Stage 1 weaning:

6-7 months: getting weaning started

The first few weeks of weaning, sometimes referred to as stage one weaning, is when a baby will begin to explore solid foods for the very first time. This is when parents will introduce new flavours, smooth textures, and even soft finger foods to help their baby transition to solid foods.

Research shows that offering vegetables as first foods can improve food acceptance later on. Some examples of suitable vegetables, particularly green ones, which are ideal first foods include: broccoli, green beans, avocado, kale, courgette, cabbage, runner beans, and spinach. It is helpful to have a clear weaning policy in place which outlines your procedure for weaning and in particular whether you require parents to try new ingredients at home first before offering them in your setting.

Maintaining open, regular communication with parents is essential to track their baby's progress. Discuss their preferred approach to weaning, texture preferences, foods already introduced, the number of meals per day, and any reactions or relevant experiences at mealtimes.

For spoon-fed weaning, start with a smooth but thick puree. This texture will encourage babies to use their tongue to manoeuvre food around their mouth before swallowing. This provides the building blocks for oral motor development and babies will build on these skills as they are exposed to more challenging textures.

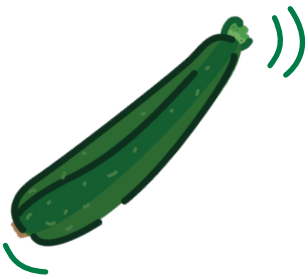
For baby-led weaning, start with finger foods from 6 months. The best finger foods are ones that are soft and easy to bite, such as cooked broccoli or cauliflower florets, courgette, ripe avocado, green beans and carrot. Even without teeth, babies can manage soft finger foods with their gums.

Smooth, thick puree

Mashed food

Well cooked or soft finger foods

Stage 1 weaning is a gradual process, starting slowly with one meal a day. The amount of food a baby accepts at this stage is not as important as exposing them to new flavours and textures. Allow babies to explore the food at their own pace and let them practice the skills needed for eating.



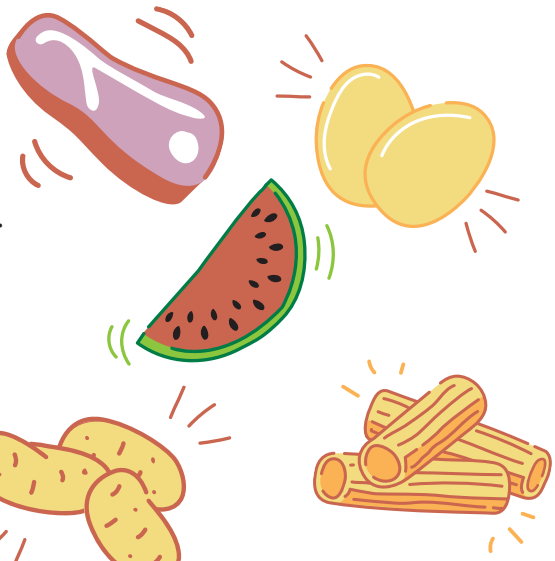
Make mealtimes relaxed and playful, with lots of smiles, eye contact, and positive body language. It's important not to push or persuade a baby to eat if they're reluctant.

Watch for signs that they've had enough, such as clamping their mouth shut, turning their head away, or becoming restless - and always respond to these signals with care.

Stage 1 weaning foods

After vegetables, begin to include foods from other food groups one at a time, such as beans, pulses, meats, fish, eggs, potatoes, rice, pasta, bread, other grains, fruits and dairy foods.

At this stage, focusing on iron-rich foods is particularly important to replenish a baby's iron stores and support their growth.



Some great options for iron-rich weaning foods include:

- Minced lamb, beef, or chicken
- Roast chicken strips (as finger foods)
- Mashed fish* (cod, salmon, haddock, hake)
- Mashed beans, lentils, or chickpeas

*check carefully for bones

How many milk feeds?

At 6 to 7 months, milk (either breastmilk or formula) should still be the primary source of nutrition and energy for the baby. Milk feeds do not significantly reduce during this stage, as most of their nutritional needs will continue to be met through milk. It's important to communicate closely with each baby's parent or carer about their current milk feeding routine. This will help ensure consistency while they are at nursery.

As babies begin to adapt to solids and gradually eat more during mealtimes, a second meal can be introduced, typically between 6 and 7 months. Every baby is different, so it's important to discuss with parents or carers how many meals they are offering at home.

E: hello@nurserykitchen.co.uk
W: nurserykitchen.co.uk T: 01245 808080