

# HOME ECONOMICS

## GUIDE



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## Homemade Baby Foods

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Semi-solid food will be recommended for your baby at about four months of age. Some nutritionists and physicians advise later, at six months.

You can buy baby food at the grocery store or you can make baby food from foods you prepare for the family.



day. So, if the baby has a problem (vomiting, rash, or diarrhea) with a particular food, you will know which one it is. Some families like to keep a record of foods the baby has accepted on a list by the cupboard.

### Fruits



### Vegetables



### Meats



### Cereals



### Starting New Foods

- Use pureed or strained foods. Make sure homemade baby foods are smooth without lumps. At about nine months babies can be introduced to more food texture such as mashed, crushed, and lumpy cooked foods.
- Gradually introduce the baby to a variety of foods from each of the food groups. Start only one new food each

#### Homemade Baby Food

##### Advantages

- Usually save money.
- Easy to use family foods unseasoned.
- Can use high quality foods in season.
- Can give baby foods without added sugar, starch or salt.

##### Disadvantages

- Lead seaming used on juice cans leave higher amounts of lead in fruit juice than a baby should have. Therefore, use baby juices packaged in glass jars or fresh or frozen juices.
- Can't use when traveling.

- Start with about a teaspoon of the new food. Serve it along with something the baby likes. The baby will gradually eat more.
- You can mix the new food with milk or formula so the first foods will be easier to handle. Or you can use cooking liquid, fruit juice, plain yogurt, buttermilk, or water.
- Don't worry if the baby spits out first spoon-fed foods. He is getting used to the spoon and also learning to swallow.
- Do not use mixtures such as casseroles, pizza, or cobblers which are prepared for family consumption.
- Do not season baby foods even if they are tasteless to you. Baby food should not have added sugar, salt, fat-back, monosodium glutamate, or spicy seasonings.
- Sodium is found naturally in foods so additional salt does not need to be added. Too much salt will be hard on the baby's system. There is also concern that too much sodium (salt) early in life may be a factor in blood pressure problems later.
- Don't use fried or greasy foods.
- Also ask for Home Economics Guide 6179: **Infants—Feeding Is More Than Nutrition.**

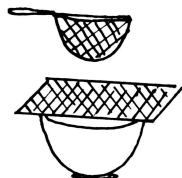


## How To Puree Food For Your Baby



### Mashing

Mash soft food with a fork. Make sure there are no lumps, skins or seeds. Ripe bananas or cooked foods without skin or seeds can easily be mashed to feed the baby. Cooked foods such as apple, white or sweet potatoes, and carrots are also easy to mash.



### Sieve or Strainer

Use a sieve or strainer or a clean, fine wire mesh. Push the cooked food through a sieve with a spoon. Repeat the process if the food is still lumpy.



### Food Mill

Cut the food into pieces before cooking. Put the cooked food through the food mill. The skin and seeds will stay in the food mill.

### Blender

Read the directions with your blender. Make sure skins and seeds are removed first. Add a small amount of formula, cooking liquid, or fruit juice for blending. Blend the food until it is smooth with no lumps.



### Baby Food Grinder

Convenient to use for a single serving.

### Food Grinder



When the baby can have ground meat, put cooked meat through a meat grinder. This will not be fine enough for young babies. Coarsely mashed, finely chopped, or ground meat will eventually replace most strained foods. The physician may advise the use of chopped foods for the baby after a certain number of months of strained food. At that time, very thin sliced or diced roast chicken, chopped beef or flaked, boneless, broiled or baked fish can also be used. Fish must be carefully selected with no bones.

## Foods You Can Fix For Babies

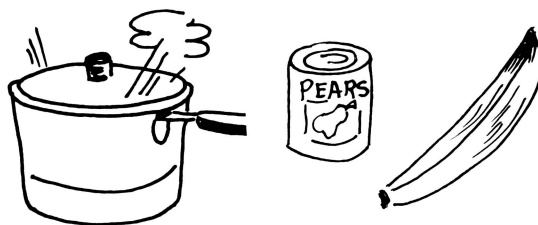


### Cereals

Select *whole grain* or *enriched* cereal. (Enriched means that iron and vitamins have been added back after refining.) Cook cereals according to the directions on the package. Dilute the cooked cereal with milk. Baby cereals are ready for the baby to eat. Coarse cereals will need to be strained.

### Fruits

**RIPE BANANA:** Ripe bananas have a brown skin with spots. Mash a little bit.

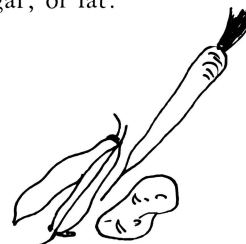
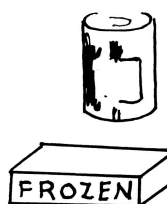


**STEWED FRUIT:** (apricots, apples, pears, peaches, prunes) Prunes are especially good for constipated babies. Wash fresh fruit. Cook in a little bit of boiling water until soft. Puree or strain so all the lumps are gone. Make sure there are no seeds or skin in the fruits.

**CANNED FRUIT:** (apricots, apples, pears, peaches, prunes, plums) Buy fruit canned in water. Or, pour off the sweet juice and rinse the fruit so the fruit won't be too sweet for the baby. Do not feed berries to the baby because of the small seeds.

### Vegetables

Do not add salt, sugar, or fat.



