

What to Feed a Hungry Toddler...

Nutritious, Inexpensive, Creative and Easy Snack and Lunch Ideas

When, where, and how: Encourage new foods. A hungry person may try something new that may have been turned down during mealtime. New locations are also fun - a snack on the front steps or back porch. Try wearing dress-up clothes or "sharing" with a favorite doll. Remember the added appeal of different containers - odd shapes, colorful dishes, paper bags, straws, or even a (clean) toy boat. Small amounts on large plates are less imposing. Old foods in new ways are nice (frozen corn kernels, oranges cut like grapefruits). Perhaps (later) an easy-to-reach help-yourself space in the fridge or cupboard.

THE BEST SNACKS have no preservatives, additives, coloring or artificial flavorings. Crackers and breads should be whole grain. Sweeteners (even honey-safe after age 2) should be minimal!

Be careful: Select only those foods your own toddler can handle without choking. Some pediatricians recommend waiting on seeds, nuts, and popcorn until 2 or 3 years - check with yours.



- ♥ Frozen blueberries
- ♥ Canned pineapple pieces (in own juice), plain, or dipped in honey or unsweetened coconut
- ♥ Carrot or celery sticks dipped in peanut butter (100% nuts, no sugar) or cream cheese
- ♥ Dates stuffed with peanut butter, cream cheese, or natural cheese... topped with a nut or piece of fruit
- ♥ Cucumber rounds spread with goat cheese, farmer's cheese or cream cheese (covered with another round for a sandwich)
- ♥ Melted cheese on whole grain toast, or buttered toast, sprinkled with grated parmesan (a very high-protein cheese)
- ♥ Raw mushrooms
- ♥ Avocado strips (when in season)
- ♥ Dried apples, apricots, pears, or peaches
- ♥ Dates, figs, prunes (pitted, not too many!)
- ♥ Sprouts - alfalfa or other (easy to do yourself)
- ♥ Jello or jello cubs made from 100% fruit juice and gelatin (no added sugar)
- ♥ Fruit juice frozen in an ice cube tray, with a piece of fruit (a different type in each cube?)
- ♥ Fruit juice popsicles, make your own with 100% apple, orange, cranberries, or other juice - mix, experiment
- ♥ Yogurt popsicles, made with plain yogurt (and fruit juice concentrate) with vanilla and honey to taste
- ♥ Banana - pieces or whole - and frozen (on a stick?), perhaps rolled in unsweetened coconut, melted carob, granola, or honey
- ♥ Breadsticks from homemade whole wheat dough, rolled in logs, baked and frozen. Defrost and serve.
- ♥ Croutons made with whole wheat bread crusts.
- ♥ Brown rice crackers (crunchy like popcorn)
- ♥ Whole wheat matzoh (with or without bran) or egg and onion matzoh
- ♥ Rye crisp (lots of fiber)
- ♥ Whole wheat pretzels (with or without salt) or try making your own
- ♥ Oven crisped tortilla chips (corn tortillas cut into wedges and baked until crisp - a homemade chip)
- ♥ Liver strips, sauteed - perhaps dipped in whole wheat flour or wheat germ - or seasoned with soy sauce
- ♥ Slices of nitrite-free hot dogs
- ♥ Leftover chicken (try adding sesame seeds or wheat germ to whole wheat flour or bread crumbs before cooking)
- ♥ Melon balls, strips or cubes - fresh in season or frozen
- ♥ Fresh grapes - served fresh or frozen

- ♥ Citrus fruit (orange, pineapple, grapefruit), peeled, sectioned and frozen (or fresh)
- ♥ Oranges or grapefruit sliced (with skin on)
- ♥ Non-processed, natural cheese - grated, in cubes, or cut with a cookie cutter (white cheese has no artificial coloring, Swiss is low in sodium)
- ♥ Pitted olives (sliced or placed on a carrot or even a toddler's finger)
- ♥ Monukka raisins (larger and naturally sweeter)
- ♥ Fruit butter (100% fruit, no sugar) on crackers or toast, or spread inside a halved whole wheat pita
- ♥ Fresh peas, straight from the pod, or frozen peas, served frozen
- ♥ Lettuce shreds
- ♥ Cold, cooked eggplant
- ♥ Leftover sweet potato cubes or slices
- ♥ Green or red pepper strips-red are sweeter and have more vitamin C
- ♥ Frozen corn kernels
- ♥ Hard boiled eggs, deviled eggs, leftover cold scrambled egg pieces
- ♥ Grated carrot (maybe tossed with garlic powder)
- ♥ Cherry, plum, or grape tomatoes
- ♥ Raw zucchini in strips or rounds
- ♥ Drained tuna chunks
- ♥ Tuna and ricotta cheese mix, for dip or spread - with raw vegetables or whole grain crackers
- ♥ Tuna and crushed pineapple, mix or blend, serve with raw vegetable or whole grain crackers
- ♥ Tuna topped or mixed with grated cheese, on toast (broiled if there's time)
- ♥ Ricotta or cottage cheese with dates, dried apricots, and sunflower seeds (great color and texture)
- ♥ Farmer's or cottage cheese with sliced olives for a tangy flavor, with crushed pineapple for sweet
- ♥ Cottage cheese mixed with raisins, cinnamon, and vanilla on bread or toast, broiled until bubbly
- ♥ Softened cream (or other) cheese, in balls or logs - rolled in nuts (salty) or granola (sweet)
- ♥ Frozen strawberries (with no added sugar), only slightly thawed
- ♥ Vegetable juice
- ♥ Homemade "soda walk", soda or seltzer water (no added salt) mixed with 100% fruit juice (freshly squeezed or juiced only)
- ♥ Blender drink - orange juice and milk/orange juice, milk, and banana (add a little yogurt, wheat germ, vanilla, or honey)

