

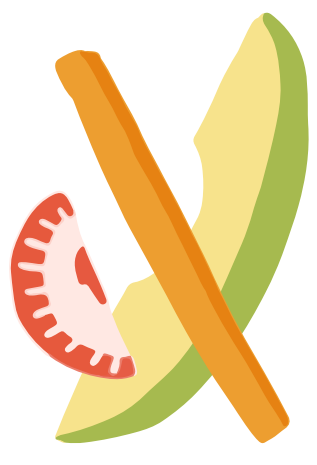
ANNABEL KARMEL

The Ultimate Guide to Finger Foods for Baby



How to introduce finger foods from the start of weaning – what to serve and how to serve it!

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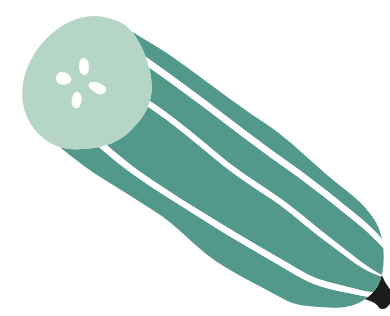


Safety guidelines

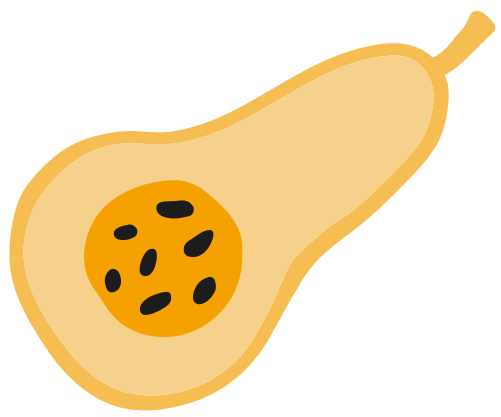
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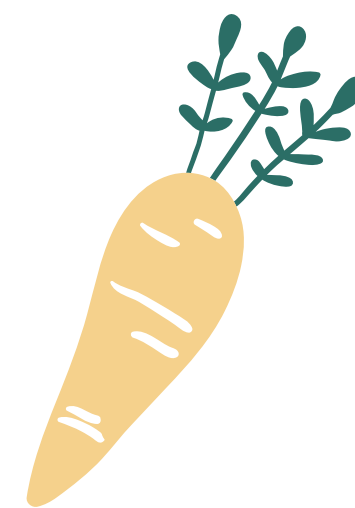
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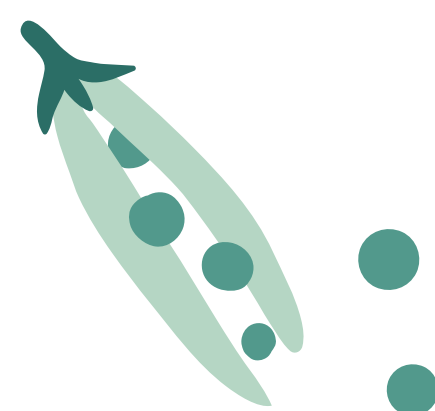
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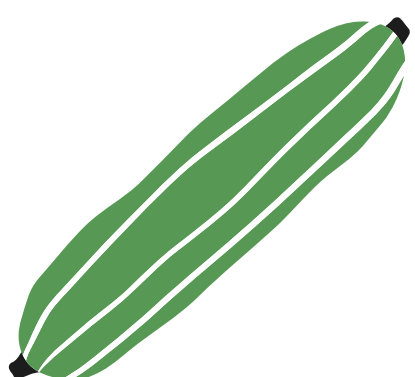
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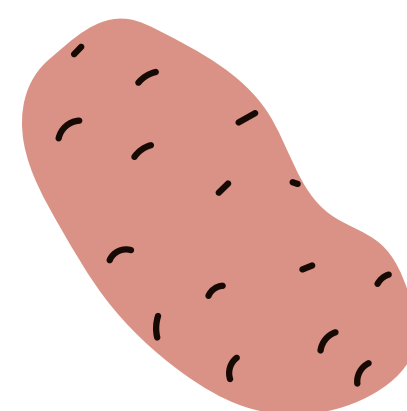
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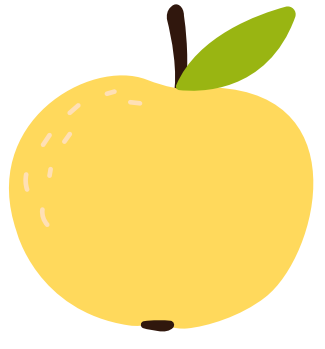


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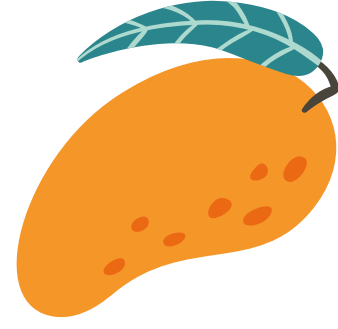


Sweet Potato

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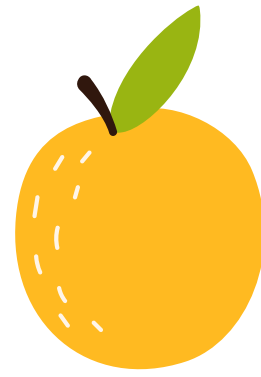
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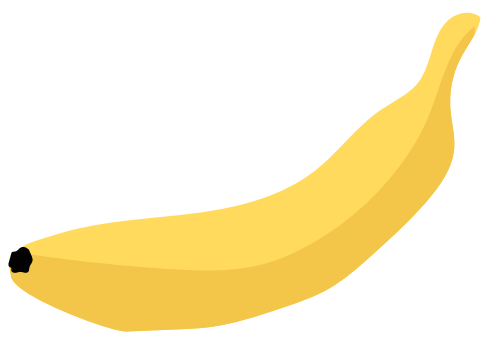
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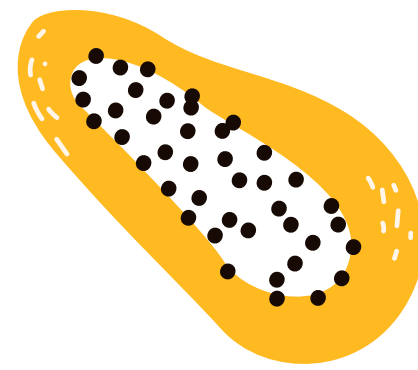
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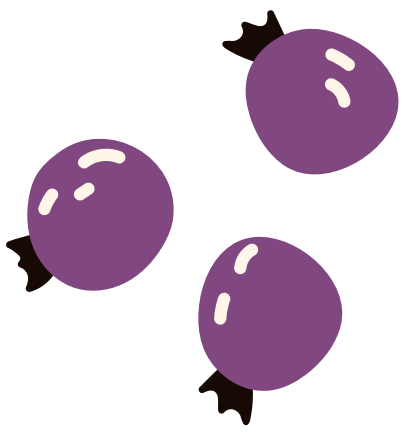
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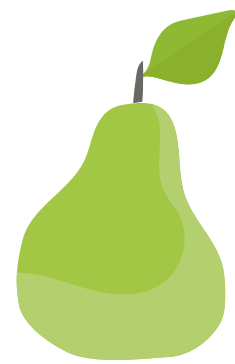
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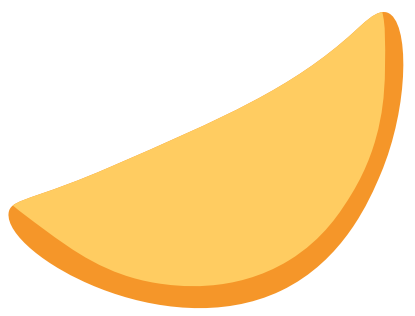
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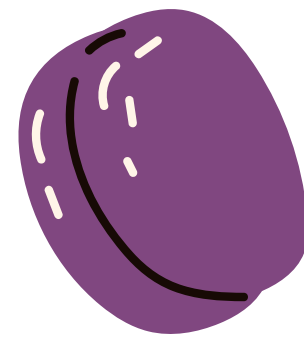
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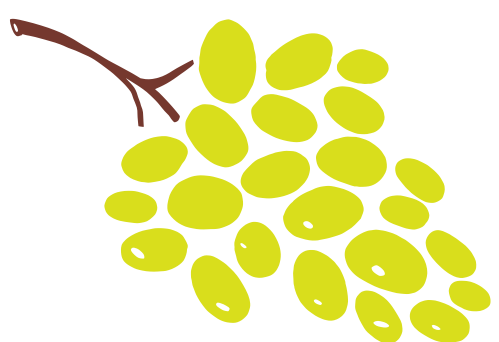
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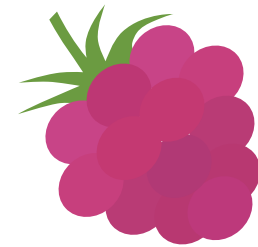
**Cantaloupe
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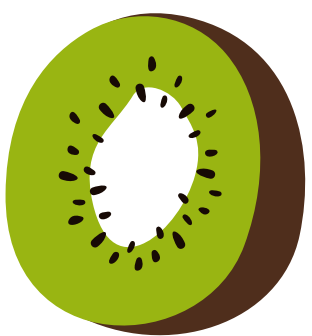
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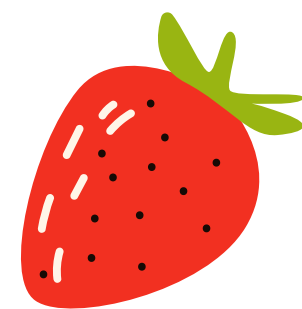
Grapes



Raspberries



Kiwi Fruit



Strawberries

Let's talk finger foods!



From around six to six and a half months, you can introduce soft finger foods into your baby's diet.

Finger foods are the ideal way to introduce your baby to different textures and handing over the reins to your baby will allow them to work out how to get food to their mouth, break pieces off and chew. And don't worry, even if your baby doesn't have teeth yet, you'll be surprised how powerful a baby's gums are!

So, what finger foods are best for baby? And how do you prepare them so that they are safe for your little food explorer? Fear not! I've pulled together this handy reference guide on how to introduce finger foods from the very start of weaning – whether it's carrot batons, broccoli florets, avocado wedges or chopped berries, I've got those first taste fruits and veggies covered!

Ready for some finger food exploration? Select whichever fruit or veggie takes your fancy and let's go!

