

1

Designing a Healthy Lunch Experience

Overview

Everyone knows that packing our own lunch on a regular basis saves money and gets us to eat healthier. But like other healthy things (e.g. exercise, personal wellness, time management, etc.), we often lose our way and forget to make the time it takes to do what is best for us.

Design Rationale

The busy world of work/life balance, combined with the ever increasing cost of good food, we need to pause and consider what might be a healthy and sustainable lunch experience.

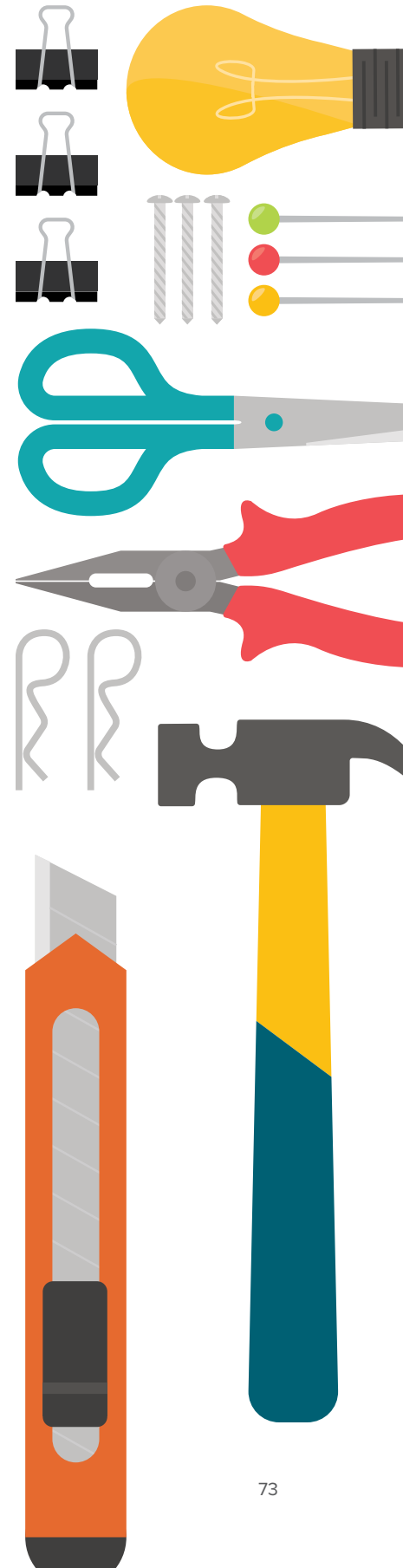
The website Lifehacker offers an interesting formula to help us to have a balanced, delicious box lunch experience (<http://lifehacker.com/pack-healthy-hearty-lunches-with-this-six-layer-formul-1752826181>).

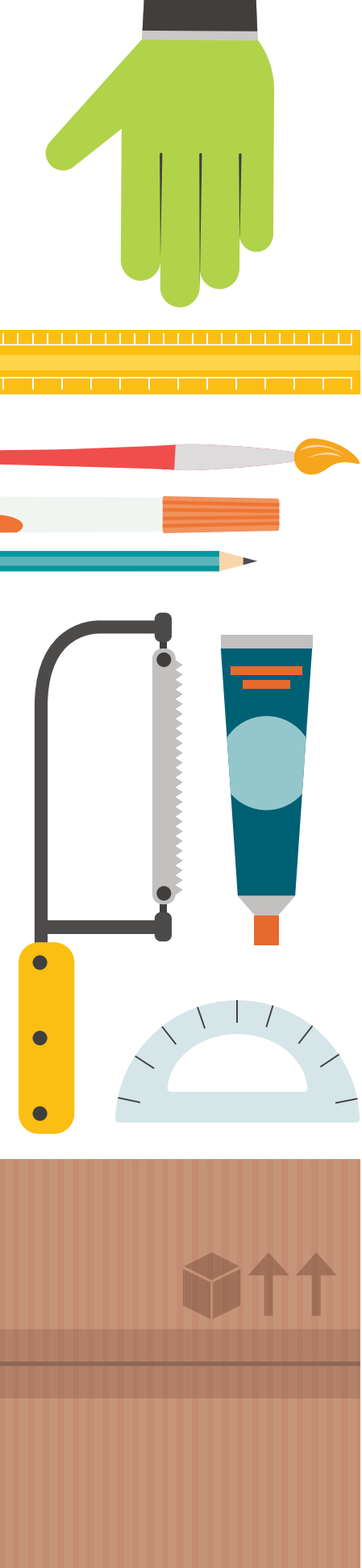
Central to the formula is the notion of the six-layer lunch experience which consists of the following elements:

- **Grains:** Anything from rice to quinoa, this will act as the foundation of your meal and be integral to staying full the whole afternoon. Obviously optional if you're watching your carbs.
- **Seasonal vegetable:** You can throw in more than one veggie, whichever ones you happen to have on hand. This is a great layer to use up roasted veggies from last night's dinner.
- **Leafy greens:** Raw or cooked, greens will bulk up your lunch, and if you're cutting out grains or watching your carbs, switch these out as the base of your lunch for a fibrous, healthy alternative.
- **Protein:** Tons of ways you can go here, from sliced chicken, cured meats, tofu cubes, beans, or a hard boiled egg.
- **Sour/acidic flavor:** Lighten things up and pull your dish together with an acidic dressing, sauce, or even just a squeeze of lemon.
- **Healthy fats:** This is your chance to really customize each day's lunch, from olive oil to avocado to nuts.

Of concern is how to “pack” and “transport” our healthy lunches in a way that looks good, trendy, and keeps all the food elements in an appetizing way that maintains the integrity and goodness of each of the food elements. Globally, there are many great solutions to this concern. Examples include:

- Tiffin boxes (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tiffin_carrier)
- Bento boxes (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bento>)





The foodie site, Bon Appétit offers some excellent food examples packed away in a Bento box (<http://www.bonappetit.com/trends/article/bento-box-lunch-recipe>).

Problem Scenario

Your team has been selected to develop the perfect lunch box that addresses the problems we face in packing and transporting a healthy lunch. Currently, we see the use of brown bags, throw away containers, and generally unappetizing lunch solutions. Your task is to make a solution to this problem that is different from those already available on the market.

Success Determinants

Success will be determined by the degree to which your design solution:

- Addresses the design challenge
- Addresses an identifiable need for the end-user
- Uses the provided materials, resources, and tools
- Is a helpful and unique option for those of us considering packing and transporting our increasingly healthy lunches

Parameters

- Plan how to use something of every consumable item in the participant group kit provided.
- You can use items from the pantry
- You can use any of the tools that have been provided.
- Your prototype could be a scale version rather than actual size.

Suggestions for Use

- The Healthy Lunch Experience design challenge has been used successfully with students Grades 7–12 and with teachers. Obvious curricular connections can be in the British Columbia Applied Design, Skills, and Technologies K-12 curriculum (<https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/adst>). The Framework for Kindergarten to Grade 12 Wellness Education attends to Physical Wellness, focusing on healthy growth, development, nutrition and care of the body.
- The importance of eating healthier lunches has prompted an Indiegogo campaign—Prepd Pack: The Lunchbox Reimagined—which includes containers as well as a smart app to help you purchase food and organize menus (Indiegogo campaign: <https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/prepd-pack-the-lunchbox-reimagined#/> and Prepd website: <https://www.getprepd.com/>).