



HOW TO Pack a Zero Waste Lunch

DO USE REUSABLE ITEMS:

- Water bottles
- Sandwich/Snack bags
- Lunch bags
- Plastic spoons and forks

DON'T USE DISPOSABLE PACKAGING:

- Snack packs, fruit cups
- Plastic water bottles
- Plastic bags, plastic wrap & foil

What Does a Zero Waste Lunch Look Like?

| Zero Waste Lunch (REUSABLE)* | A Typical Lunch (DISPOSABLE) |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reusable lunchboxes.• Sandwiches and other main dishes, fresh fruit, fresh vegetables, and treats in a reusable lunch container.• Reusable forks and spoons.• Reusable drink containers.• Reusable lunch-bags. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sandwiches sealed in plastic bags/plastic wrap or foil.• Fruits and vegetables in plastic bags• Prepackaged chips, cookies, fruit bars, granola bars, cheeses, and fruit leathers.• Prepackaged yogurts, applesauce, and puddings.• Crackers, pretzels, chips, and other snack foods sealed in plastic bags.• Disposable juice boxes, juice pouches, soda cans, water bottles, and milk cartons.• Plastic forks and spoons. |

*With this type of lunch, lunch food items can be bought in larger quantities. The packaging can be left at home for reuse or recycling. Waste-free lunches are not only a wise environmental choice, but they are less expensive and healthier as well.

What Does it Cost to Pack a Zero Waste Lunch?

| Disposable Lunch | | Zero Waste Lunch | |
|------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|---------------|
| 1 pb&j sandwich | \$1.25 | 1 pb&j sandwich | \$1.25 |
| 1 single serve yogurt | .85 | 1 serving of yogurt | .50 |
| 1 Lunchables | 1.75 | 1 serving of crackers & cheese | .40 |
| 1 fruit cup | .62 | 1 fresh cut fruit | .30 |
| 1 package of carrots and dip | .65 | 1 serving of carrots and dip | .25 |
| 3 plastic bags | .12 | reusable spoon/fork | 0 |
| 1 juice pouch | .35 | water | 0 |
| 1 plastic spoon | .04 | packaging | 0 |
| 1 bottle water (12oz) | .35 | | |
| TOTAL | \$5.98 | TOTAL | \$2.48 |

The Bottom Line

| Disposable Lunch | Zero Waste Lunch |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| \$5.98/day | \$2.48/day |
| \$29.90/week | \$12.40/week |
| \$1,076.40/school year | \$446.40/school year |

\$1076.40 - (\$446.40+ \$25*) = \$605 Savings Per School Year Per Student

* initial reusable containers purchase

**adapted from www.wastefreelunches.org