Annabel Karmel





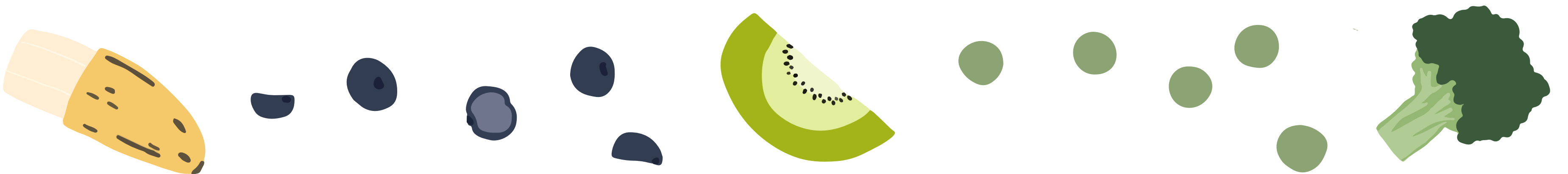
Finger foods in the first few weeks

If your baby is new to finger foods, start with single veggies, and I always recommend sweet root vegetables such as carrot and sweet potato. After only having naturally sweet breastmilk or formula until now, these are foods that your baby is likely to be interested in, so a great place to start.

However, it's important that you also introduce more bitter veggies such as broccoli and cauliflower at the beginning alongside those sweeter root veggies. If introduced early in your baby's weaning journey (by that, I mean the first week of weaning and beyond), and with repeated exposure, it's likely they'll be more receptive to these foods in the long run.

You can start with offering a new food once a day for the first few days, and then increase this to twice a day by days three and four.

As a guide, your baby should generally be eating three small portions a day by the end of week two. In finger food terms, a small portion will be anything from two to four small batons of food.



FROM THE UK'S NO.1 CHILDREN'S COOKERY AUTHOR

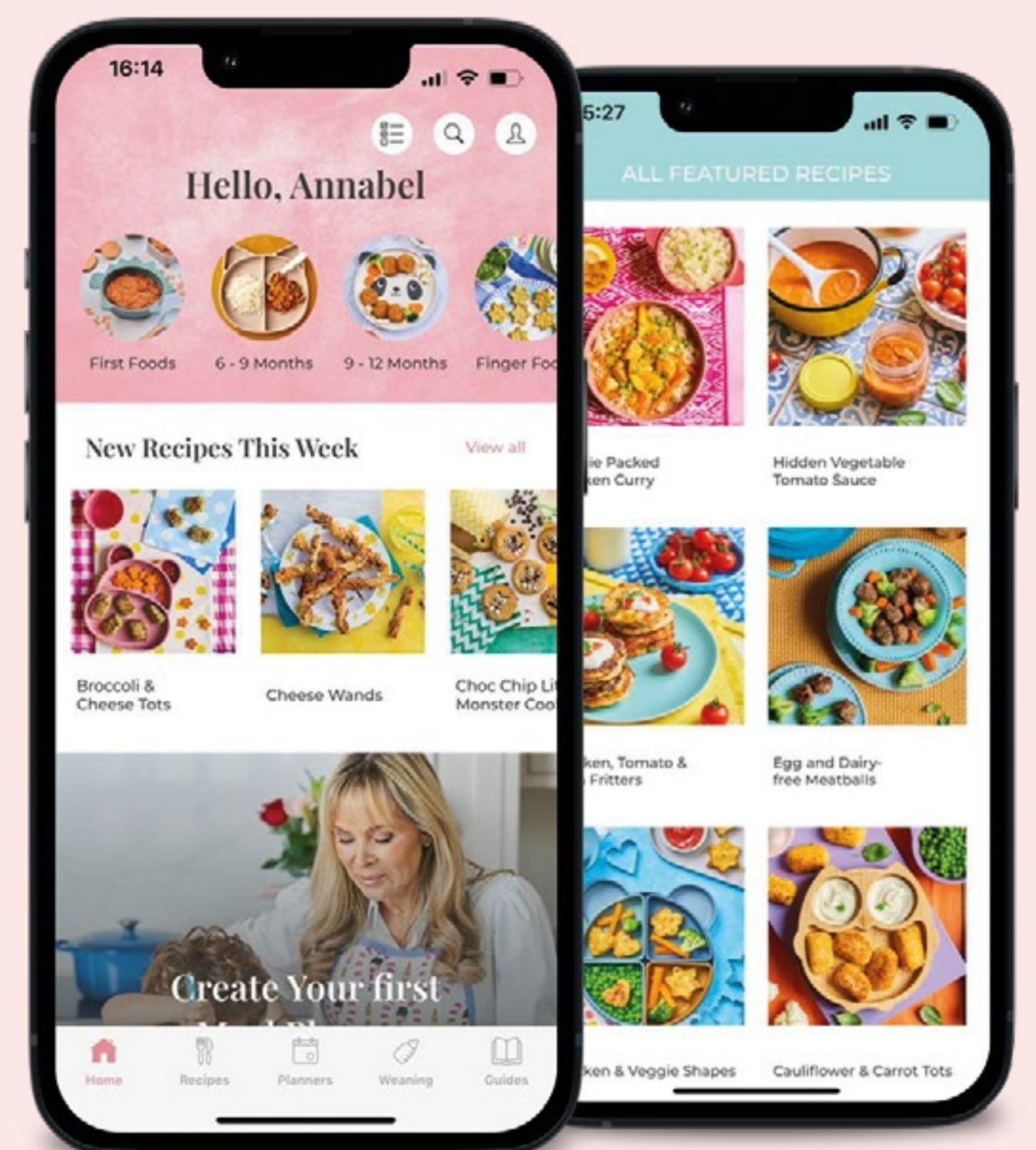


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Finger food safety guidelines



1. NEVER leave your baby alone whilst eating and always ensure they are supported in an upright position.
2. Become familiar with first aid procedures. Check out the Red Cross or NHS websites which have step-by-step training videos or there will likely be first aid courses near where you live.
3. NEVER give whole pieces of small solid foods, or raw fruit or vegetables that could easily lodge in and obstruct the throat. Foods such as grapes, large blueberries and cherry tomatoes should be safely cut up into quarters.
4. Avoid fruit with stones or remove pips and stones before offering to your baby.
5. Eating is a skill and tackling texture is another developmental milestone that your baby will have to train for whilst on their weaning journey! Which is why at the start of weaning, finger foods need to be soft - your baby should be able to squash finger foods between finger and thumb.
6. To start with, avoid finger foods that your baby could break into large chunks such as cucumber.
7. Avoid cutting foods into circular coin shapes especially if they are raw e.g. round coins of raw carrot.
8. Cutting food into batons or wedges is best for your baby. They will need to be fairly long (roughly 5 – 7cm) so that some sticks out of their fist and they are narrow enough for them to hold easily.
9. Remove the skin from most fruits and vegetables. The skin introduces a new texture which can be difficult for your baby to manage and could lead to choking.
10. Babies do have a tendency to store food in their mouth, so just have a quick check they're not storing any spare food as a snack for later before you take them out of the highchair!

Gagging & choking

Choking is a concern for most parents, so knowing the signs of choking and gagging may help you to understand the difference between them.

CHOKING

Is when your baby's airways become blocked. They will be unable to cry, cough, make any noise or breathe and they'll need immediate help.

GAGGING

Is completely normal and is actually a safety mechanism to prevent choking. This is simply your baby learning how to use their tongue to move food from the front of their mouth to the back so they can swallow it. The gag reflex in babies is triggered towards the front of the tongue (unlike adults where this is much further back). Getting the hang of this can lead to gagging. That's why soft finger foods are great from six months because your baby learns to chew and swallow when this reflex is safely close to the front of the mouth.



6 to 9 months

Steamed large florets

Broccoli

Broccoli is a true superfood for babies! Did you know that it provides a little bit of almost every nutrient you need? It contains powerful antioxidants to help build and strengthen the immune system and is a great source of vitamins and minerals such as folate, iron, potassium, vitamin K and vitamin C which aids iron absorption.

Whilst it is essential to offer green veggies at the start of weaning so that your baby gets used to slightly more bitter tastes, foods such as broccoli, cauliflower and kale can be slightly more difficult to digest as they are high in fibre. Whilst many babies are absolutely fine eating these foods from the get-go it may take a little time for some digestive systems to adjust, and that's ok.

6 to 9 months

STEAMED

To begin with make sure that broccoli florets are really nice and soft. Steam fairly large florets of broccoli for about 8 minutes or until tender. If you offer cooked florets to babies upside down, they are likely to pick them up by the stem. Top tip! Steaming broccoli (rather than boiling) retains those important nutrients as vitamin C is water soluble.

9 to 12 months

Once your baby has developed their pincer grip (picking up foods with the thumb and forefinger) you can cut the broccoli into smaller florets and eventually bite-sized pieces.

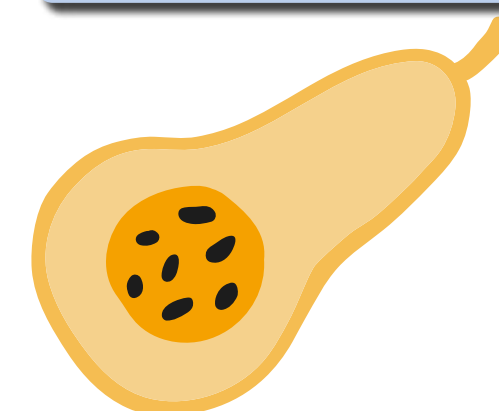
- Steamed finger foods can be kept in the fridge for 2 - 3 days.



9 to 12 months

Steamed small florets

Butternut Squash

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The sweet nutty taste of butternut squash is popular with babies and the sweetness is enhanced when roasted in the oven. It is rich in vitamins A, C and E and a good source of fibre. It's also easy for babies to digest so a great first food all round!

