





# About Bento Boxes

Bento boxes are a type of food container that originated in Japan and are often described as Japanese lunch boxes. They are used to pack single portions of balanced meals that typically consist of a starch, a protein, and some side dishes. Bento boxes have dividers or compartments to separate foods that are put directly into the boxes without extra packaging. Bentos are a convenient and healthy way to enjoy food on the go.



#### Rules for success:

- 1. Limit your condiments. Avoid or use the lowest calorie versions. This includes marinades, etc..
- 2. Try to start using the bento boxes for lunch and dinner for 2 weeks.
- 3. Keep breakfast simple.
- 4. Add 0-2 snacks as needed.
- 5. Eat ALL the veggies to help this work.
- 6. Drink at least 2L of water daily, more is better for the first 2 weeks.
- 7. Keep it really, really simple at the beginning. Consider prepping a day or more at a time if you like to cook.

## Bento Box Kickstart

This is a super simple way to start getting results right away without being hungry while eating whole foods with minimal prep.

STEP Get your bento boxes!

STEP Review food list to be clear on what types of foods go in each box.

STEP Gather meal ideas that work well with bento boxes. See page 5 meal combination ideas for a great start.

STEP
Use bento boxes to simplify meal prep and regulate portions.

### Bento Food List

#### NON-STARCHY VEGETABLES

Don't worry about the carbs from these foods

for most easting philosophies

Artichoke
Arugula
Asparagus
Bamboo shoots
Beets (cubed)
Bok choy
Broccoflower
Broccoli
Brussel sprouts
Cabbage
Carrots
Cauliflower
Celeriac root

Chard/Swiss chard

Chervil

Celery

Chinese cabbage

Chives
Cilantro
Cucumbers
Daikon radishes
Eggplant
Endive

Fermented vegetables (Kimchi, pickles, sauer-

kraut, etc) Garlic Green beans

Fscarole

Fennel

Greens: beet, collard, kale, turnip, etc

Horseradish
Jicama
Kohlrabi
Leeks
Lettuce, all
Microgreens
Mushrooms
Okra
Onions
Parsley
Peppers, all
Radicchio
Radishes
Salsa

Snap peas/Snow peas

Spinach Sprouts, all

Sea vegetables

Scallions

**Shallots** 

Squash: spaghetti, yellow, zucchini, etc

Tomato Turnips Water chestnuts Watercress

**PROTEINS** 

Most of the calories come from protein

Cottage cheese Ricotta cheese Greek yogurt Egg

Fish/shellfish: halibut, herring, mackerel, salm-

on, sardines, tuna, etc

Meat: beef, buffalo, elk, lamb, venison, other

wild game, etc

Poultry (skinless): chicken, Cornish hen, duck,

pheasant, turkey, etc

Natto Spirulina Tempeh Tofu

Powder (check label for 1 serving = 7g)

Low-fat cheese

**CARBS** 

Most of the calories come from carbs in these

foods
Black beans
Edamame
Green peas
Hummus
Refried beans
Acorn squash
Butternut squash

Plantain

Yam

Potato: purple, red, sweet, yellow, mashed

Root vegetables: parsnip, rutabaga

Apple Applesauce Apricots Banana Blackberries Blueberries Cherries Grapefruit Grapes Kiwi Mango Mellon: all Nectarine Orange Papaya Peach Pear Persimmon Pineapple

**Plums** 

Pomegranate seeds

Raspberries Strawberries Tangerines Amaranth Buckwheat/Kasha

Millet

Oats: rolled, steel cut

Quinoa

Rice: basmati, black, brown, purple, red, wild

Sorghum Teff Barley Bulgar Couscous Kamut

Semolina Spelt Dairy milk

Dairy alternatives: almond, coconut, flaxseed,

oat, soy, etc...

**FATS** 

Calories are mostly from fat from these foods

Almonds
Brazil nuts
Cashews
Chia seeds
Flaxseed
Hazelnuts
Hemp seeds
Macadamias

Nut and seed butters

Peanuts
Pecans
Pine nuts
Pistachios
Pumpkin seeds
Sesame seeds
Soy nuts
Sunflower seeds
Walnut halves
Avocado
Butter

Dark chocolate (70% or higher cocoa)

Olives: black, green, kalamato

Cooking Oils: avocado, butter, coconut, grapeseed, extra virgin olive, rice, sesame Salad Oils: almond, avocado, grapeseed, hempseed, extra virgin olive, pumpkin seed, rice bran, safflower, sesame, sunflower, walnut

### Bento Building Blocks

#### Large container: non starchy veggies

4 cups of non-starchy vegetables (salads, frozen or fresh veggies. Raw or cooked fine).

Large container examples:

- 1. Salad greens (easiest)
- 2. Chopped raw veggies (easy)
- 3. Roast a bag of frozen veggies like broccoli-cauliflower-pepper mix (intermediate)
- 4. Collard green roll ups (difficult)(http://goop.com/recipes/collard-roll-ups-with-coconutcurry-kale/

#### Medium container: protein

1 cup of protein. Hard boiled eggs go great here. So do previously cooked/leftover meat/fish/fowl.

Medium container examples:

- 1. Hard-boiled eggs
- 2. Leftover meat/fish/fowl from dinner
- 3. Canned chicken
- 4. Greek yogurt

#### <u>Small container: carbs</u>

1/2 cup. Let's go for whole grains, tolerated fruits, sweet potatoes and beans here. These are mostly called "resistant starches" and include more fiber for your happy digestive tract.

Small container ideas:

- 1. Hummus
- 2. Whole grains like rice, quinoa etc... (see attached "skip the parsley" recipe)
- Fruit as tolerated
- 4. Sweet potatoes and other starchier veggies
- 5. Lentil/bean combinations are great to make ahead like three bean salads, cowboy caviar etc...=

#### So, how can I make a meal out of this on the fly?

Some example combinations (let your imagination run wild. These are just for ideas):

- Raw Snacker: Chopped veggies in the large container, plain greek yogurt in the medium size container (mix with herbs like dill if desired) and fruit in the small container
- 2. Leftovers: Fill large container (4 cups) of bento box with vegetables. 1 cup container: leftover meat/fish/fowl from dinner. 1/2 cup container: all the sweet potato that can fit
- Tex-mex box: Fill large container with shredded lettuce and cabbage 1 cup container: pinto beans and salsa mixed 1/2 cup container: corn tortillas
- 4. Mediterranean: Fill large container with salad greens and avocado. 1 cup container: 1 HB egg; 1/2 cup white cannellini beans (limit 2 per day)
- 5. Brunch box: Fill large container with spinach. 1 cup container: quiche; 1/2 cup container: tolerated fruit
- 6. SUPER FAST BOX: Prewashed bagged lettuce, half a lemon for dressing, rotisserie chicken, crackers

# Weekly Plan & Goals

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