

Getting Started

**Quick and Easy Recipes
for baby and all the family**



Meal ideas to get
your baby started
on solid food

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Weaning is about introducing food to your baby. Most babies are ready for solid food at around 6 months. When starting on solids, mash well or give soft, finger foods e.g. soft cooked vegetables. As a baby gets used to eating, the texture can be lumpier. Good eating habits will help them grow and develop throughout their childhood.

ALLERGIES

If you have any concerns that your baby may have a food allergy then ask your health visitor for advice.

Introducing your baby to solid food



Around 6 months

Look out for the signs that your baby is ready to start solids

- Able to stay in a sitting position and hold head steady
- Good hand to mouth coordination
- Able to chew and swallow food



6 - 7 months

Aim to have a small amount at one mealtime each day either mashed or finger food. Gradually introduce a variety of different foods - textures, flavours and colours.



8 - 10 months

Including your baby at mealtimes will develop social skills and encourage good habits from an early age. Gradually introduce more meals. Little by little, encourage a wider range of lumpier foods and combinations of foods - go at baby's own pace.



10 - 12 months

By this stage your baby will be having mini meals with a range of different foods. As the amount of food increases your baby will need less milk but it is important to continue with breast feeding or around 500ml formula until 12 months.

Food safety and your baby



Babies are more vulnerable to illness from harmful bacteria which can develop in foods.

To keep germs at bay it is important to:

- wash your hands before preparing food
- store foods safely
- freeze, defrost and reheat food thoroughly
- wash feeding bowls and spoons in hot soapy water

When preparing food in advance, keep food in a clean covered container in the fridge for no more than 48 hours (2 days) and reheat thoroughly if serving hot.

To re-heat food:

- put food in a microwavable bowl and heat for one minute at a time. Repeat this until you can see steam. Stir foods well in between heating and if not hot enough, continue to heat until hot all the way through.
- cool the food and check the temperature on the inside of your wrist before feeding your baby.



Top Tip!

Freezing extra portions of food can be useful. Always defrost food before reheating.

What do you need to get started?



This is all you need to introduce your baby to solids.



This is all the equipment you will need to make the following recipes in the book.

Finger foods for your baby

Giving your baby finger foods will help to develop biting, chewing and promote self feeding and will introduce your baby to different flavours and textures.

Don't add salt or sugar to any of these foods for baby.

- start with soft foods for example: well cooked vegetables or mashed banana
- always remove pips and stones and to begin with peel any skins
- cut them into a sticks or cubes big enough for your baby to hold
- never leave your baby by themselves with food, stay with them to prevent choking



Vegetables

Wash, peel and steam or cook in a little water until soft to make them easier for your baby to manage. As your baby grows the vegetables don't have to be as soft. Try carrots, parsnips, turnip, butternut squash, peppers, cauliflower and broccoli.

Always cut grapes and cherry tomatoes in half lengthways to prevent choking for all young children.

Fruit

Start with soft easy to chew fruit - such as banana, melon, mango, pears, and peaches. Use fresh or tinned. Move onto firmer fruits as baby becomes better at chewing and holding food.



Pasta, rice, potato and cereals

- plain cooked pasta (white and wholegrain), try different shapes and kinds
- cooled boiled baby potatoes with skins cut into quarters.
- cooled clumps of boiled rice (no added salt). Roll into small balls to make easy to handle
- some breakfast cereals for example: rice crispies, porridge or wheat biscuits



Bread, savoury biscuits and crackers

- different types of bread - white and wholemeal, sliced or crusty
- tortilla wraps, naan bread, soda bread
- pitta bread or bagels
- plain crackers for example: water biscuits, cream crackers
- rice cakes
- oat cakes
- bread sticks



Meat, fish, cheese and egg

- cooked chicken and fish - remove all skin and check for bones and cut into small slices or chunks
- cut cheddar cheese into thin strips
- cut hard boiled eggs into quarters



Carrot and sweet potato mash

Getting Started
first tastes
for baby

Food you need:

2-3 medium carrots
1 large sweet potato
2 mugs water

Equipment:

medium pot with lid
peeler, sharp knife
chopping board
potato masher or fork
mug and small bowl



1



Wash and peel carrots and cut both ends off.

