

GETTING STARTED

Making the decision to make your own baby food can be a challenging one, but **Cultivating Kids** is here to help! Some of the many benefits for making your own food include:

-  **Healthier:** When you make your own food you know exactly what is going into your baby's body. Additionally, the entire family eats healthier because you are focusing on fruits and vegetables (at first) with your little one. Most likely will find your own produce intake increasing!
-  **Cost efficient:** While there may be a little extra time involved, in the long run you are actually saving money by making your own food. You do not have to buy separate food for you and the baby, plus you do not need the fancy equipment to make it happen.
-  **Easy:** Using the tools here and approaching baby food making in a way that makes sense for you is the best way to keep it simple and a lasting commitment. You may find yourself making all of your infant's food or just a portion of it, whatever you decide to do make it realistic for your lifestyle.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

There are more and more products on the market specifically created for baby food making. At Cultivating Kids we try to make use of items you may already have in your kitchen. This does not mean you should avoid the specialty baby food makers, but you can do without for the time being.

-  **Pots & Pans:** You will need your basic pots and pans to soften the food before mashing it into baby food. Simply steaming or boiling the produce until you can easily poke it with a fork is the best way to get started.
-  **Fork:** Simple and easy clean up! Most of the first foods you will be using just need to be peeled and mashed. Grab a fork and get to it!
-  **Food processor: or blender:** If you have one handy you can place fresh or softened foods in here and puree. It is a personal preference when it comes to the texture of your food. The younger your child the smoother the texture should be. However, as they develop teeth and become more accustomed to solid foods you can leave food slightly lumpier.
-  **Ice cube trays:** If you are preparing food in larger batches you may want to freeze some of your goods. One way to do that is to pour your puree into ice cube trays (I prefer silicone ones allowing you to easily pop out the frozen treat). Once frozen you will then transfer them to a freezer bag.
-  **Plastic freezer bags:** To store food you can place the puree or food cubes (mentioned above) into a freezer bag and store them. Make sure to label them with the date created and the food enclosed.

