



The Monkey Puzzle Cookbook



Nutritionist-approved recipes
for happy, healthy children



Welcome to your Cookbook

Autumn/Winter

These recipes have been developed especially for our nursery children—designed to be nutritious, seasonal, and practical to prepare in busy kitchens. They reflect a balance of the key food groups needed for children in early years, while introducing a wide variety of ingredients, textures, and flavours to help expand little palates.

Each recipe has been designed for simplicity and consistency, using familiar ingredients and straight forward methods to support whoever is preparing the meals.

Benefits of Self-Serving

The interactive approach helps children explore textures and flavours while developing fine motor skills and taste preferences. They can control how much cinnamon they add, making breakfast more engaging and educational!

Banana & cinnamon toast with milk

INGREDIENTS

10 slices wholemeal bread

*3-4 medium ripe bananas
(approximately 300g)*

1 tsp ground cinnamon

*1 litre whole milk or dairy-free
alternative (oat, almond, or soy milk)*

METHOD

Option 1: for younger children (mashed banana)

Toast slices until golden brown and crispy. Prepare banana mixture: peel bananas and mash with a fork until smooth, then mix in the cinnamon. Spread the mashed banana and cinnamon mixture evenly over each slice. Cut into fingers. Serve immediately: place on plates with a 100ml glass of cold milk alongside each portion.

Option 2: for older children (interactive version)

Toast slices until golden brown and crispy. Prepare bananas: peel and slice bananas into rounds, approximately 5mm thick. Set up stations: provide small shakers filled with cinnamon. Let children build: have children place banana slices on their toast and lightly crush with a fork. Add cinnamon: under supervision, children can shake cinnamon over their toast to taste. Serve immediately: place on plates with a 100ml glass of cold milk alongside each portion.



Chef's Tips

Don't overwork the dough - gentle mixing keeps scones light and fluffy!

The rectangle method is faster and easier for larger batches with no waste!

Cheese & herb scones

INGREDIENTS

225g self-raising flour

1 tsp baking powder

60g butter, cold and cubed

50g mature cheddar cheese, grated

2 tbsp fresh chives, chopped (or 1 tbsp dried mixed herbs)

1 egg

60ml milk

Black pepper

Extra milk for brushing

METHOD

Preheat oven to 220°C/200°C fan/gas mark 6. Rub butter into flour and baking powder until mixture resembles breadcrumbs. Use a food processor to save time. Pulse briefly until ingredients are just combined. Stir in the grated cheese. Beat the eggs with 60ml milk. Add the chives (or dried mixed herbs) to the egg mixture, then add to dry ingredients. Mix gently to form a soft dough (add a little more milk if needed).

Either: Roll out on a floured surface to 2cm thickness and cut into rounds using a 5cm cutter, or press dough/roll dough into a rectangle of 2cm thickness and cut into 10 squares (roughly 5cm x 5cm each), and place on a greased, lined baking sheet. Brush tops with milk. Bake for 12-15 minutes until golden brown. Cool on wire rack. Cut in half before serving. Serving: 1 scone per child as a snack.

Beef lasagne

INGREDIENTS

500g fresh beef mince

2 x 400g tins plum tomatoes

2 medium onions, peeled, finely chopped

2 carrots, peeled, diced small

2 garlic cloves, peeled and finely chopped/crushed

Small bunch fresh basil

4 tbsp olive oil

1 tbsp tomato puree

1½ tsp mixed dried herbs

Black pepper to taste

450ml whole milk

100g mild cheddar cheese, grated

40g unsalted butter

40g plain flour

400g dried lasagne sheets

50g mild cheddar cheese, grated (for topping)



METHOD

Heat oil, fry onions, carrots, and chopped basil stalks for 5 minutes until soft. Add garlic for 2 minutes, then beef and black pepper. Cook until beef is no longer pink. Add tinned tomatoes and dried herbs, then fill each empty can with water and add to the pan. Simmer uncovered for 1 hour until thickened, stirring occasionally. Stir in torn basil leaves until wilted. For the cheese sauce, melt butter in a separate pan, whisk in flour for 1 minute, then gradually add milk, whisking until smooth. Simmer until thickened, stir in cheese. Preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan/gas mark 4. Layer a baking dish with ragu, lasagne sheets, and cheese sauce. Repeat 3–4 times, scatter remaining cheese, add basil leaves and black pepper. Bake for 35–45 minutes until bubbling and tender.



Winter Comfort

Mixed frozen berries create a deliciously warming pudding with natural sweetness - perfect with cooled yoghurt!



Winter fruit crumble with yoghurt

INGREDIENTS

500g frozen mixed berries

1 tbsp cornflour

2 tbsp water

1 tsp ground cinnamon

200g plain flour

100g unsalted butter, cold and cubed

100g porridge oats

1/2 tsp mixed spice

300g plain Greek yoghurt

METHOD

Heat oven to 190°C/170°C fan/gas mark 5. Mix cornflour with water in a small bowl to make a smooth paste. In a large saucepan, add the frozen berries and cinnamon, and cover. Cook over medium heat for 10-15 minutes until berries break down. Stir in cornflour paste and cook for another 2-3 minutes until thickened. Remove from heat and let it cool slightly. Meanwhile, to make the crumble, start by rubbing cold butter with flour until it resembles breadcrumbs. Use a food processor to save time. Stir in oats and mixed spice. Transfer the berry compote to a large baking dish. Sprinkle crumble topping evenly over the compote. Bake for 25 minutes until golden brown and bubbling. Serve warm with a large spoonful of cool yoghurt.

Chef's Tips

- Cook berries into a compote first for concentrated flavour and to prevent watery crumble.
- Baking time is shorter as fruit is already cooked.
- Each child gets a portion of crumble plus yoghurt.





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