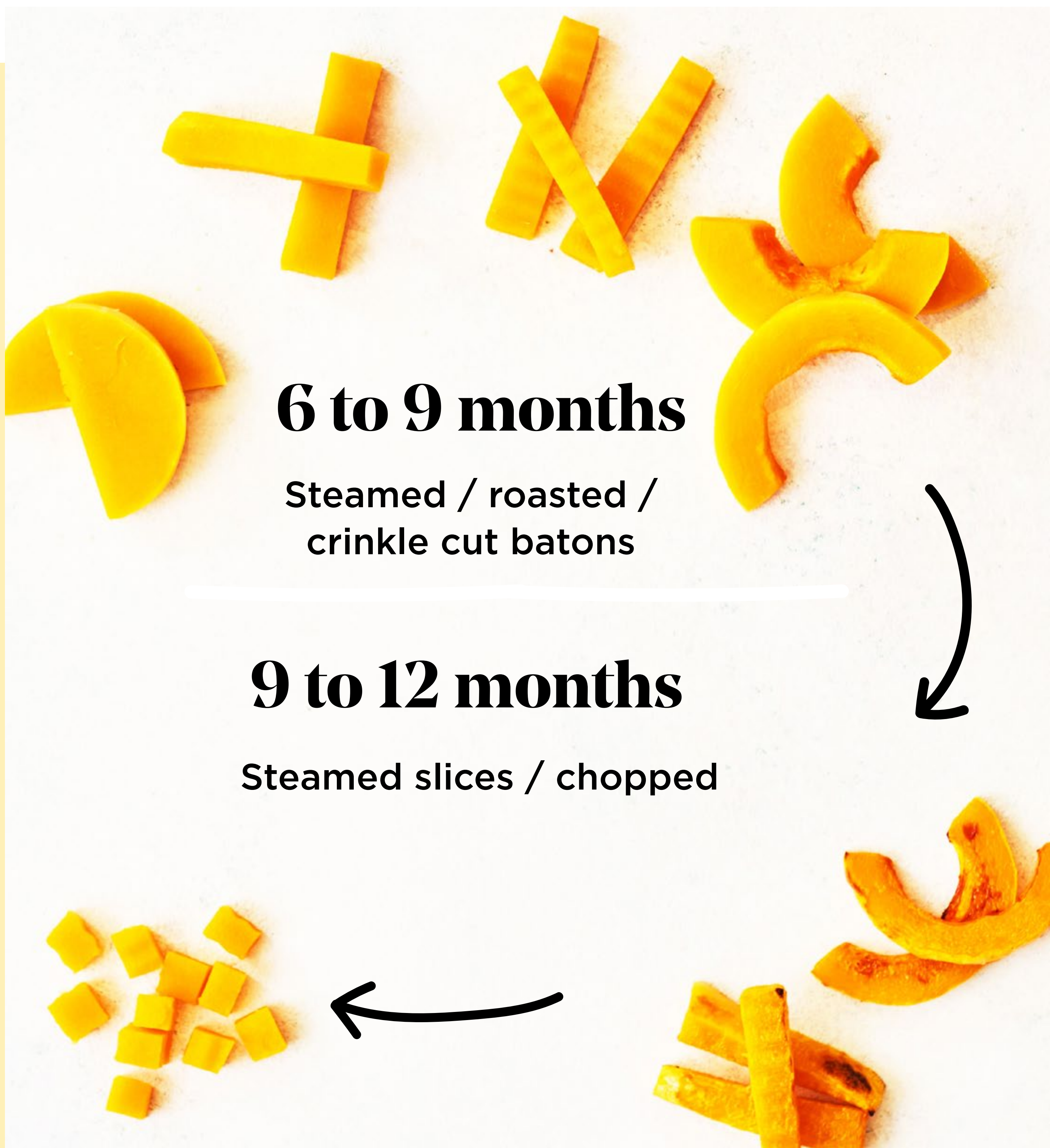
6 to 9 months

STEAM

Cut a butternut squash into crescent shapes, half moons or batons approximately 5 - 7cm in length and steam for 12 to 15 minutes. Top tip! Cut the butternut squash batons with a crinkle cutter as this makes it even easier for your baby to grab hold of.

BAKE

To roast a butternut squash, brush with a little vegetable, rapeseed or olive oil and bake in an oven preheated to 180C Fan / 200C / 400F / Gas Mark 6 for 20 to 25 minutes.



9 to 12 months

Steam slices of butternut squash (as above) and then cut into bite-sized pieces to get your baby practicing that pincer grip (picking up foods with the thumb and forefinger).

HOW TO CUT A BUTTERNUT SQUASH

1. Using a sharp knife, cut off the stem and about 1cm from the bottom of the squash.
2. Next, cut the squash in half at the point where the long 'neck' section meets the base section.

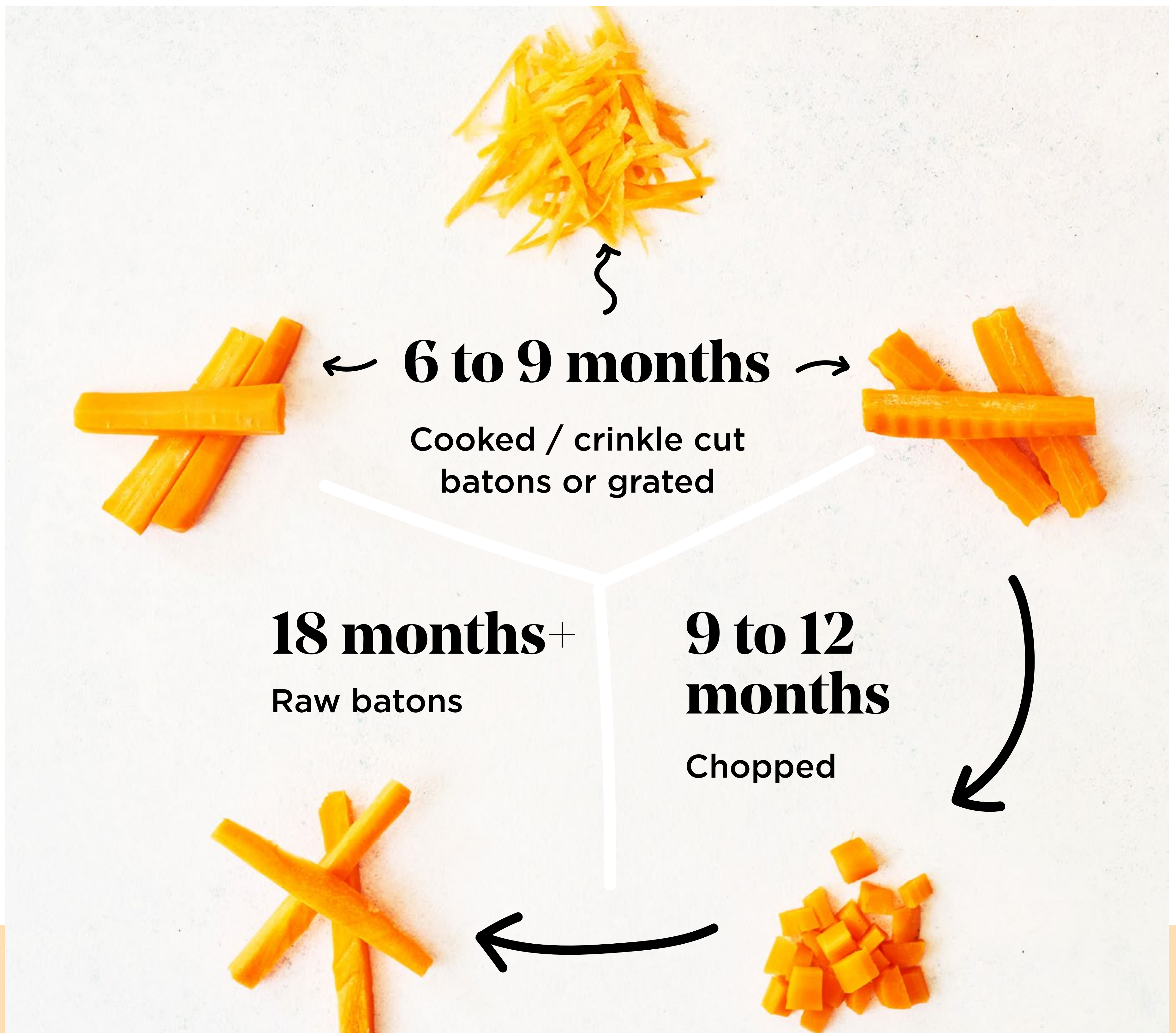
3. Use a swivel blade vegetable peeler or a sharp knife to remove the skin.
4. Once the skin has been removed cut the base section in half to expose the seeds and scrape them out along with any fibrous stringy bits using a spoon.
5. You can now cut the squash into crescent shapes, half moons, batons or cubes.

- Steamed or roasted finger foods can be kept in the fridge for 2 - 3 days.

Carrot

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Carrots provide a rich source of beta-carotene which converts to vitamin A. Vitamin A strengthens your baby's immune system (and supports the healthy development of your baby's vision and keeps skin healthy).



6 to 9 months

Peel a medium carrot and cut into batons roughly 5 – 7cm in length. You can cut these with straight edges or use a crinkle cutter to up the fun factor. Steam for 8 to 10 minutes or until tender enough to slightly squish with your fingers (but not so soft that they fall apart).

9 to 12 months

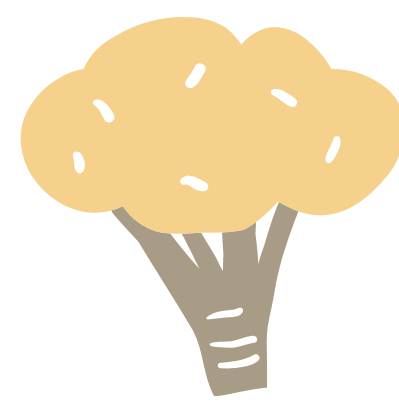
Once your baby has developed their pincer grip (picking up foods with the thumb and forefinger) you can give diced cooked carrot and also offer finely grated carrot.

18 months+

Every baby develops at their own pace and you will need to follow their lead but at around 18 months you can try offering raw carrot batons once your baby has fully developed the art of chewing.

