

Why: BRING YOUR LUNCH TO WORK

Spare The Air While You Eat Healthy

For The Environment:

Buy in Bulk, Cook in Bulk...Save in Bulk

- Buying in bulk means less packaging waste and less money spent on marketing.
- Cooking larger quantities of food at one time saves time and energy.



Out to Lunch: 4-mile Round Trip Case Study

Let's say you travel about two miles each way for lunch for a total of four miles. That's the distance from the U-Med District to Midtown. Factoring in waiting in line and finding a place to park, your short lunch trip just cost you \$2.08 in gas and vehicle ownership and emitted four pounds of CO₂. (U.S. EPA)

For Your Health:

- Portion control --- you only eat what you pack. Make your own 100-calorie snack packs of your favorite chocolate, nuts or candies.
- You can take a walk instead of spending time driving to get lunch.
- It's the easiest way to avoid fried foods.

For Your Wallet:

If you go out to lunch five days a week at \$10/lunch...

\$10 lunch x 5 workdays per week = \$50/week
x 48 workweeks per year = **\$2,400**

If you bring your lunch at \$3/lunch...

\$3 lunch x 5 workdays per week = \$15/week
x 48 workweeks per year = **\$720**

Monthly Savings = \$140

Annual Savings = \$1,680

20 years in stock market = \$114,185

**Plus the cost of gas,
maintenance and your time!**

TIPS

- Keep a bottle of hot sauce at work. It can perk up anything from a sandwich to a salad.
- Buy or make a nifty lunch box. It'll make any lunch more fun.
- Pack your lunch the night before.
- Keep a few cans of soup or microwave meals at work just in case you forget your lunch or are pressed for time.
- Make extra portions for dinner that can be enjoyed the next day for lunch.
- Be sure to include foods from all of the major food groups, including fruits, vegetables, and grains, as well as dairy products and lean meats.
- Avoid soda and other high-calorie, high-sugar drinks. These drinks contribute to energy loss in the afternoon and add empty calories.

How? Create a Zero-Waste Lunch

It is estimated that the average school-age child using a disposable lunch generates 67 pounds of waste per school year. That equates to 18,760 pounds of lunch waste for just one average-size elementary school. Now add up all the schools and all the office buildings.



Bringing your lunch to work or school doesn't have to generate waste. You can avoid the pre-packaged "convenience" products and all of their packaging waste by doing it yourself without any more effort. Here are some tips for creating a zero-waste lunch.

- Use a reusable insulated bag or lunch box instead of a brown paper bag. A reusable ice pack can be used to keep perishable food items cold.
- Get a few reusable containers that can be washed and used over and over instead of using disposable plastic sandwich bags for sandwiches and snacks. If you use sandwich bags, you can rinse these out and reuse them. Several companies even sell bag-drying racks for next to your kitchen sink, or build your own!
- Use a thermos or reusable jug instead of a bottle of soda or a juice box.
- Visit www.wastefreelunches.org or www.laptoplunches.com for reusable products, and hundreds of great menu ideas to keep your zero-waste lunch wholesome and interesting.
- Use metal silverware or wash plastic utensils and reuse them instead of flimsy plastic utensils that are used once and thrown away.
- Buy in bulk and pack individual servings in reusable bags or containers. Create your own snack packs rather than purchasing the over-packaged, over-priced, store-bought versions.
- Use cloth napkins that can be washed and reused instead of using paper napkins or paper towels.



Green Office Party Planning

- Send electronic invitations.
- Consider the number of people attending when planning the menu to be sure there won't be too much food.
- Send leftovers home with coworkers and/or donate them to organizations like Bean's Cafe. Contact first to be sure your items are acceptable.
- Save party platter trays to create your own party platter at future events.
- Serve organic, shade-grown and/or fair-trade coffees and teas.
- Invest in reusable plates, cups, and utensils, or use biodegradable serviceware if reusables are not feasible.
- Do potlucks! Everyone brings food in their own reusable containers and takes home the leftovers.



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