3
- Two slices of vegetarian pizza (toppings include mushrooms, onions, tomatoes and pineapples)
- Two graham crackers
- Six ounces skim milk
- One handful of grapes

Menu #4
- One medium bowl of lean meat chili (prepared the night before). Drain fat!
- Four saltine crackers
- 1/2-cup low-fat cottage cheese with pineapple slices
- One medium apple
- One large glass of iced tea

Menu #5
- Roast beef (three ounces), horseradish, and tomato on rye bread
- A small tossed salad with carrots and low-calorie dressing
- One medium pear
- One six-ounce glass of skim milk

Menu #6
- One medium chicken breast steamed with garlic, and 1/2 cup wild rice (Prepared the night before)
- One medium peach
- Walnut and orange salad made with low-fat mayonnaise
- One Large glass of apple juice

Menu #7
- One chicken and lettuce stuffed tortilla with 1/8 cup Colby cheese and salsa
- One small bag of baked tortilla chips
- One cup of non-buttered corn (prepared in microwave at work)
- One large glass of water

Menu #8
- A small plate of penne pasta with red sauce (prepared the night before). Watch the fat and calories in the sauce
- One slice whole wheat garlic bread
- One medium apple
- One large glass of 100% grape juice

Menu #9
- Roast beef (three ounces), horseradish, and tomato on rye bread
- A small tossed salad with carrots and low-calorie dressing
- One medium pear
- One six-ounce glass of skim milk

Menu #10
- Roast beef (three ounces), horseradish, and tomato on rye bread
- A small tossed salad with carrots and low-calorie dressing
- One medium pear
- One six-ounce glass of skim milk

Lunchtime Match-up

Fast Food vs. Brown Bag

Take a look at how these fast food challengers match up against healthier, brown bag champions.

Bout One
- Fast Food Challenger
  - Double Whopper with cheese
  - King size fries
  - King size soda

Calories: 2,090
Fat: 100 grams

Healthy Brown Bag Champ
- Turkey sandwich on whole wheat bread
- Small bag baked potato chips
- One, 12-ounce diet soda

Calories: 550
Fat: 10 grams

Bout Two
- Fast Food Challenger
  - KFC “Twister” sandwich
  - Mashed potatoes with gravy
  - Biscuit
  - Slice of apple pie

Calories: 1,250
Fat: 61 grams

Healthy Brown Bag Champ
- Steamed chicken breast on a bed of lettuce (low-fat dressing)
  - One medium apple
  - Small chocolate chip cookie
  - Large glass of iced tea

Calories: 570
Fat: 9 grams

It's a knock out every time—the healthy brown bag champ is always the winner.