

Team picnic in the park

MISSION VERY POSSIBLE!

Why not organise a team meeting in a completely different environment, and include a healthy picnic and some physical activity?

Simple steps to a successful 'team in the park' meeting:

1. Appoint a champion to organise your event.
2. Find a suitable venue for a team meeting in an outdoor location, with a contingency for bad weather (eg, an indoor meeting room).
3. Agree on the catering arrangements:
 - external caterers
 - employees to bring food to share, or
 - each employee to bring his or her own picnic.Don't forget to check for any special dietary requirements.
4. Organise for food to be transported to the outdoor venue. Don't take food out of the fridge until the last minute, and use a cool bag or cool box to keep it chilled until you are ready to eat. It is especially important to keep the following foods cool:
 - cooked meat and cooked poultry
 - meat or fish pâtés and spreads
 - milk and eggs, and uncooked and lightly-cooked dishes made with them – such as mayonnaise and hollandaise sauces and mousses
 - shellfish and seafood – including prawns, shrimps, mussels, oysters, crab, lobster and scampi
 - cooked rice
 - food containing cream, such as trifle, cream cakes and desserts.
5. Agree on the time available for the team event and then select a suitable physical activity.
6. Buy any equipment needed for the lunch and activity.
 - Remember to bring antiseptic hand wipes if your venue doesn't have hand-washing facilities.
 - Take something to keep food covered whenever possible.
 - Remember the rubbish bags!
7. Circulate the agenda to the team – including details about lunch and the optional physical activity.
8. Organise transport for the team to the venue. Can you walk or cycle?
9. If the weather is poor on the day, confirm as early as possible whether the meeting will go ahead.
10. Enjoy your 'team picnic in the park' and don't forget to ask for feedback.

Suggestions for activities

Kite-flying
Rounders
Walk
Nature trail
Croquet
Boules
Volleyball
Old-style school sports day, eg, hide and seek!

Suggestions for healthy picnic food

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TORTILLA WHEELS:

Spread a large wholemeal tortilla with a layer of low-fat houmous, then add sliced red and green pepper and salad and watercress. Roll up tightly, then slice into 1-inch lengths, using cocktail sticks to hold them in shape if necessary. Arrange cut side up and scatter with sesame seeds.

Allow 1 tortilla per person.

POTATO SALAD:

Boil 500g (20oz) of baby potatoes until just tender and for the last 2 minutes add 100g (4oz) of fine green beans. Drain both and run under cold water to cool.

In a serving bowl place a variety of mixed salad leaves. Add the potatoes and beans. Crumble 200g of feta cheese over the potatoes, along with some chopped chives and spring onions. Toss well and serve as soon as possible with a low-fat salad dressing.

Serves 5-6 people.

(CHIPS AND DIPS:

Dip unsalted tortilla chips, slices of pitta bread and mixed vegetable sticks (carrots, peppers, sugar snap peas, baby sweetcorn, celery and spring onions) into low-fat crème fraîche mixed with a squeeze of lime and a handful of chopped coriander.

PITTA POCKETS:

Mix chopped boiled egg, roughly chopped watercress and chopped spring onion with a little low-fat yoghurt. Stuff the mixture into wholemeal pitta breads.

Alternative filling:

Low-fat coronation chicken (made with low-fat yoghurt)

TUNA WRAPS:

Drain a small tin of tuna (or salmon) and spread it over a wholemeal tortilla wrap. Add a handful of salad leaves, and some chopped salad onion and grated carrot. Roll up from one edge and wrap in greaseproof paper, twisting the ends like a Christmas cracker.

Allow 1 tortilla per person.

Suggestions for healthy picnic food

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SELECTION OF HIGH-FIBRE AND WHOLEGRAIN BREADS:

Served with:

- individual low-fat cheese portions
- chunky fruits and vegetables – for example, cucumber, cherry tomatoes, celery, apple and pear.

TUNA AND BEAN SALAD:

Mix together 1 grated carrot, 1 sliced red pepper, 100g of sugar snap peas finely sliced, and 400g canned mixed beans, drained and rinsed. Drizzle with low-fat salad dressing and place in a serving dish. Flake 200g of tuna over the top and serve with mixed salad leaves.

Serves 3-4 people.

PASTA POTS:

Serve cooked pasta in individual pots with a range of summer ingredients including: cherry tomatoes, basil and red onions salmon (tinned or fresh), cucumber, peas, lemon juice and mint.

Allow 50-75g pasta (dry weight) per person.

COUSCOUS SALAD:

Serve cooked couscous with a range of tasty ingredients including:

- roasted vegetables
- beef tomatoes, rocket and mozzarella.

Allow 50g couscous (dry weight) per person.

Top tips

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Avoid high-fat snack foods such as sausage rolls, Scotch eggs and crisps. Instead, offer easy-to-eat vegetable snacks such as cherry tomatoes, or carrot or celery sticks. Choose low-fat versions of favourite picnic foods such as sandwiches and quiche.

And for dessert...

Home-baked cakes are great for picnics and, by making your own, you can reduce the amount of added sugar. Why not try banana bread, raspberry muffins or flapjacks?
And for a really healthy dessert, why not prepare some fresh fruit kebabs or tropical fruit salad?

Cooling drinks for your picnic

PINK FIZZ:

Add sparkling water to pomegranate juice. Pour it over ice cubes and top with sliced strawberries.

(CHILLED DRINKS:

Use vacuum flasks to keep drinks chilled. Rinse the flasks with cold water first and the drinks will stay cooler for longer.

Use plastic glasses in the park as they are easy to transport.

FROZEN LEMONS AND LIMES:

Slice lemons and limes and freeze in bags. On the day, remove the fruit from the freezer and add them to your drinks to keep them cool.

Have plenty of water and fruit juices available to keep your team hydrated on hot summer days.

DON'T FORGET TO TAKE:

- plates, cups, cutlery and napkins
- water
- picnic blankets
- sun cream and hats
- rubbish bags