



How to Build a Better Vegan Sandwich

By Mary Margaret Chappell
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Turn the ultimate convenience food into the ultimate healthy meal with these flavor-boosting sandwich ingredient ideas.

Choose whole grain bread. High in fiber and nutrients, whole grain bread can lend incredible flavor and texture to even the simplest sandwiches. To be sure you're getting the most whole grain goodness for your buck, look for the [Whole Grains Council stamp](#) on bread packaging or check the first item on the ingredient list: It should be a grain flour with "whole" in the name. (Terms like "multigrain," "natural," and "cracked wheat" can be misleading because they don't actually indicate high whole grain content.) If you love white bread for your sandwiches, switch to loaves made with white whole wheat flour. White whole wheat is a whole grain milled from a wheat variety that has a pale "white" coating and a milder flavor and softer texture than traditional (red) wheat. Look for loaves that have short ingredient lists. See "[Reading Food Packages and Nutrition Labels](#)" for more shopping tips.

Hold the mayo. With so many spread options available, why stick with the one (mayonnaise) that, even if vegan, is mostly oil? Switch it out for tasty alternatives including mustard, nut and seed butters, mashed avocado, [hummus](#), and other [blended bean](#) spreads. These all add the moist creaminess a sandwich needs while helping hold ingredients inside the bread. Or you can make your own mayonnaise-like spread by blending $\frac{3}{4}$ cup silken tofu with 1 teaspoon vinegar or lemon juice and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon Dijon mustard.

Look to leftovers for creative fillings. Anything in the fridge is fair game to put between two slices of bread. A quick mash with a fork can turn last night's beans into a luscious sandwich filling. Cooked quinoa can be rolled into our [Quick Hummus and Quinoa Wrap](#), and leftover diced potato can be used to make [Devised Potato Sandwiches](#). And don't forget: Burgers are sandwiches, too. Many veggie burgers are just as delicious hot as they are cold and make great next-day lunches.

Vary your veggies. Spinach, sprouts, baby kale, and salad green mixes are tasty leafy alternatives to basic lettuce. Grated vegetables, such as the carrots and beets

used in our [Navy Bean Hummus and Mixed Vegetable Pita Pockets](#), add bright color and juicy sweetness. Sliced cucumbers, zucchini, and bell peppers can stand in for tomatoes when the latter aren't in season. And [roasted vegetables](#) are practically a category all their own with their dense, moist, chewy texture and smoky flavor.

Sprinkle on extra seasoning. A drizzle of vinegar or citrus juice, a shake of dried herbs or spices, and a dash of [nutritional yeast](#) are just a few ways to boost sandwich flavor in seconds. Try a little vinegar and dried oregano on an Italian-style veggie sub, some chili powder and lime juice on any sandwich with avocado, or a sprinkling of nutritional yeast inside a veggie-filled wrap or pita pocket.