

Starting Solids with Confidence

Baby-led weaning is a way to introduce solids that supports independence at mealtime. Instead of guiding baby's hands or spoon, you let them explore and feed themselves.

6-8 Months

- Bigger shapes are safe
- Pieces should be large enough for baby to hold easily.
- Food should have some sticking out above and below baby's fist.
- Aim for about the size of two adult fingers placed together.



Food textures: firm, fibrous, soft finger foods, soft scoopable foods

9-11 Months

- Baby begins to develop the pincer grasp (picking up food with the tips of the thumb and pointer finger)
- To encourage this skill, offer smaller pieces of food such as:
 - Bite-sized pieces
 - Shredded foods
 - Very thin slices



Consider adding the following foods textures (if not already introduced): crumbly, crunchy, loose grains, lumpy

12- 17 Months

- Soft foods cut into small pieces, with a utensil offered for practice.
- Soft, larger pieces that encourage biting and tearing.
- Thinly sliced or shredded foods if more chewing is needed (like cooked meat).



18+ Months

- At this age, toddlers can handle a variety of shapes, sizes, and textures.
- Continue to modify high-risk foods (popcorn, whole grapes, cherry tomatoes, nuts) to reduce choking risk.
- Make sure your child can take small bites and chew well.
- Many toddlers begin using utensils more independently.
- Toddlers may switch between fingers and utensils

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Bigger foods are safer at first.
- If spoon feeding, preload spoon and hand to baby.
- Introduce allergens early and often.
- Explore a wide variety of food.
- Get messy!

REFERENCES:

