

■ SAFE LUNCHBOXES FOR NURSERY ■

A Parent's Guide to Preventing Choking & Managing Allergies

■ 1. THE NURSERY BAN LIST (HIGH CHOKING & ALLERGY RISKS)

- **Whole Nuts & Seeds:** Banned in most nurseries due to life-threatening allergy risks; also a severe choking hazard.
- **Whole Popcorn:** Light, hard pieces easily slip back into a child's airway, creating a total blockage.
- **Marshmallows & Chewy Sweets:** Sticky textures expand when wet and can block the throat permanently.
- **Raw Jelly Cubes:** Do not melt quickly in the mouth and can form an airtight seal over the windpipe.

■ 2. THE LUNCHBOX PREP CHEATSHEET (UNDER 5s)

Food Item	■ Never Pack Like This	■ Always Pack Like This
Grapes & Tomatoes	Whole (can perfectly seal a tiny windpipe)	Cut lengthways into halves or quarters.
Sausages / Hot Dogs	Round coin discs or chunks	Cut lengthways into thin, narrow strips.
Apples, Pears, Veg	Large, hard chunks or wedges	Grate them or slice into paper-thin layers.
Cheese Blocks	Thick cubes or blocks	Grate or serve in thin ribbons.
Meat & Poultry	Large pieces or served on the bone	Shred finely and double-check for bones.

■ 3. ALLERGY-SAFE ALTERNATIVES

- **Instead of Peanut Butter:** Use **Sunflower Seed Butter (SunButter)** or **WowButter** (soy-based spread that tastes like peanut butter but is completely nut-free). Check your nursery's specific rules on seeds.
- **Instead of Dairy Cheese:** If your nursery or child avoids dairy, use calcium-fortified plant-based alternatives—but ensure they are sliced paper-thin or grated exactly like dairy options.
- **Instead of Nut Bars / Snack Mixes:** Pack **oat cakes**, **roasted chickpea snacks**, or homemade seedless oat bars marked clearly as nut-free.
- **Check Labels Carefully:** Avoid anything containing an explicit 'May contain nuts' warning if your nursery enforces a strict nut-free environment.

■ THE THREE GOLDEN LUNCHBOX RULES

1. **Think 'Batons' Not 'Coins':** Always cut long or round foods lengthways into narrow strips.
2. **Peel Tough Skins:** Remove stringy or tough skins from sausages, apples, and cucumbers.
3. **Clearly Label Everything:** Label all boxes and bags with your child's full name to avoid meal mix-ups.