2



Cut carrots into chunks or slices then place into the pot. Wash and peel sweet potato and cut into chunks or slices.

3



Put into pot with carrots and add 2 mugs of water. Place on a high heat and bring to the boil.

4



Put on a lid and reduce heat. Cook for around 15 minutes until potato and carrot are soft (use a small fork or knife to test). When cooked, take pot off the heat and drain.

5

Take out enough cooked vegetables for your baby and put in a clean bowl. Mash well for baby's first tastes.



Top Tip!

Keep the rest of the carrot and potato to make soup.

Apple and pear mash

Getting Started
first tastes
for baby

Food you need:

1 apple
1 pear
1 dessertspoon of water

Equipment:

pot, bowl, sharp knife
chopping board
dessertspoon
peeler, fork



1



Wash and peel apple and pear.

2



Cut apple and pear into quarters and remove core and pips. Chop both into small pieces.

3



Put into pot with the water. Boil until soft adding a little extra water if needed.

4



Use a fork to test. If fork goes through apple and pear easily then they are cooked. Mash well for baby's first taste.

Top Tip!

Serve on its own or have with wheat biscuit and natural or plain yogurt. Try with homemade custard or rice pudding.



Cheesy broccoli and potato

Food you need:

- 1 large potato (peeled & diced)
- 3 - 4 broccoli florets (fresh or frozen)
- 3 dessertspoons of cream cheese

Equipment:

- 2 small pots
- potato masher or fork
- bowl, colander, peeler
- dessertspoon
- sharp knife



1



Cook the potato and broccoli in boiling water between 10-15 minutes or until soft.

2



Drain potatoes and broccoli. Mash together in a bowl to make a soft mixture with some lumps.

3



Mix in the cream cheese and serve on its own or try with chicken or fish.

Top Tip!

Try freezing extra portions in an ice cube tray or small storage pot.



Potato, avocado and pea mash

Food you need:

- 1 large potato (peeled & diced)
- 1 avocado (stoned & peeled)
- 3 dessertspoons of frozen peas
- 2 dessertspoons of whole milk

Equipment:

- 2 small pots
- 2 small bowls
- colander
- masher or fork
- dessertspoon
- sharp knife, peeler



1



Cook potatoes for 15 minutes or until soft. Cook peas in boiling water for 5 minutes or alternatively cook in a microwave for 2-3 minutes.

2



Peel avocado and remove stone.

3



Drain peas. Mash together in a bowl with avocado to make a soft mixture with some lumps.

4



Drain potato and mash with milk to soft lumps.



Top Tip!

Add baby's usual milk or whole milk to get the right consistency for your baby.



Potato and leek soup

Food you need:

2 leeks
2 medium potatoes
1 carrot
6 mugs of water
1 stock cube (family only)

Equipment:

large pot
peeler, grater
sharp knife
potato masher
chopping board
colander
mug and small bowl
stirring spoon



1



Chop leeks into small pieces and rinse in a colander under a cold running tap. Place into pot.

2



Wash potatoes and cut into cubes, then add to the pot.

3



Wash, peel, grate or chop carrot and add to the pot.

4



Add 6 mugs of water to the pot. Put pot on high heat and bring to the boil. Reduce heat and simmer (bubble gently) for 15 minutes until potato and carrot are soft.

5



Put enough soup for your baby into a clean bowl. The soup can be left chunky or mashed and served with bread.

For the rest of the family, put back onto the heat. Add a stock cube to remaining soup and cook gently for 5 minutes. Serve with bread or a filled sandwich or roll.



Top Tip!

To check if vegetables are cooked try prodding them with a fork or small knife to see if they are soft.



Quick Minestrone soup

Food you need:

2 mugs of frozen mixed vegetables
3 dessertspoons tomato puree
1 teaspoon of garlic puree/powder
4 mugs of water
1 tin chopped tomatoes
1 tin drained kidney beans
½ mug of spaghetti or other pasta shapes
1 stock cube (family only)

Equipment:

large pot
tin opener
dessertspoon
sieve/bowl
potato masher
sharp knife
chopping board
teaspoon and mug



1

Put the vegetables, tinned tomato, puree and garlic into a pot with the water and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer (bubble gently) for 10 minutes.

2



Break the spaghetti into short lengths.

