

Food in a jar – fast, healthy, tasty

Serving food and drink in mason jars is all the rage. Mason jar cuisine allows you to create healthy food that's tasty and easy to prepare. Read on for how to make salad in a jar and quick oatmeal in a jar.

Breakfast in a jar - DIY Quick Oatmeal Jars

These quick oatmeal jars are easy to make, and you can make one or a whole week's worth ahead. Just assemble all the ingredients in the jar, and seal and save or transport until meal time. Then, just add water or milk/ almond milk, etc. (or water and milk mixture) and heat. Breakfast (or lunch) is served!

Note: Use quick oats. These are not instant oats, nor are they old fashioned or steel cut oats. These cook a little faster than old fashioned and steel cut, but they have better texture and flavor than instant oats. They work well in this quick cooking recipe.

*Classic oatmeal**

Makes 1 serving

- ½ c. quick oats*
- 2 Tbsp. raisins
- 1 Tbsp. chopped walnuts
- 2 tsp. brown sugar
- Pinch salt

Assemble all ingredients in a glass jar or other microwave/hot water-safe container.

At meal time, you can heat and serve two ways:

1. Microwave method: Add ¾ to 1 cup water or milk/almond milk, etc. (or a mix of water and milk depending on desired texture. Microwave for 2-3 minutes or until desired consistency is reached. Stir. Adjust sugar and salt to taste as needed.

2. Hot water method: Pour $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 cup boiled water, milk/almond milk, etc. (or a mixture of water and milk) depending on desired texture. Stir, re-cover, and let sit until desired consistency is reached (usually 3 - 5 minutes). Adjust sugar and salt to taste as needed.

* Experiment with flavors to suit your taste. Substitute other dried fruits and nuts or seeds. Add orange zest, cinnamon or other flavorings if desired.

Lunch in a jar – make ahead salad in a jar

Salad in a jar is an easy make-ahead way to have a healthy lunch at work (also makes a great instant supper, if you are coming home late!). Here's how to make one that will stay fresh and not get soggy before you are ready to eat it!

You will need one wide-mouth jar that's big enough to put all your ingredients in (Mason jar type).

- Put your dressing in the bottom on the jar.
- Put all the hearty ingredients (ones that won't break easily or absorb the dressing (e.g. carrots, beans, chick peas, green beans, bell pepper, radishes, whole grape or cherry tomatoes)
- Put lighter ingredients (things that are breakable, smash-able, or that might absorb the dressing) lightly on top of the hearty ingredient layer (e.g. nuts, seeds, shredded cooked meat, hard-boiled egg, tofu, grains such as quinoa, berries, other fruit, broccoli, mushrooms, peas, cucumber, chopped onions, herbs)
- Put the greens on top (e.g. spinach, chard, field greens, lettuce, baby kale, arugula)

Refrigerate till you are ready to eat. To serve, put into bowl and lightly toss. If you use a big enough jar, you can stir the ingredients gently (or shake gently) in the jar, and eat it in the jar. Be careful though because this can get messy!

For more Mason jar recipes, including deconstructed sushi in a jar, yogurt berry parfaits in a jar, skinny burritos in a jar and more, check out these sites:

- Spark people [<http://recipes.sparkpeople.com/great-recipes.asp?food=mason+jar+salad>]]

CAMPUS WELLBEING SERVICES

humanresources.illinois.edu/campus-wellbeing-services

- Women's Health magazine

[[<http://www.womenshealthmag.com/nutrition/mason-jar-recipes>]]

Want to learn more about eating a healthy lunch? Schedule Campus Wellbeing Services "The New Power Lunch" session for your department. Contact Campus Wellbeing Services at wellbeing@illinois.edu or call (217) 265-9355.