**COOKED VEGETABLES:** (carrots, squash, spinach, string beans, peas, asparagus, tomatoes, white or sweet potatoes, and beets) Use fresh, frozen or canned vegetables. Boil in a little bit of water until the vegetable is soft. Be careful with broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, turnips, or onions. The flavor may be too strong for some babies.

Canned vegetables such as peas usually have a fair amount of salt from processing. Some frozen vegetables have added salt.

There is controversy about beets, carrots, spinach and other greens for homemade baby food because they may be high in nitrites and nitrates.

### Egg Yolks

Egg white is usually not given to babies until the baby is a year old. The egg white may cause problems. But, the egg yolk is an excellent source of iron.

**HARD COOKED EGGS:** Put a fresh egg in boiling water. Turn off the heat. Let the egg sit in the hot water 20 minutes. Remove the cooked yolk. Mash the yolk with a fork.

**EGG CUSTARD:** Put 1 egg yolk, ¼ cup milk, and 1 teaspoon sugar in a pan. Stir over medium heat until the mixture is thick.



### Meat

Do not add salt or fat.

**BEEF, POULTRY, LAMB, PORK, OR VEAL:** Scrape raw meat with a spoon or dull knife. Heat this until no red shows. Or, blend until smooth ½ cup cooked meat with 2 to 4 tablespoons of liquid.



**PRESERVED MEATS:** Do not use preserved meats such as ham, bacon, hot dogs or luncheon meats because of the nitrates and nitrites. Some scientists are concerned about very young children having food with nitrates and nitrites which are present naturally or added as preservatives.

### Juice

Strain fresh or reconstituted frozen orange or grapefruit juices. Do not sweeten. Dilute with equal amounts of water up to 7 to 9 months of age.

Apple juice or grape juice can be used for the baby but they are not as high as citrus fruit in vitamin C. Some baby juices are fortified with vitamin C.

Do not use powdered fruit drink or canned fruit drinks. Fruit drinks contain only about 10 percent juice.

## Finger Foods For The Teething Infant

- Hard Bread, Roll, or Toast (without butter)
- Chicken Drumstick (remove gristle and sharp tendons)
- Finger Foods
- Banana Pieces or Cooked Fruit. Some choking is possible if raw fruits such as apple slices are used too early.

A baby starts chewing something partly to help cut his teeth and also to satisfy his hunger. A wafer that is firm and does not crumble seems to satisfy the teething baby best. Avoid using sweet cookies, cakes, pretzels, and pastries for the teething infant. Children will learn to eat

sweets soon enough as they grow up. These foods can contain extra calories, crowd out nutritious food, and cause tooth decay.

## Teething Cooky

Recipes for teething cookies should help meet the baby's needs. Use the recipe containing eggs if your baby can eat eggs and your doctor says okay.

These cookies keep well in a cannister or the dough may be frozen and baked when convenient.

2 tablespoons molasses	¾ cup flour
1 teaspoon vanilla	¼ cup dry milk
1 teaspoon water	¼ teaspoon salt
1 egg yolk, unbeaten	¼ teaspoon baking powder

1. Combine molasses, vanilla and water.
2. Add egg yolk and mix well.
3. Combine dry ingredients and add to egg mixture.
4. Mix ingredients together thoroughly. This mixture is very dry and crumbly, resembling yellow cornmeal.
5. Form dough into ball, working it with hands to make more compact.
6. Roll out on waxed paper about ¼-inch thick, pushing edges of dough together with hands to keep it in shape.
7. Cut into bars 1-inch by 2½-inches and place on ungreased cooky sheet.
8. Bake in moderate oven (350°F) 15 minutes, then lower oven temperature to warm (140°F), open oven door slightly and let cookies set in oven for additional 30 minutes.

Yield: 10 1-inch by 2½-inch bars.

Variation: For babies who cannot eat eggs, omit the egg yolk and add 1 tablespoon more water to recipe.

Variation: For a cooky not quite so hard, omit the water and add 2 tablespoons shortening.

## Food Safety

1. Make sure seeds and skins are removed from fruits and vegetables so they will not choke the baby.
2. Make sure the pureer, blender, grinder or whatever equipment is used (e.g. can opener, cutting boards, counter) is clean. A wire brush is a good investment to scrub hard to clean spots in screens or in the blender. Old food particles can harbor harmful bacteria that contaminate baby food and cause sickness. Thoroughly rinse equipment with very hot water.

3. When food is pureed or ground, bacteria are more likely to grow because of the increased surface area. Therefore, in addition to clean equipment and handling, storage methods need to be of the highest standards.
  - Meat and eggs pureed for the baby should be kept only one day in the refrigerator because they spoil easily. Do not let these foods stand at room temperature for any length of time.
  - Fruits and vegetables prepared for the baby can be stored in the refrigerator for about two days.
  - To store homemade baby food up to three months, pour the mixture into ice cube trays, cover with a moisture-vapor proof wrap, and transfer to freezer bags to appropriate air-tight containers. Be sure to mark on the label the date the food was frozen. For feeding, heat the homemade cube to boiling; cool and serve. One cube is about the right size for one serving.
4. Warm only the amount of baby food that will be used at a feeding. Saliva will affect the food in the dish from which the baby is eating. The natural enzymes in saliva may begin to break down starch so mixtures that are held will usually become thinner. Therefore, throw away any food served to the baby which is not completely eaten. Do not even put a tasting spoon in any baby food portion that is kept in the refrigerator.