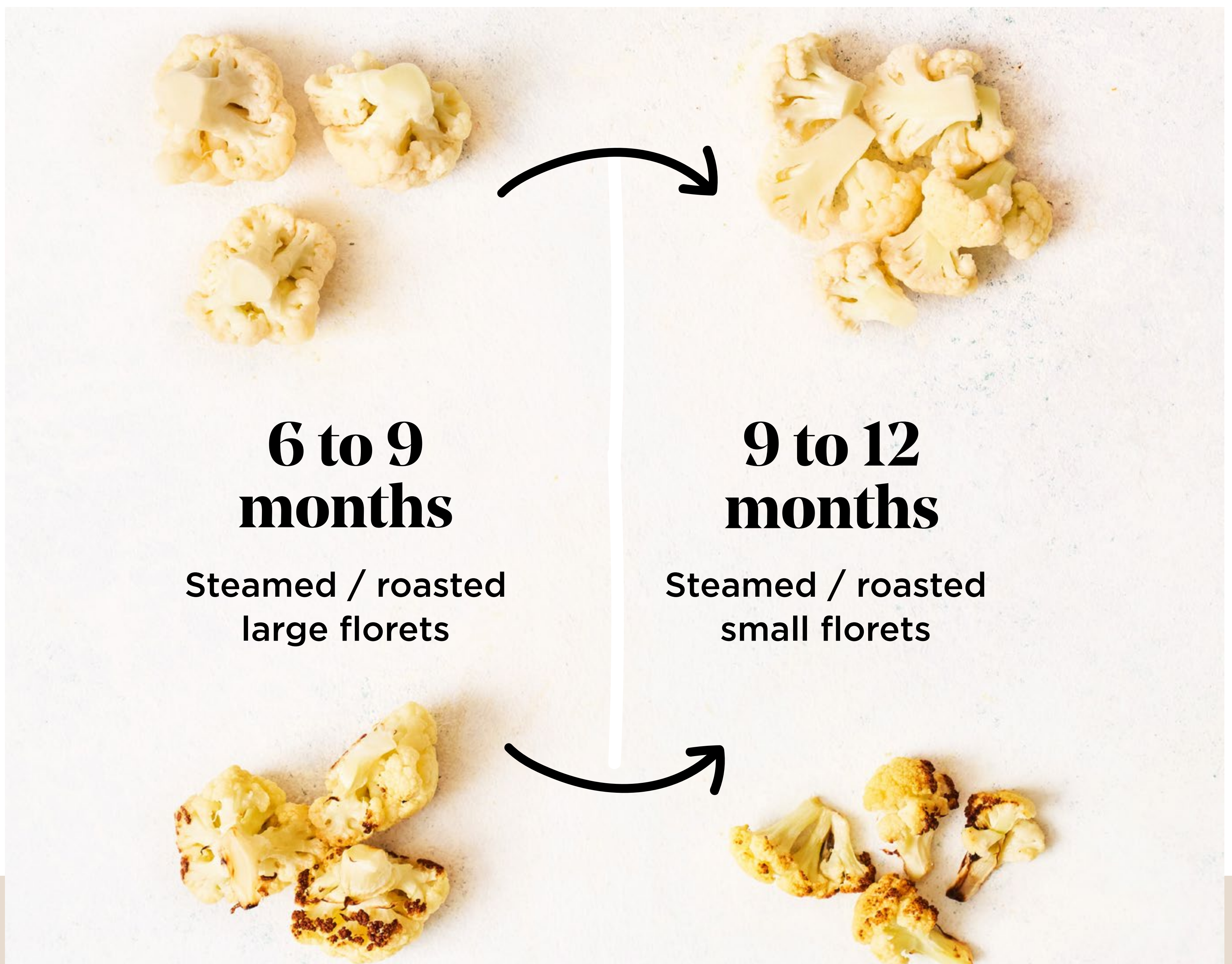
- Avoid cutting raw or cooked carrots into circular coin shapes as these can be a choking hazard for your baby.
- Steamed finger foods can be kept in the fridge for 2 - 3 days.

Cauliflower



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Although plain in colour, cauliflower contains some of almost every vitamin and mineral our bodies need, including antioxidants to support the immune system, vitamin K and B vitamins to name a few. Plus, it's loaded with vitamin C to help with iron absorption, which is essential in your baby's diet from 6 months.



6 to 9 months

STEAM

Cut the cauliflower into fairly large florets. Steam for around 8 minutes or until soft and tender. Top tip! If you place the florets upside down, your baby is more likely to pick them up from the stalk.

BAKE

Roasting cauliflower in the oven gives it a delicious flavour as it caramelises the natural sugars. Preheat the oven to 180C Fan / 200C / 400F / Gas Mark 6 and line a

baking sheet with non stick baking paper. Put the florets onto the baking sheet in a single layer and roast for 20 to 25 minutes or until golden and tender.

9 to 12 months

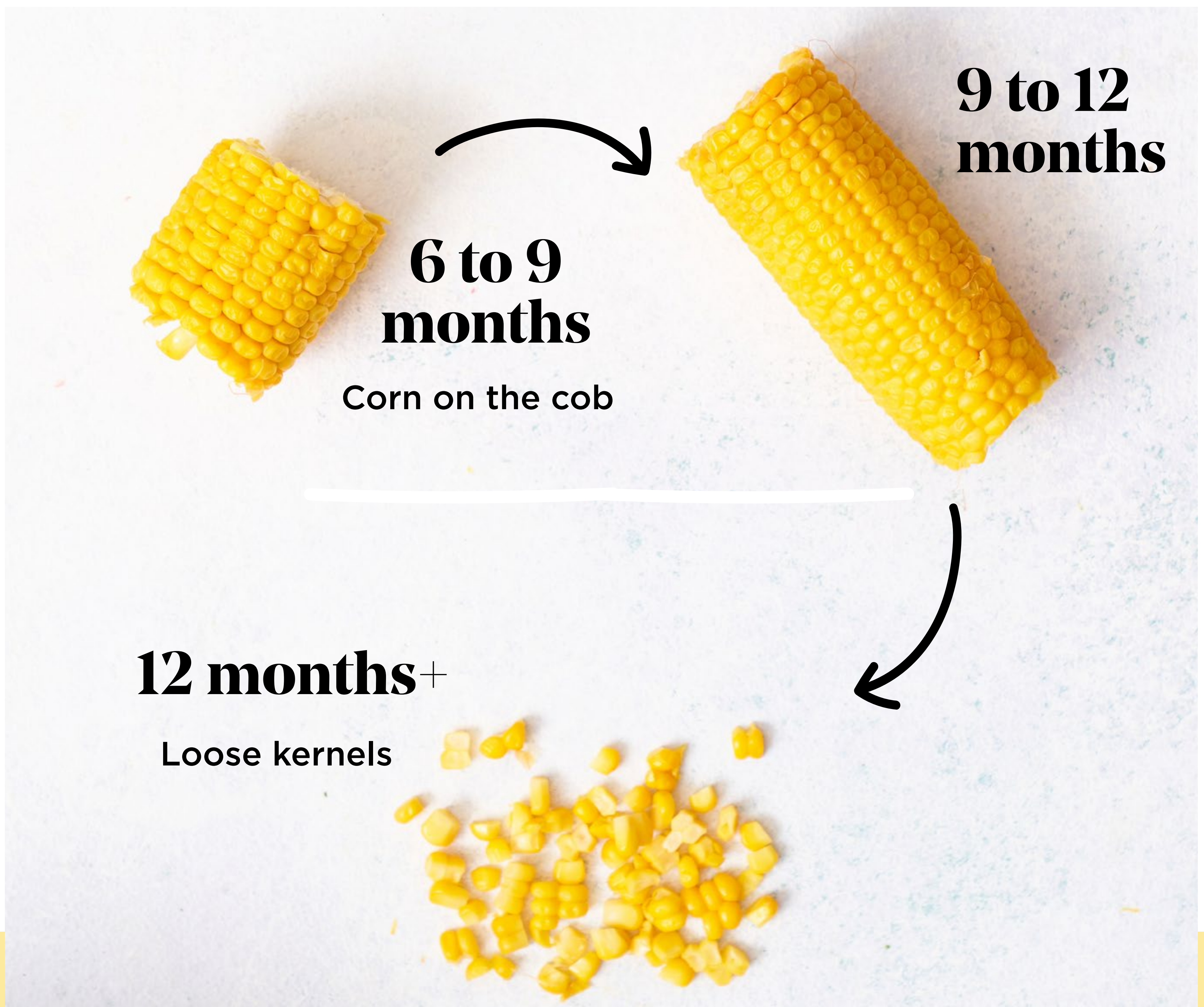
Once your baby develops their pincer grip (picking up foods with the thumb and forefinger) you can cut cauliflower into smaller bite-sized pieces.

- Steamed or roasted finger foods can be kept in the fridge for 2 - 3 days.

Corn

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Sweetcorn has a high fibre content which will help aid digestion and keep your baby's bowel movements regular. Corn contains essential minerals such as zinc, magnesium, copper and iron as well as valuable B vitamins which are important for your baby's health.



6 to 9 months

Rather than offering loose kernels of corn (or sweetcorn), at this stage you can offer corn on the cob instead. Cut the corn into short lengths (approximately 5cm rounds). Drop the corn into boiling water and boil for 8 to 10 minutes, then remove with tongs. Once cool, let your baby explore by 'gumming' and gnawing on the corn.

9 to 12 months

As your baby gets older you can increase the length of the corn on the cobb pieces.