3



Pour the kidney beans into a sieve and rinse under a cold running tap. Add spaghetti and kidney beans into the soup and cook gently for 15 minutes or until spaghetti is soft.

4



Remove enough soup for baby and mash. **For the rest of the family** add stock cube to remaining soup, cook gently for 5 minutes to dissolve stock cube.



Soup ideas

Basic soup principles

How much do you need: as a rough guide

- 1 part chopped onion
- 3 parts chopped vegetables of your choice
- 4 parts water (remember add 1 stock cube (family only))

What to do:

- Gently cook onion in a little oil over a low heat for a few minutes
- Add peeled and chopped vegetables, cook for a few minutes and then cover with boiling water
- Try adding black pepper, dried or fresh herbs such as parsley



Top Tip!

Soup is not only quick and easy to make; it is also cheap and nutritious. Batch cook and freeze it for later.

1 part = a mug

Other soup ideas

Lentil soup

What you need:

3 dessertspoons red lentils

500ml or 1 pint of water / 1 stock cube (family only)

Onion chopped

Carrots chopped or grated

Leek chopped



Chicken casserole

Food you need:

2 –3 chicken breasts or 4 boneless
chicken thighs
1 medium onion
1 carrot
2 medium potatoes
2 mugs of water
1 dessertspoon vegetable oil
1 stock cube (family only)

Equipment:

chopping board
large pot
stirring spoon
sharp knife
dessertspoon
mug
peeler



1



Wash, peel and chop carrot and potato into small cubes. Peel and chop onion into small pieces.

2



Remove any skin from the chicken and cut into small cubes.

3



Put oil into pot and place on high heat. When hot, add chicken and onion stirring all the time until the chicken is no longer pink on outside.

4



Add vegetables and potatoes and 2 mugs of water and stir well.

5



Bring to boil and turn down heat until simmering (bubble gently), stirring 2 or 3 times during cooking to stop the casserole sticking. Check if there's enough water and add more if needed.

6



For the rest of the family put back on to the heat and add a chicken stock cube and stir until dissolved. Serve with vegetables and/or bread.

Vegetarian Option

Replace chicken with half a mug of lentils or tin of chickpeas.



Top Tip!

After handling raw meat, always clean your board, knife and hands in hot soapy water. Ideally use different chopping boards for raw food.

For your baby remove a portion of chicken casserole and chop or mash to the texture that suits them.



Mince and potatoes

Food you need:

400 - 500g beef mince
1 medium onion
1 or 2 carrots
1 - 2 mugs of water
1 beef stock cube or gravy
powder (family only)
4 - 6 medium potatoes
2-3 dessertspoons whole milk

Equipment:

peeler
sharp knife
chopping board
2 large pots with lid
stirring spoon
potato masher
dessertspoon
mug and teaspoon



1



Peel and chop the onion.
Wash, peel and chop the
carrot.

2



Put beef mince into a pot.
Turn heat on high.

3



Stir all the time until beef
turns brown.

4



Add the chopped onion and
carrot to mince and stir for a
couple of minutes. Reduce
heat.

5



Add water to just cover the mince and vegetables. Simmer for 20 minutes until the carrot is soft. Once cooked, remove a portion for baby.

6



Peel, wash and cut potatoes into even sized pieces and cook in boiling water for 15 minutes or until soft.

7



For the rest of the family, add the stock cube or gravy powder. For a thicker gravy, mix a teaspoon of cornflour with cold water and add to mince, stirring all the time.

8



Drain potatoes and add the milk, mash together. Serve with a green vegetable such as peas, broccoli or cabbage.

Top Tip!

Other root vegetables can be added, for example turnip, parsnip, butternut squash. Frozen mixed veg is a good alternative to fresh vegetables. Use different kinds of minced meat e.g. pork, lamb, turkey or chicken.



Simple tomato and vegetable sauce

Food you need:

1 tin of chopped tomatoes
1 large onion
1 pepper (any colour)
1 courgette
2-3 florets broccoli (fresh or frozen)
1 carrot (grated)
1 clove garlic (or teaspoon pureé)
2 dessertspoons tomato puree
1 teaspoon mixed herbs
1 dessertspoon vegetable oil

Equipment:

chopping board
medium pot
stirring spoon
hand blender
dessertspoon
grater, peeler
teaspoon,
masher
tin opener



1



Peel and chop onion into small pieces.
Wash, peel, chop or grate carrot.

