

Snacks That Travel Well

Eating in the car is something you shouldn't do unless you are highly skilled at juggling. In your defense, if you can get the kids to soccer, ballet, pick up the dry cleaning, conduct the car pool, and get to work on time, you are qualified. Okay, so everyone's schedule isn't that busy, but there are times when almost everyone has to be away from home during meal times at one time or another due to hectic schedules.

The goal here is to keep you from being tempted when it comes to eating out just because you can't be home at dinner time. When there are items on hand that you can reach and eat with the car in motion, it is easier to pass right by those fast food joints and stick to healthier eating habits. Here are just a few choices to help you do just that. These foods can all be prepared prior to traveling so they are right there ready to eat right when that hunger pain hits.

Here's a familiar scenario to many. It's almost dinner time, but you've had to stay after work and still need to pick the kids up from practice. You're craving a sandwich. Just because you're on the road doesn't mean you have to swing in the drive thru and grab a burger. Try this car friendly sandwich instead. First, if you're going to eat it in the car, you'll need some rolls. They should be sturdy rolls like hoagie rolls you get from the bakery that are not cut yet.

You'll want to make these ahead of time (the night before would be perfect). To create your sandwich on the go, cut one end off of the hoagie roll. This is like creating a bread bowl only you are doing it from the end instead of the center. Scoop out some of the bread in the center and spoon your sandwich filling inside. This is great for anything with mayonnaise. Your sandwich can actually sit up in a cup holder but wrap it in a paper towel or parchment first.

Potatoes make a good snack that will fill you up in a jiffy, but don't stop for greasy French fries. Instead make yourself a homemade batch. Cut potatoes into sticks, chips, or cubes. Sprinkle the potatoes with water and toss them in a bag of seasonings of your choice. Spray cooking spray on a cookie sheet and bake.

These little poppers can be eaten from a container while you drive. The kids can eat them with very little mess too. Sweet potatoes can be used instead of russet potatoes and use cinnamon and a pinch of nutmeg in place of salt and other less healthy seasonings. (Plain yogurt, cinnamon and honey makes a great dipping sauce on the go, or at home!)

On long trips, you may need some energy to help you get where you are going. How about trail mix? Create a batch of your own. Toast some pretzels, Melba toast pieces, and nuts. Mix with raisins, dried cherries, and other goodies. Keep an entire container with you in the car so everyone can have an energy boost. Homemade trail mix is a great snack while you're waiting in traffic too. Another quick snack you can prepare several days in advance and just grab as needed is a stuffed bagel. My daughter loves whole wheat bagels with a thin layer of almond butter in the middle. I cut the bagel sandwich into 4 bite size pieces and pop them in the freezer. When I know we're going to be out for a few hours and my daughter will need to eat something or else she'll turn into a hungry monster, I grab some bagel bites out of the freezer. They defrost on the go because they are so small and you can even gnaw on them frozen if necessary. If you don't eat all of them, just put the rest in the fridge for the next day.

Soup can also be another car-friendly meal. Just pour some of your favorite soup into the blender and blend until the pieces are small enough for you to swallow without choking. You can even puree the soup completely if you'd prefer. For a thicker texture, add a bit of cream soup. Now, your soup is ready for distributing in your to-go cups. The ideal cup would be a coffee mug with a lid. These types of cups have a wide opening perfect for drinking soups from. You can take the soup with you while you're out shopping, working in the garden or to work. A cup of soup is packed with healthy nutrients and can also be frozen until its travel time.

My daughter loves to eat on the go and I feel good knowing that she's eating healthy even while I'm busy driving somewhere. Just a little bit of forethought goes a long way towards keeping your car clean and your body happy. The next time you don't have time to eat, reach for one of these tasty treats instead of pulling into that fast food drive thru.

About the Author

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