Packed lunches don't have to be boring. With a little thought and imagination they can be fun, healthy and tasty too. Just include something from each of the four main food groups, pop in a drink and away you go!

1. Start with the basics - bread, cereals and potatoes.
   - Try different types of bread, eg sliced bread, bread rolls, pitta breads, bagels, baguettes, muffins, crackers,... the list is endless!
   - Go for a variety of breads too - wholemeal, granary, high fibre white, brown or white
   - Why not try basing your lunch on rice, pasta or potatoes instead of sandwiches sometimes, eg pasta salad

2. Add a tasty filling - meat, fish and alternatives. Try to include lean meat, chicken, fish, eggs, nuts, beans or pulses in your lunchbox:
   - Egg mayonnaise and cucumber
   - Mashed sardines and tomato
   - Chicken tikka and salad
   - Peanut butter and banana
   - Ham, cheese and tomato
   Remember if you are using a spread to choose a reduced fat one - or do without it completely if you are using a moist filling.

3. Feeling fruity?
   It's important to eat 5 (or more) portions of fruit and vegetables every day. You won't be stuck for choice when it comes to lunchtime:
   - fresh fruit - apple, grapes, banana, kiwi
   - fruit dried fruits, eg raisins, apricots
   - chopped raw vegetables, eg carrot sticks, cherry tomatoes or a mixed salad
   - tinned fruit in natural juice- pop into a small container or buy in small tins with a ring pull

4. Dairy delights
   Try to include some dairy products in your lunchbox - important to keep your teeth healthy and your bones strong:
   - low fat yogurt -plain or fruit flavoured
   - low fat fromage frais
   - small pot of rice pudding
   - milkshake

Added extras
Fancy a 'treat' in your lunch-box? There's nothing wrong with this. Just try and make healthier choices when you can:
   - reduced fat crisps or twiglets
   - fruit cake, currant bun, scone or slice of carrot cake,
   - plain popcorn
   - plain biscuit, eg digestive or cereal bar
   - fun sized bar of chocolate
   And finally, if you haven't already done so -

POP IN A DRINK.
Choose from:
   - Water
   - Plain or flavoured milk
   - Pure fruit juice in small cartons or in a small bottle
   - Low calorie squash or diet drinks - small cans are now available
   - And don't forget hot drinks in the winter, eg soups

Remember to keep your lunch cool:
   - Use a cool bag and pop in an ice-pack or freeze a carton of juice and place in with food to keep cool.
   - Keep in the fridge until morning if you make it the night before.
   - Don't store your lunch next to a radiator or in the sun.

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