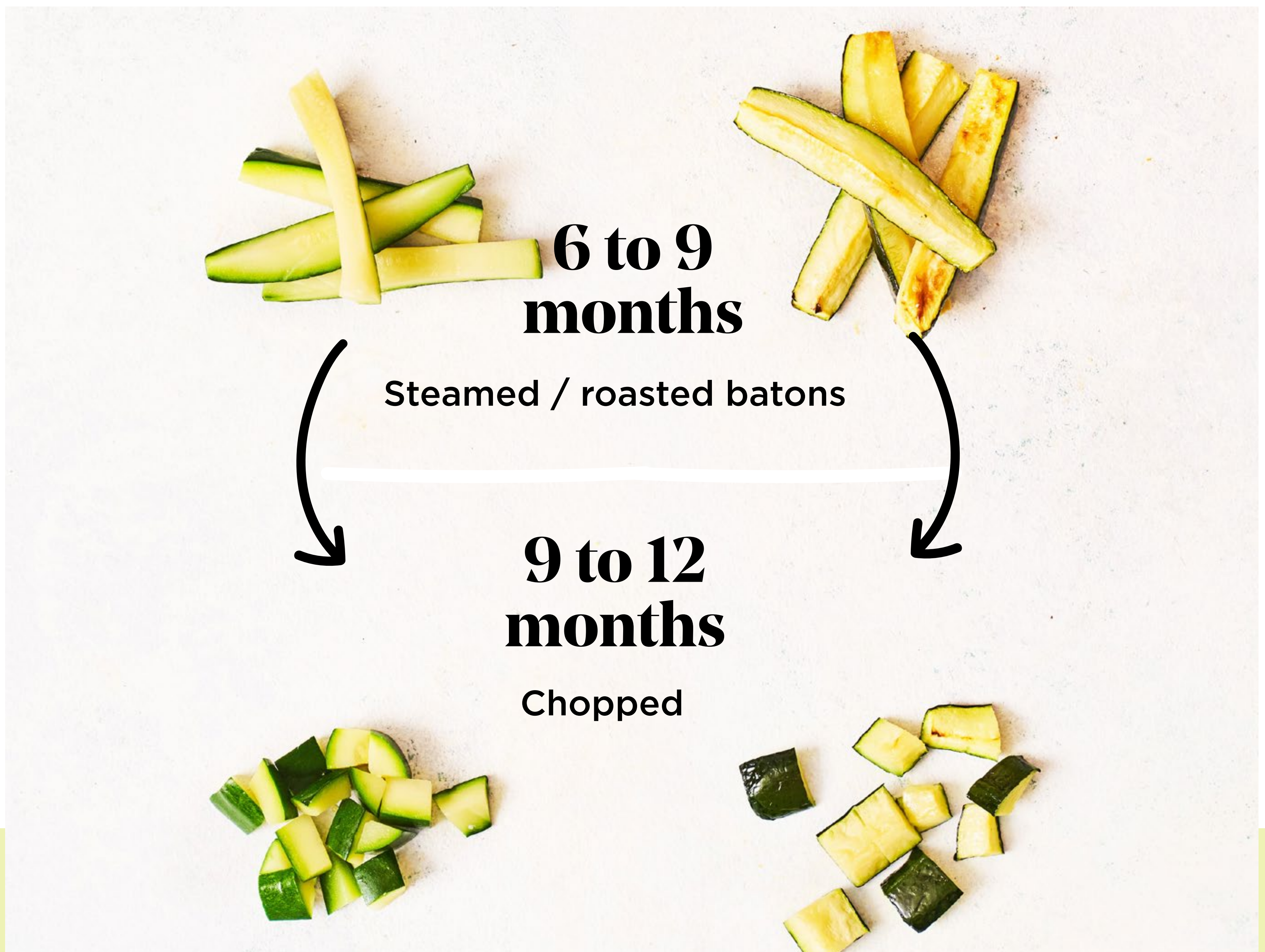
12 months+

Using a sharp knife, cut the kernels off the cooked corn on the cob (or alternatively use sweetcorn from a tin). Serve directly onto their highchair so it encourages them to pick up individual kernels. Alternatively, flatten these gently with the back of a fork or your fingers if you're worried about choking, however many babies will be able to manage whole kernels from 12 months.

Courgette

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Courgettes contain a number of essential vitamins and minerals, particularly vitamin A to support your baby's visual development and immune system. Courgettes are also generally quite easy to digest for your baby as they don't contain a lot of fibre. Plus, when courgettes are steamed or roasted, the skin softens which makes it even easier for babies to digest.



6 to 9 months

STEAM

Cut off the top and tail of the courgette and chop into batons about 5 - 7cm. Steam for about 7 minutes or until tender.

BAKE

1. Preheat the oven to 180C Fan / 200C / 400F / Gas Mark 6.
2. Line a baking sheet with baking paper and arrange courgette batons (roughly 5 - 7cm in length) in a single layer.
3. Brush with a little vegetable, rapeseed or olive oil and roast for about 10 minutes or until tender.

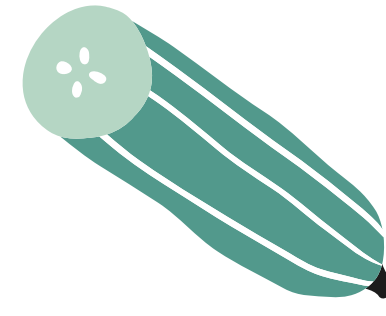
*Don't be tempted to cut the courgette into circular coin shapes as these can be a choking hazard for your baby.

9 to 12 months

Once your baby develops their pincer grip (picking up foods with the thumb and forefinger) you can cut the steamed or roasted courgette into bite-sized pieces.

*Steamed or roasted finger foods can be kept in the fridge for 2 - 3 days.

Cucumber

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Did you know that cucumbers are made up of 95% water? That makes them a super hydrating snack, particularly in the summer! They are also packed with antioxidants and vitamin K, and also make great teethingers for sore gums.

6 to 9 months

Peeled raw



9 to 12 months

Chopped



6 to 9 months

Peel the skin off a cucumber and cut into long batons that are easy for your baby to handle (roughly 5 – 7cm long). If you offer the softer middle, this will be an easier texture for your baby to manage in the initial months of weaning.

- Avoid cutting cucumber into circular coin shapes as these can be a choking hazard for your baby.

9 to 12 months

Most of the nutrients in a cucumber are stored in the skin so once your baby has mastered the art of chewing you can leave the skin on cucumber batons for maximum nutrition intake. Once your baby has developed their pincer grip (picking up foods with the thumb and forefinger) you can also cut the cucumber into smaller bite-sized pieces.

6 to 9 months Whole

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Green Beans

Green beans are a good source of vitamins and minerals including vitamins A, C, and K as well as manganese to support your baby's metabolism and bone health. They also contain protein and fibre for your growing baby. French beans are probably the best variety for babies as they are the least stringy and fibrous type of bean.

9 to 12 months Chopped



6 to 12 months

Offer whole green beans (French bean variety) with the tops and tails cut off and then simply steam until soft for approximately 7 to 8 minutes.

9 to 12 months

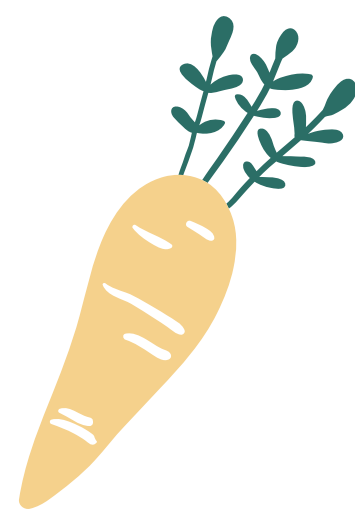
At this stage you can also start to offer diced steamed green beans to help your baby practice their pincer grip (picking up foods with the thumb and forefinger).

Did you know?

Frozen and fresh green beans have a similar nutrient content but sometimes frozen green beans can be more tender and easier for your baby to manage.

*Steamed finger foods can be kept in the fridge for 2 - 3 days.

Parsnips

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Parsnips are a good source of antioxidants, folate and fibre. Including parsnip in your baby's diet will help boost your baby's immune system as well as support their digestive health. Babies like parsnips because they are naturally sweet in flavour (similar to the sweetness of their usual milk).



6 to 9 months

STEAM

Peel a parsnip, cut into fairly long batons (roughly 5 - 7cm in length) and steam for approximately 8 minutes or until tender.

BAKE

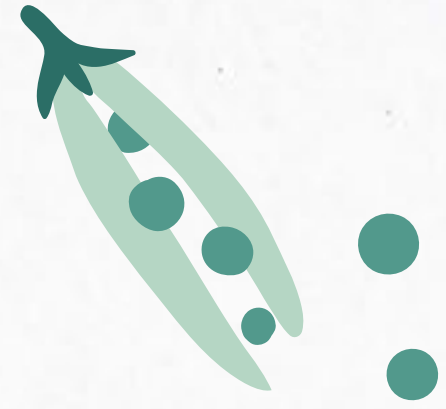
Preheat the oven to 180C Fan / 200C / 400F / Gas Mark 6. Arrange peeled parsnip batons on a baking tray lined with baking paper, brush with a little vegetable, rapeseed or olive oil and bake in the oven for about 20 minutes or until tender.

9 to 12 months

Steam or bake a peeled parsnip and then cut into bite-sized pieces to get your baby practicing that pincer grip (picking up foods with the thumb and forefinger).

- Avoid cutting parsnips into circular coin shapes as these can be a choking hazard for your baby. It's best to cut parsnip into fairly long batons.
- Steamed or roasted finger foods can be kept in the fridge for 2 - 3 days.

Peas



Small but mighty – peas are a nutritional powerhouse! Who knew that the bag of peas in the back of our freezer boasts an impressive list of vitamins and minerals for our baby?

As well as being packed with protein (which is unique from

other veggies) peas also have exceptionally high levels of vitamins A, C, and K and are also a fantastic source of fibre, vitamin B6 and folate.

Frozen are just as nutritious as fresh so whichever your family's preference – serve away!



6 to 9 months

At this stage it is difficult for babies to pick up peas themselves so it is best to mix peas into recipes such as a cottage pie, fritters, baby omelette or pasta dish.

9 to 12 months

Peas are perfect to help babies practice their pincer grip! Serve directly onto their highchair so it encourages them to pick up individual peas or flatten peas gently with the back of a fork or your fingers if you're worried about choking.

Sweet Peppers



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Peppers are rich in vitamins and antioxidants including vitamins C and A. When it comes to food exploration, it's good to mix up how you offer certain foods, so encourage your baby to eat the rainbow and use a mix of red, orange and yellow peppers.



6 to 9 months

Steamed / roasted



9 to 12 months

Chopped



6 to 9 months

1. Preheat the oven to 180C Fan / 200C / 400F / Gas Mark 6 and line a baking sheet with non stick baking paper.
2. Cut off the top of the pepper and scoop out the seeds and the pith.
3. Cut into wedges, brush the skin with a little vegetable, rapeseed or olive oil and roast cut side down in the oven for about 20 minutes or until the pepper is nice and soft.
4. Allow to cool and peel the skin off for younger babies before serving.

- Roasted finger foods can be kept in the fridge for 2 - 3 days.

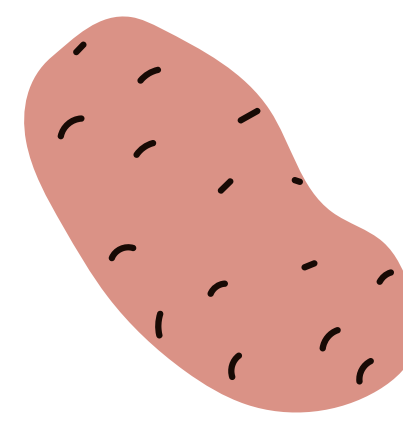
Top Tip!

To make it easier to remove the skin from a roasted pepper, seal in a plastic bag or cover in a bowl with clingfilm when you take it out of the oven. Leave to cool covered or inside of the bag and the skin should peel off easily.

9 to 12 months

Once your baby develops their pincer grip (picking up foods with the thumb and forefinger) you can also start to offer smaller pieces of cooked roasted red pepper.

Sweet Potato

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Sweet potatoes are a great first weaning food as they are naturally sweet, packed with vitamins and are unlikely to provoke an allergic reaction. They are an excellent source of beta-carotene which is converted to Vitamin A for that important immune support as well as rich in vitamin C, B6 and potassium.

