

# ***JUICING FOR CHILDREN***





Kids are notoriously fussy eaters, so it can be difficult to get healthy food into them. Juicing for children is a great way for frustrated parents to introduce fruits and vegetables in an appealing manner, without having to deal with temper tantrums at the dinner table.

The best part is that you can sneak in healthy ingredients like spinach or kale, which they don't tend to notice. If your child needs some convincing on how good this drink tastes, here are some ideas to try!

There are lots of reasons to make juice for kids! Often they won't eat an apple because of the tough skin. Obviously, you can peel it or why not juice it and add a few carrots too. Problem solved!

How many children do you know that will eat celery? I can count them on no fingers! Why not juice celery and add a little apple too? Kids will love it! If you want to sneak in some dark leafy greens, try adding spinach or kale with pineapple for an awesome flavour combination.

There are lots of other combinations available using fruits and vegetables that kids will enjoy like oranges, blueberries, strawberries, broccoli and carrots. You might be surprised at how well they eat when their food is transformed into yummy looking drinkables.

The colours alone make them appealing. And you could even freeze the juices and make healthy ice popsicles for hot summer days.



## Introduce your child to new foods by making a juice from it

If your child is a picky eater, juicing can be an easy way to introduce foods they might not otherwise try. It is often the texture of fruits and vegetables that children don't like. This way they will experience the flavours without having to worry about the texture, which can often cause a gag reflex and make them sick. And who wants to eat something that makes you sick?

Kids don't tend to like strong flavours so try these mild juice combinations: Banana and Pineapple; Apple and Pear; Watermelon and Kiwi.

Think outside the box. How about juice in unusual combinations like Kale Strawberry Lemonade or Beet Carrot Orange Ginger Juice. Combining veggies with fruit provides more vitamins than either one alone. It also gives a healthy, satisfying sweetness so no need for that nasty refined sugar, that kids then get addicted to.

You can start with one vegetable and introduce another at a time, gradually building up their repertoire.

The best way is to start with something simple, like a cucumber-based juice. Cucumbers are very mild and calming on the stomach, which makes them perfect for kids who have sensitive digestion. Follow that up by introducing carrots, apples or oranges as well.



Just be sure you're adding in vegetables they can handle. If your child has an aversion to leafy greens (like spinach and kale), you can add these in gradually. And why not make it a learning experience as you see what colours are produced by mixing up different coloured fruits and veggies.

## **Juicing for babies**

For children under one, it is better to speak with a doctor or health professional before giving juice to babies. However, once they start weaning there is no reason why they cannot start to be introduced to yummy juices.

Juice fruits and vegetables that are high in iron and vitamin C. Babies need the most concentrated sources of these nutrients for early brain development. Spinach is quite mild in taste for a baby's palate and full of brain-boosting iron.

Avoid juice with too much sugar. So vegetable juices are much better than fruit juices. High sugar will cause tooth decay although you could dilute it by mixing it with water. Giving sweet sugary drinks to babies and toddlers also gives them a taste for it which leads to problems all through life. Another great reason to get them used to, and liking, lots of vegetable juices.



## Add vegetables or fruit to juices that they already like

Most children will eat carrots as they are naturally sweet. Add other vegetables into the mix one at a time. Examples include celery, leafy greens, beetroot and other stronger tasting vegetables. Unfortunately, the ones that taste the worst are the ones that are the best for us all, but especially children.

So, persevere because children that eat lots of fruit and vegetables are much healthier than those that eat processed carbs and sweets/candy. Offer children either half an adult's portion of fresh juice at one time or offer smaller sips throughout the day so their stomachs have more time to adjust to this change.

With what is left you can either drink it yourself or freeze it to use as a base for a smoothie another day.

Children often show more interest in eating meals they have helped to prepare. So let them choose the fruits and vegetables at the store. Show them how to peel, chop and prepare them. You may wish to just let them watch as you process the fruits and vegetables in the juicer. We don't want little hands getting shredded!!

The best thing to do with juices for children is to keep trying different things until you find something that works for both of you!