2



Wash courgette, peppers and broccoli.
Remove seeds from pepper. Chop
courgette, pepper and broccoli into
small pieces. Peel and crush garlic.

3



Cook onion in a little oil for a few
minutes until soft. Add garlic, tomato
puree and mixed herbs. Stir well.

4



Add chopped tomatoes.
Half fill tomato tin with cold water and
add to mixture.

5



Reduce heat and cook gently for 20 minutes stirring occasionally. Once it is cooked, mash or blend.

This sauce can be kept in a covered container in the fridge for up to 2 days or can be frozen.

Other family food ideas

The simple tomato and vegetable sauce can be made by using a variety of vegetables, fresh or frozen e.g. peas, sweetcorn, mushrooms, cauliflower.

The sauce can be used on its own or as an ideal base for lots of family meals. Add to mince for Bolognese or use with fish, chicken or pasta.



Salmon and potato pie

Food you need:

100g skinless salmon fillet
(or haddock)
2 medium potatoes (use frozen
mash as an alternative)
6 dessertspoons whole milk
2 dessertspoons of peas

Equipment:

small frying pan
2 small pots
fish slice
small bowl
fork, peeler
dessertspoon



1



Place fish in pan, cover with some of the milk. Cook until the fish flakes easily with a fork. Keep some of the milk to add to the potatoes.

2



Wash, peel and chop potatoes into small chunks. Cook in boiling water for 15 minutes or until soft.

3

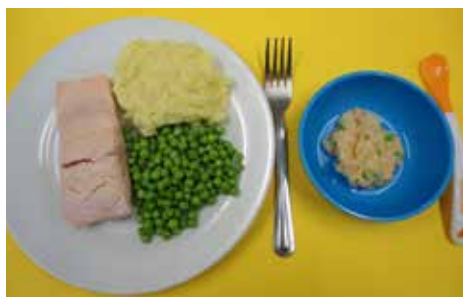


Cook peas in boiling water for 5 minutes or alternatively cook in a microwave for 2-3 minutes.

4



Drain and mash potatoes with the milk. Remove fish from the pan and mix together in a bowl with the potatoes and peas.



Fish facts

You can use the salmon and potato pie mixture to make fish cakes. Just add an egg. Make the mixture into 9 small cakes and fry in a non stick pan until golden on each side.

- Serve warm or cold
- Makes a great finger food
- Frozen fish with no breadcrumbs is as healthy as fresh fish
- Tinned tuna or sardines are quick, easy and nutritious
- Try tinned fish in spring water or oil as brine is salty

Oily fish like salmon, sardines, mackerel are great for brain development and healthy hearts.



Creamy lentil and vegetable curry

Food you need:

1 dessertspoon of vegetable oil
1 small onion (peeled and finely chopped)
1 small carrot (grated or finely chopped)
8 dessert spoons of split red lentils
½ teaspoon of mild curry powder
1 mug of water
1 small carton of full fat natural yogurt

Equipment:

small pot
mug
sharp knife
grater
dessertspoon
teaspoon



1



Cook onion in a little oil for a few minutes until soft.

2



Stir in carrot, lentils and curry powder.

3



Add water, stir and bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 15 minutes.

4



When the lentils are soft, remove from heat and stir in natural yogurt.



Filled omelette

Food you need:

4 eggs
1 dessertspoon of vegetable oil
Selection of chopped vegetables
(peppers, onions)
A little grated cheese (optional)

Equipment:

small frying pan
fish slice
small bowl
fork, chopping board
sharp knife
dessertspoon



1



Break eggs into a bowl, whisk with a fork. Heat oil in a small frying pan and add chopped vegetables and cook for 2 minutes.

2



Add egg mix to the frying pan and cook for one minute. Add optional grated cheese.

3



Cook until base is slightly brown, flip one half over the other to make a "D" shape.

4



Cook for 30 seconds then flip and cook other side. Lift out onto a plate cut a piece of the omelette into fingers for your baby. Serve with toast or potato wedges and a mixed salad.