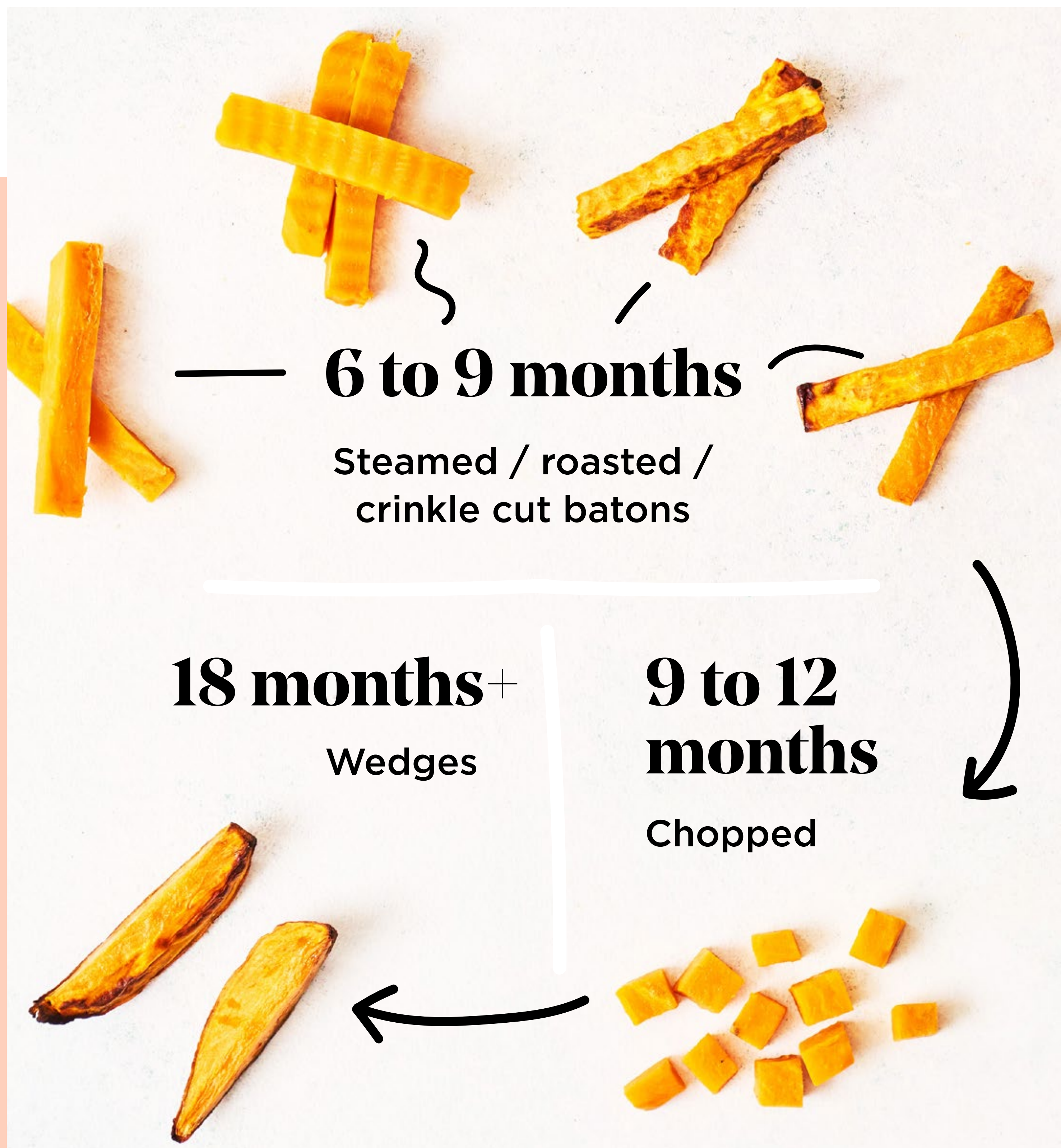
6 to 9 months

STEAM

Peel and cut a sweet potato into batons about 5 - 7cm long and steam for about 8 minutes until tender. Top tip! You can also cut sweet potato batons using a crinkle cutter which can make them easier for your baby to hold.

BAKE

Did you know that roasting intensifies the natural sweetness of sweet potato?



1. Peel a sweet potato and cut into batons around 5 - 7cm.
 2. Line a baking sheet with non stick paper. Arrange in a single layer and brush with a little vegetable, rapeseed or olive oil.
 3. Bake in an oven preheated to 180C Fan / 200C / 400F / Gas Mark 6 for about 20 to 25 minutes or until tender.
 4. After first tastes have been accepted you could sprinkle with a little cinnamon to introduce new flavours!
- Steamed or roasted finger foods can be kept in the fridge for 2 - 3 days.

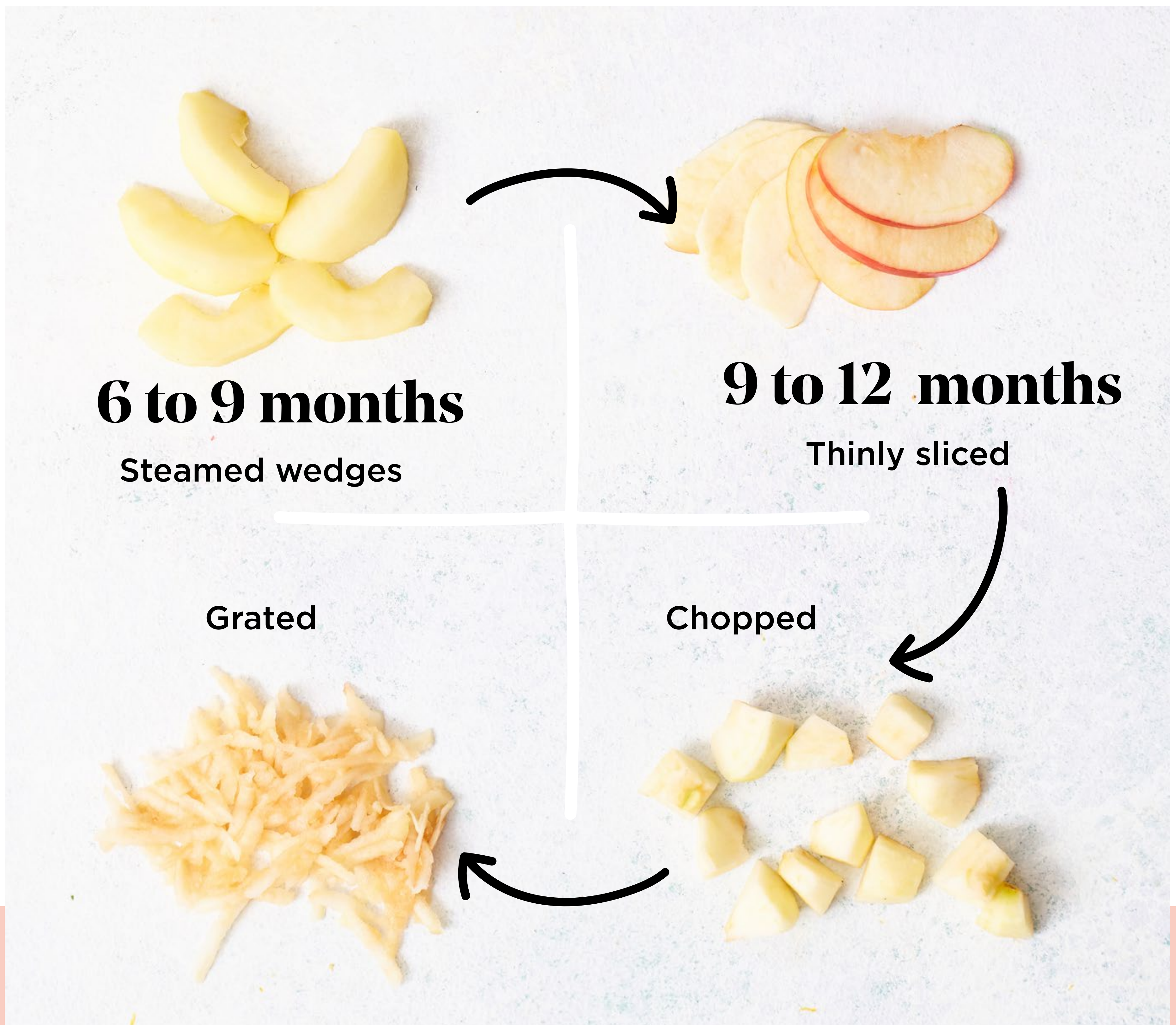
9 to 12 months

Once your baby has developed their pincer grip (picking up foods with the thumb and forefinger) you can give diced cooked sweet potato. For older babies once they are able to chew, scrub a sweet potato (but now there is no need to peel the skin), cut into wedges and arrange on a baking sheet. Brush with a little oil and bake for 20 to 25 minutes or until tender.

Apple 🍏

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Apples are very high in fibre and contain two types; the insoluble fibre works like roughage to help soften stools while the soluble fibre called pectin helps to feed the friendly bacteria in your baby's gut, improving digestion and ensuring bowel movements are kept regular, avoiding constipation and diarrhoea.



6 to 9 months

Apple needs to be cooked for young babies. Why? Cooking breaks down the structure of food which helps with digestion in an immature tummy. A slightly older baby will be better able to handle the fibres and sugars of raw fruits than a baby who is younger and just starting on solids. Cooking until soft also helps avoid any potential choking risks with harder fruits.

To prepare apple for your baby, simply peel, core, cut into wedges and steam for about 4 minutes or until tender.

9 to 12 months

You can continue to offer cooked apple but you can also introduce grated or diced apple as well as finely cut slices of raw apple, with or without the skin depending on your baby's own development.

*Steamed finger foods can be kept in the fridge for 2 - 3 days.

Avocado

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Avocados are a fantastic all-rounder when it comes to weaning foods. Rich in monounsaturated fats (also known as the ‘good type’ of fat) they are one of the most nutrient dense foods around. They contain an abundance of vitamins and minerals, including vitamins A, C and E which can help our immune systems fight off any unwanted attack! PLUS, you don’t need to cook them.



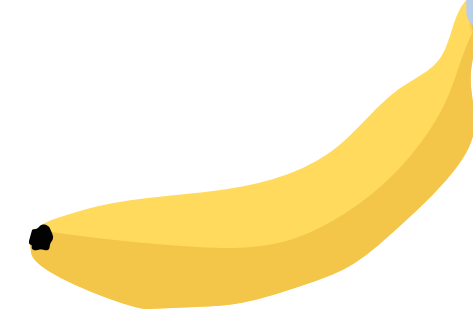
6 to 9 months

Cut a small avocado in half, remove the stone, then cut into wedges and simply peel away the skin. Sliced avocado can be challenging as a finger food for your baby as it is very slippery. You can help your baby to grip onto it if you roll the wedges in flax seeds, hemp seeds or panko breadcrumbs (just be aware that wheat is a common allergen so be on the look out for any signs of a reaction).

