

Cup Training for Baby

Is My Baby Ready?

At 5-6 months of age your baby may show signs that he is ready to start drinking from a cup. He should be able to sit in a highchair or other well-supported chair, preferably with a tray. He should be able to hold toys while sitting and bring them to his mouth.

Getting Started

Be sure your baby is sitting well-supported in a comfortable chair. Choose a small cup that fits your baby's mouth and hands. You can use a cup with a lid but do not use a spill-proof cup as these are hard to suck liquid from and your baby may get discouraged. Start with water, diluted juice, breastmilk, or infant formula in your baby's cup. Hold the cup for your baby and let him help guide it to his mouth. If the cup has handles, you can hold one side and let the baby hold the other. Some babies need extra support – you can hold the baby's chin to give extra jaw support if needed. At first, take the cup away from your baby when not drinking. Don't leave it on the highchair tray for baby to play with. Some babies prefer to drink from small cups without lids. You can help your baby train on a lidless cup by putting thickened drinks in the cup at first (see recipes below). This helps slow the flow from the cup to make it easier to control. Gradually make the liquid thinner as your baby is able to manage the flow of the liquid in the cup.

What's Next?

It may take several months for your baby to develop the skills it takes to drink from a cup independently. Give assistance as needed while encouraging your baby to hold and guide the cup as his skills improve. Help your baby learn this new habit by offering the cup to him in his highchair at around the same time every day. Then as your baby's skills improve, offer the cup at each meal or snack. As your baby learns the cup is not a toy, you can leave the cup on the highchair tray during mealtime for your baby to control when he wants a drink.

Recipes

Drinkable Veggies

1-2 Tablespoons apple juice
2 oz. stage 1 sweet potatoes
Pour in cup and mix with spoon.

Fruity Milkshake

½ med. Banana, sliced
1 oz. frozen winter squash
2 Tablespoon infant formula
(or breastmilk)
Put ingredients in blender.
Mix well.