



PREPARING BABY FOOD

Equipment Needed

A blender or food processor works best for making early foods smooth. As your baby moves on to more textured foods, a fork or food grinder is often all that is needed. Inexpensive baby food grinders are available in the baby departments of discount stores and on the internet. Make sure all equipment and work surfaces are clean before you start.

Fruits

For soft ripe fruits such as bananas, peaches, pears and avocados, simply remove any seeds and peels; then purée, grind or mash.

For other fresh or frozen fruits:

- Wash, peel and cut into small pieces.
- Add 1 cup fruit to $\frac{1}{4}$ cup boiling water in pan or microwave-safe container.
- Cover, reduce heat and cook slowly until tender.
- Next, purée, mash or grind the cooled fruit, adding water, breast milk or formula for desired consistency.

Peeled and chopped canned fruits packed in fruit juice or water can be prepared without additional cooking.

Vegetables

Wash, peel and slice fresh vegetables or frozen vegetables without added seasonings. Boil or microwave vegetables in covered container with ½ to 1 inch of water until they are tender.

Purée, grind or mash with some of the cooking water.

Meats/Protein

Remove skin, bone, fat and gristle. Cut in ½-inch cubes and place in cooking pan. Add water just to cover and heat until boiling. Reduce heat and cook slowly until very tender (high heat makes meat tough).

Purée or grind, adding cooking liquid, breast milk, formula or water for desired consistency.

For cooked egg, cooked fish or cooked dry beans, purée, grind or mash finely with a fork. Add liquid for desired consistency if needed.

Once babies have tried foods and are ready to move on to more complex foods, try different combinations:

- Apples and sweet potato
- Banana and avocado
- Beef and barley
- Sweet potato and papaya
- Carrots and potato
- Butternut squash and corn
- Chicken and rice



Baby Food Recipes

Carrots and Apples

- 1 cup carrots, peeled and sliced
- 1 medium apple, peeled, cored and cut in quarters
- ¼ cup water

Combine carrots, apple and water in a baking dish or microwave-safe container.

Cover and bake for 45 minutes at 350°F or microwave for 8 minutes on high, until tender.

Purée or mash with a fork, adding cooking liquid for desired consistency.

Sweet Potato Chicken

- 1 small sweet potato
- ¼ cup cooked chicken cut into bite-size pieces
- ½ cup cooked brown rice
- ½ cup breast milk, water or prepared formula

Wash and bake sweet potato in oven 50 minutes at 425°F or microwave for 5 minutes on high heat until soft throughout.

Peel and combine with chicken, rice and liquid (breast milk, water or prepared formula).

Blend, mash or grind until as smooth as desired.

Mix & Match Meal

- 1 cup cooked, cubed or diced meat
- ½ cup cooked rice, potato, noodles or macaroni
- ¾ cup cooked, diced vegetables
- ¾ cup breast milk, water or prepared formula

Combine and blend, grind or mash until as smooth as desired. Some good combinations are:

- Beef, peas, and potatoes
- Chicken, broccoli, and rice
- Beef, squash, and macaroni



Storing Baby Food

Refrigeration

Store in tightly-covered containers and place in coldest part of the refrigerator for no more than 2 days. Meats, eggs, fish and chicken should be used within 1 day.

Freezing

Food cube method

Place puréed/mashed food into ice cube trays or paper cupcake liners.

"Plop" method

"Plop" spoonful's of puréed/mashed food onto a cookie sheet. Cover food with plastic wrap or foil and freeze. Once frozen, put food portions in labeled and dated freezer bags. Store in the freezer for up to 1 month.

Before Mealtime

Take out the food you want to serve. Thaw it in the refrigerator or in a microwave on defrost setting.

Reheating

Completely reheat refrigerated or frozen baby food to at least 165°F before feeding. Allow food to cool to lukewarm. Stir the food and test its temperature to make sure it is not too hot before serving to baby. Throw out any uneaten leftover food in the baby's dish or the serving dish.



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