HOW TO PREPARE AN AVOCADO

1. When cutting an avocado in half, rotate the fruit around the knife (keeping the knife steady in the other hand).
2. Twist the two sides away from each other and it should separate into two halves.
3. Place the half with the stone in a dish cloth. Holding securely in your hand, tap the back edge of a sharp knife into the stone and twist. This should loosen the stone making it easy to lift out.
4. Cut each half in half again and you can then easily peel off the skin.

Banana



Banana lollipop



Peeled banana



Banana split



Chopped banana

Bananas are such an easy, nutritious no-cook first food for baby – and portable too! Naturally sweet and soft they also contain lots of vitamins and minerals including potassium, B Vitamins, manganese and selenium to name a few.

Parents sometimes worry about offering bananas in case their baby becomes constipated but as long as you steer clear of those that are green in colour and opt for riper bananas, they can actually help to relieve these symptoms. If constipation is an issue, offer bananas that are bright yellow but with a spot or two of brown which should indicate that they are ripe.

Did you know?

While most of us peel bananas from the stem down, it often bruises them and turns the top to mush. We should copy monkeys and turn our bananas upside down and pinch the base. The banana then splits easily and you can peel it back ready to eat!

6 months +

You can give your baby a small banana, peeled and broken or cut in half. Alternatively, try these two preparation tricks:

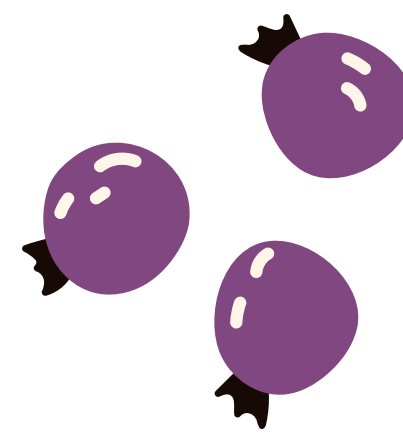
BANANA LOLLIPOP

Some babies will squeeze a banana and it turns to mush so it's often a good idea to leave some of the skin on. Simply run a knife around the peel (about 3cm from the open end). Gently peel back the skin leaving just the 3cm deep handle at the end for your baby to hold. Et voilà – a banana 'lollipop!'

BANANA SPLIT

Peel a banana and then push your forefinger down into one end. As you continue pushing, it will split into three – simple but so effective!

Blueberries

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This naturally sweet purple fruit packs a powerful punch on the nutrition scale (and the good news is they're usually a firm fruit favourite with babies too).

Blueberries are a fantastic source of fibre and vitamins, including vitamin C which will help your baby absorb plant-based sources of iron. They are also believed to have one of the highest antioxidant levels of most fruits and vegetables!

6 to 9 months

Squashed



9 to 12 months

Cut in half / whole



6 to 9 months

Whole blueberries are a choking hazard so squash them with your finger before giving to your baby or cut into small bite-sized pieces.

If cooking, blueberries become very soft so you don't need to squash them.

9 to 12 months

Cut large blueberries into halves or quarters or squash with your finger (so they are no longer round).



6 to 9 months Crescent shape

Canaloupe Melon

Cantaloupe melon is a particularly nutritious variety of melon so a good one to seek out for your baby! It is a rich source of vitamin C and beta-carotene which converts to vitamin A in the body to act as a powerful antioxidant. It also has a high water content so great if your baby is dehydrated, particularly in the summer months.

9 to 12 months Chopped



6 to 9 months

Melon tends to be quite hard and slippery so how you prepare it is important. The best way to cut melon for your baby is to cut it into thin crescent moon shapes which are easy for your baby to handle.

9 to 12 months

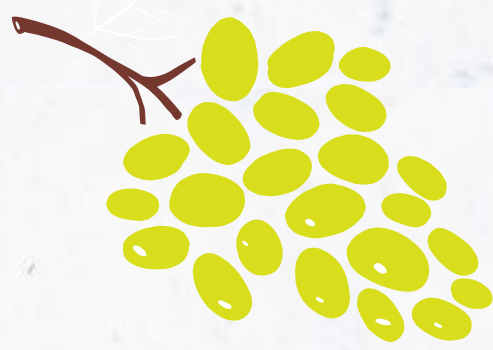
As your baby masters their pincer grip (picking up foods with the thumb and forefinger) you can also offer smaller bite-sized pieces of melon.



9 to 12 months

Cut into quarters lengthwise

Grapes



Grapes are high in nutrients and antioxidants, with most being stored in the skin. Grapes are a good source of vitamin K which is vital for blood clotting and maintaining healthy bones.

It's important to NEVER give whole pieces of small solid foods such as grapes as these are a choking hazard that could easily lodge in and obstruct the throat. Grapes should always be safely cut into quarters. Young babies who are starting out weaning haven't yet developed their pincer grip (picking up foods with the thumb and forefinger) so would find it difficult to pick up quartered grapes. Therefore, it is best to wait until your baby is around 9 months before offering these.



9 to 12 months

Cut grapes into quarters lengthwise and remove the seeds. There is no need to remove the skin on grapes (and many of the antioxidants in grapes are stored in the skin).

Top tip!

If you are worried about giving grapes to your baby, you can add these to a Baby Safe Feeder allowing your baby to chew on the grapes through the feeder. Plus, chewing on very cold grapes through a feeder can help soothe sore gums.

6 to 9 months

Wedges

Kiwi Fruit

Did you know that the tangy fuzzy kiwi fruit contains nearly twice as much Vitamin C as an orange? It's also lower in natural sugars than many other fruits and packed full of essential nutrients for your baby. The antioxidants and high level of vitamin C are also thought to help children with asthma symptoms, such as coughing and wheezing!

An allergy to kiwi is very rare and it's important to note that some foods such as tomatoes and other citrus fruits can irritate the skin and cause a red rash around the mouth after eating but this does not necessarily indicate a food allergy.

As you would when introducing any new food, start by serving a small quantity of kiwi on its own. If there is no reaction, you can gradually increase the quantity. However, if you have any concerns at all, don't be afraid to check-in with your GP or health visitor.

9 to 12 months Chopped

6 to 9 months

Before you get prepping ensure your kiwi is nice and ripe. Peel a ripe kiwi fruit and cut into quarters (depending on their size). Cut the end corners off each corner to remove the hard stem.

9 to 12 months

Once your baby has developed their pincer grip (picking up foods with the thumb and forefinger) you can cut the kiwi fruit into bite-sized pieces.

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6 to 9 months Wedges

Mango

Mangoes are rich in vitamins A and C and provide a good source of fibre to support your baby's digestive system and keep their bowel movements regular. However, they are quite difficult for babies to hold as they can be quite slippery.

There is no need to cook ripe mango. Always make sure that your mango is nice and ripe by giving it a gentle squeeze – it should give a little to the touch.

9 to 12 months Chopped



6 to 9 months

Cut a mango into wedges and remove the skin.

Top tip! If your baby is having difficulty keeping a good grip you can roll the mango in hemp or flaxseeds. Alternatively, soft fruits like mango can be given to your baby in a mesh Baby Safe Feeder. This can help keep mess to a minimum whilst introducing your baby to the delightful fruity flavour of mango.

9 to 12 months

Once your baby has developed their pincer grip (picking up foods with the thumb and forefinger) you can cut the mango into bite-sized pieces.

HOW TO CUT A MANGO

1. Stand a mango up on its end (stem side down).
2. With a sharp knife, cut from the top of the mango down one side of the stone. Repeat with the other side.
3. Take the middle section with the stone, lay it flat on a chopping board cut away the thin slices of mango flesh on either side.
4. Remove the skin from the mango and the cut into wedges or cubes (depending on your baby's age and development).

Oranges

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Oranges are packed with vitamin C which means they will help with the absorption of iron in your baby's meal. Plus, they are a good source of B vitamins, folate, potassium and fibre which can help to support digestive health.

Babies who are chewing or 'gumming' can enjoy oranges provided you remove any seeds, pips and excess membrane. Just be sure to avoid giving smaller clementines or satsumas to young babies as they can be a choking hazard.



6 to 9 months

Wash an orange and cut into fairly large wedges leaving the skin on (but remove the excess membrane). Alternatively, cut a fairly large orange in half and using a sharp knife cut out whole segments and lift out of the membrane (essentially you are offering orange segments with the membrane and seeds removed).

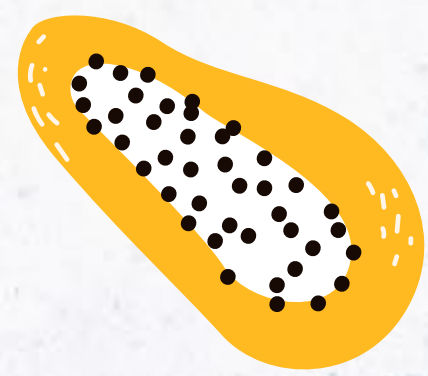
9 to 12 months

Older babies may be able to chew on an orange segment with the membrane intact but it will depend on the individual development of your baby so always be guided by them. Once your baby has developed their pincer grip you can cut the orange into bite-sized pieces. If you want to offer clementines or satsumas then it is best to remove each segment from the membrane.

6 to 9 months Wedges

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Papaya



Papaya is packed with vitamins A and C. In fact, it contains more vitamin C than an orange! This tropical fruit also contains an enzyme called papain that aids digestion and has been shown to improve symptoms of constipation.

9 to 12 months Chopped



6 to 9 months

Cut a small papaya in half, remove the black seeds and any pith. Cut into wedges and remove the skin. If your baby is struggling to hold the papaya as it is too slippery, you can leave just a little skin on each of the wedges for some extra grip. Alternatively, roll the wedges in some hemp or flaxseeds which will also lend a helping hand on the grip front!

9 to 12 months

Once your baby develops their pincer grip (picking up foods with the thumb and forefinger) you can also offer smaller bite-sized pieces of papaya.

Did you know?

It's best not to store papaya in the fridge as it can turn the flesh mushy so leave to ripen in the fruit bowl or kitchen counter before tucking in!

Pear

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Pears are rich in vitamin C, folate, copper and potassium and they are gentle on the tummy so a great first taste fruit option all-round!



6 to 9 months

Ripeness is really important and it's so your baby can easily digest the food. Soft juicy pears can be peeled, cored and cut into wedges without cooking. However, raw pears that are firm will need to be cooked before offering to your baby. Peel, core and cut a pear into wedges then steam for about 4 minutes until soft.