Eggy bread

Food you need:

Slices of bread (white or wholemeal)
3 medium eggs
3 dessertspoons whole milk
1 dessertspoon vegetable oil

Equipment:

small frying pan
fish slice
large shallow bowl
fork
dessertspoon



1



Crack the eggs into a large shallow bowl, add milk and whisk with a fork.

2



Heat oil in a frying pan on a medium heat. Dip the bread into the egg mix making sure both sides are coated.

3



Put into frying pan, when brown turn over and cook other side.



Quick cheese sauce

Food you need:

1 pint of whole milk
1½ dessertspoons of cornflour
Piece of mature grated cheese
(about the size of a pack of cards)

Equipment:

medium pot
small bowl
dessertspoon
grater
whisk or wooden spoon
cup



1



Heat milk in pot until bubbling - put cornflour into cup and add a little water to make a paste.

2



Add cornflour paste to the milk, stirring to keep smooth and until thickened.

3



Add grated cheese to sauce and melt, stir all the time to stop the sauce sticking to the pot.



Ideas for using cheese sauce



Try adding to cooked pasta to make macaroni.



Try adding to cooked vegetables to make veggie bake - see page 29.



Try adding to fish to make an alternative to fish pie.

Top Tip!

Breast feeding is best for babies. You can mix babies usual milk to food, or use whole cows milk from six months. Remember cows milk should not be given as a drink until baby is one year.

Veggie bake

Food you need:

1 pint of cheese sauce
1 large spoon grated mature cheddar
1 large bag frozen vegetables
or cook a variety of fresh vegetables

Equipment:

pot
sieve/colander
stirring spoon
mug
oven proof dish
grater



1



Cook mixed vegetables in a pot of boiling water until soft. Alternatively cook in microwave for 7 to 10 minutes.

2



Add cheese sauce (see page 27) and mix together to cover the vegetables. Tinned or fresh cooked fish could also be added.

3



Top with grated cheese and put under the grill to brown or if prepared in advance put in oven to bake about 20 minutes till bubbling and golden brown.



Top Tip!

Great idea for using leftover vegetables.



Sandwich fillings



Banana - peel and mash



Cheese and carrot - grate



Tuna mayonnaise - small tin of tuna, mix with one teaspoon of mayonnaise



Egg mayonnaise - one hardboiled egg, mix with one teaspoon of mayonnaise



Top Tip!

Try mixing natural or plain yogurt with mayonnaise.

Mackerel pate

Food you need:

Food you need:

1 cooked mackerel fillet

2 dessertspoons soft cream
cheese

Squeeze of lemon juice
(optional)

Equipment:

bowl

handblender or fork

sharp knife

dessertspoon



How to make mackerel pate

Cut the mackerel fillet into two lengthways. Pull the skin off the mackerel fillet (check for any bones)

Mash mackerel and cheese together until smooth either with a fork or hand blender. Add lemon juice (optional).

Put mackerel into a large dish to share or smaller individual dishes and use as a dip. Or use as a sandwich filling.

Serving Suggestions

- sticks of carrot, cucumber or peppers
- slice of toast, oatcakes, rice cakes or bread sticks



Snack ideas

- Toast and spread or peanut butter
- Rice cakes and grapes. Remember to cut grapes in half lengthways
- Pitta bread, carrot and cucumber sticks with a dip. Try natural yoghurt or houmous
- Pancake and fruit
- Bagel and soft cheese or banana
- Toasted fruit teacake with spread
- Plain yoghurt with tinned fruit
- Crackers and spread with sliced tomatoes



Light meal ideas

- Beans on toast
- Scrambled egg on toast
- Homemade soup with bread
- Pasta shapes with cherry tomatoes. Remember to cut tomatoes in half lengthways
- Homemade pizza made with pitta bread or English muffin. Spread base with tomato puree, add filling of choice and a little grated cheese



Top tips!

Best drink for me is water in addition to my normal milk feed.

If I don't like it the first time keep trying because it's new to me and it might take several times to like it.

I like sitting at the table and eating the same as you but leave out the sugar and salt.

I am ready to try lots of different flavours and textures.

I only have a tiny tummy so keep portions small.

Gravy and stock are too salty for me.



Ask your health visitor for information on vitamin D supplements for babies.

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