9 to 12 months

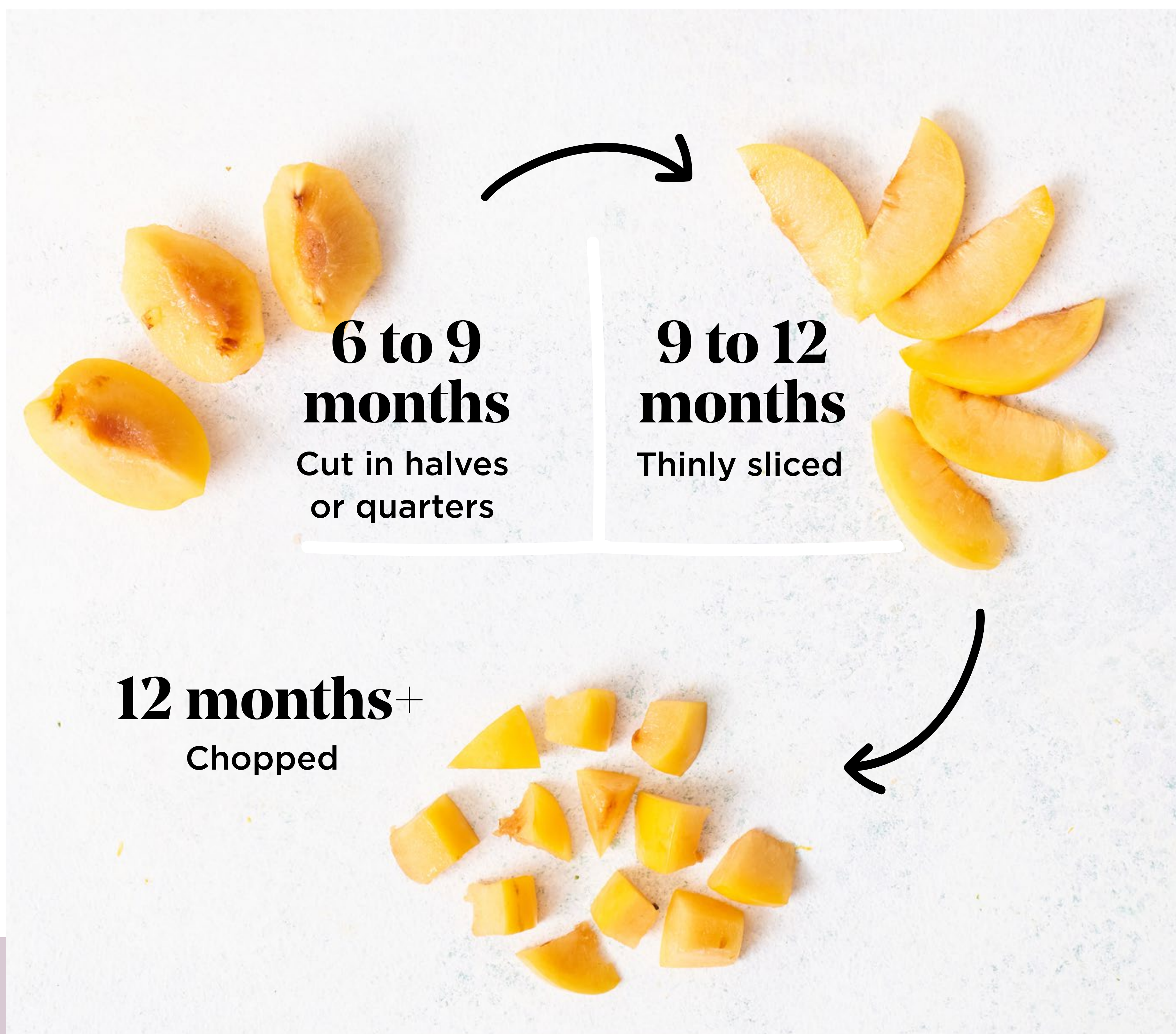
As your baby develops their pincer grip you can cut a ripe pear into bite-sized pieces for them to pick up with their thumb and forefinger. From around 10 months of age, when your baby has got to grips with finger foods you can keep the skin on a ripe pear. The skin contains a lot of fibre, nutrients and antioxidants.

*Steamed finger foods can be kept in the fridge for 2 - 3 days.

Plums

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Plums are packed with vitamins and minerals, fibre and antioxidants so they make for a fantastic first weaning food for baby.



6 to 9 months

Choose soft, ripe plums. Ripeness is really important in fruit so your baby can easily digest the food. Cut the plums in half and remove the skin.

If the plums seem hard then steam the halved plums for approximately 4 minutes until soft.

9 to 12 months

Offer thinly sliced plums with or without the skin. When starting out with finger foods you should always take the skin off fruit and many vegetables. The

skin introduces a new texture, which can be difficult to manage and can lead to choking, and the fibre content is also quite high. From around 10 months of age, when your baby has got to grips with finger foods you can keep skin on fruits such as plums (and there are a lot of nutrients stored in the skin).

12 months+

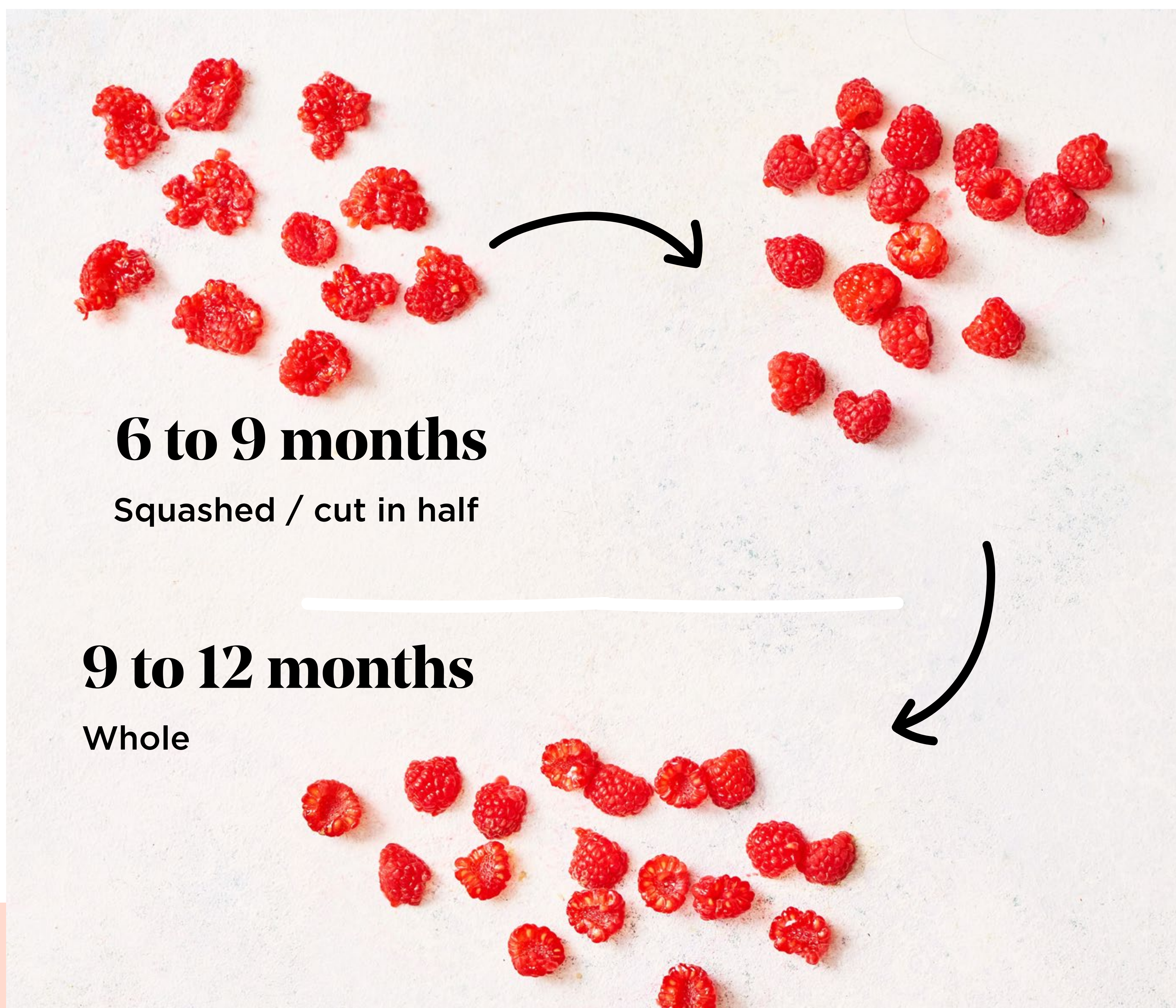
Chop the plums into bite-sized pieces. You can also try giving your baby fresh ripe pitted plums cut in half with the skin on.

Raspberries

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Raspberries are an excellent source of vitamin C and fibre. Vitamin C is an immunity booster which can also help babies absorb iron from their food. Clever hey?

Lots of parents feel nervous about offering berries as they worry about the choking risk but... as long as they are prepared in the right way, they are a fantastic nutrient-rich finger food.



6 to 9 months

Cut raspberries into halves or quarters or squash with your finger (so they are no longer round). However, if you think your baby is perfectly capable of swallowing a ripe soft raspberry then let them. This may be easier for them to pick up than one cut into quarters. You know your baby best!

9 to 12 months

Babies practicing their pincer grip (picking up foods with the thumb and forefinger) should be able to manage whole soft raspberries unless they are very large. It's important to be guided by your baby and depending on their development, if you feel these need to be halved, quartered or squashed then be sure to trust your instinct and follow your baby's lead.



6 to 9 months Whole

Strawberries

Strawberries are a baby favourite because of their sweetness. And they are also brimming with vitamin C, antioxidants, fibre as well as vitamins and minerals too. The vitamin C can aid iron absorption so serve alongside an iron-rich meal.

Don't be alarmed if you find strawberry seeds in your baby's nappy - it is absolutely normal!

6 to 9 months

Remove the stem and tops from strawberries. Depending on your baby's development, many will be able to handle large strawberries left whole and suck on them. If they do bite off a piece, they will probably chew it to mush or spit it out. If you make the hole in the hull of a strawberry slightly larger it can help your baby get a better grip.

With smaller strawberries, remove the stem and tops and chop these into quarters.

9 to 12 months

You can offer whole, quartered or bite-sized pieces of strawberry depending on the development of your baby.



9 to 12 months Bite-sized