



Stunning smoothies & super shakes



Smoothie and shake making tips & recipes

Smoothies

If you make a smoothie at home or school you need the same equipment as a commercial smoothie company but on a smaller scale. Because making fresh juice drinks has become so popular there are many different domestic machines to choose from.

You need three essential tools;

An electric juicer (for hard fruits and vegetables)

A citrus squeezer for citrus fruits (electric or manual)

A good quality blender for all soft fruits and vegetables that will form a smooth drinking texture

Note: if you don't have a juicer at home or school you can always use ready made juices. If you have hand blenders you can also successfully make smoothies and shakes but be careful to choose soft fruits that will easily blend. Bananas are particularly good as they are sweet and creamy so add texture and taste and are less costly than other fruits.

Smoothies are a combination of juices and whole fruit pulp which you press, squeeze or blend. Some can be pressed or blended depending on how ripe they are, for example pears. Assessing the ripeness of fruit differs with each type. Apples are fairly easy to judge but pineapples for example are trickier.

Press - carrot, apple, pineapple, beetroot, spinach and celery

Squeeze - orange, lemon, grapefruit and lime

Blend - nectarines, avocados, soft berries, dates, apricots, peaches, bananas

If you are making a smoothie at home you could use ready prepared juice to save time but to achieve maximum flavour preparing them fresh is better. If you are going to use ready made juice go for a good quality pressed one.

To make sure you don't make more than you can drink select a glass that is the right size for you. Fill it with the prepared fruit you want to use and top it with juice. Pour the whole lot into the blender and process then tip back into the glass and drink it straight away.

Recipes and balance

There are no real rules on what fruit you use and additional flavours and personal taste is vital here. Your end result has to be drinking consistency by making sure you have the right levels of juice to whole fruit. After you've made a couple of smoothies you'll get a feel for what works.

Tips –

- to make your smoothie thicker reduce the amount of juice and add more whole fruit
- to make your smoothie thinner add more juice
- to make your smoothie sharper add some lemon or lime juice
- to make your smoothie sweeter add some ripe banana or other naturally sweet juice like apple (never add sugar)

The drinking test

If you can drink your smoothie comfortably through a straw without having to suck hard and without any bits of fruit getting stuck it is probably the right consistency. If bits of fruit stick put it back in the blender and process for a bit longer.

To make your smoothie stay as healthy as possible you should try and combine fruits that will make it sweet enough to drink without adding extra sugar. Banana is good as a sweetener and it also adds a thick creamy texture. Other juices like apple, grape and mango also add sweetness.

Shakes

Shakes are thick creamy drinks usually made with dairy products such as yogurt or ice-cream. They often have other ingredients such as crushed cookies, fruit, or chocolate. Adding sweet things are fine for a special treat but try to avoid using these ingredients for after school snacking as they could spoil your appetite for dinner later.

Again use a glass to measure just enough ingredients for your drink and then process until smooth in a blender as fresh drinks like these do not keep well once they have been made.

Here are some of the interesting combinations the Active Kids Get Cooking team discovered on their travels to get you started.

Fresh papaya, milk and honey is a popular blended drink in Asia
Avocado pear, natural drinking yogurt & honey is found in Japan
Strawberries, bananas and apple juice is popular here in the UK

Simply combine any of your favourite fruits with a dairy base such as milk, Soya milk, drinking yogurt or natural yogurts. Try and select lower fat versions of products where you can to keep the fat content down.

Recipes ideas: there are many blended drink recipes to download from the internet. Get pupils to look at the smoothie blends in the shops for ideas from their own. Use fruits that are in season and local if possible. Frozen berries are great as they cool the drinks and you can add just a few for colour and taste.

In the next couple of pages you'll find some recipes to get you started and remember making these drinks is a great way to use up small amount of left over fruits from fruit salads, kebabs and other dishes like fruit crumbles.

The Recipes

Smoothies

Smoothies are a great way to share more expensive fruits like berries without breaking the bank. Try some of these ideas to get you started but remember it's your drink you can put whatever combination you like into it once you get a feel for what works. Try and measure the right amount to drink so use a glass to put all your ingredients into. Smoothies are quite filling because fruit contains natural sugar they could take your appetite away for eating a meal.

Tip If you do make too much simply pour the leftovers into an ice-lolly mould and freeze for a frozen smoothie treat another time.

Berry banana blend

Ingredients to fill a glass (use a glass for each portion)

1 small banana
1-2 tablespoons of fresh or frozen berries
Enough apple juice to fill the glass

1. Tip the ingredients into your blender and process until smooth.
2. Check the consistency and if it is too thick add a little more juice
3. Pour back into your glass and drink immediately

Mango Tango

Ingredients to fill a glass (use a glass for each portion)

The flesh of half a small ripe mango
½ a banana
Enough orange juice to fill the glass

1. Tip the ingredients into your blender and process until smooth.
2. Check the consistency and if it is too thick add a little more juice.
3. Pour back into your glass and drink immediately

Kiwi Crush

Ingredients to fill a glass (use a glass for each portion)

The fruit of 2 small kiwi's or 1 large
½ a white flesh peach or nectarine or ½ a banana
Enough white grape juice to fill the glass

1. Tip the ingredients into your blender and process until smooth.
2. Check the consistency and if it is too thick add a little more juice
3. Pour back into your glass and drink immediately

Shakes

Here are a few shake recipes to get you started

Breakfast cinnamon oat shake

Ingredients to fill a large glass (use a glass for each portion)

1 dessertspoon of porridge oats
½ teaspoon dried ground cinnamon
1 tablespoon of reduced fat Greek style yogurt
1 teaspoon honey
1 small banana
Semi-skimmed milk to fill the glass

- 1 Tip the ingredients into your blender and process until smooth.
- 2 Check the consistency and if it is too thick add a little more juice.
3. Pour back into your glass and drink immediately

Avocado, grape & cashew nut (suitable for dairy free diets)

Ingredients to fill a glass (use a glass for each portion)

(If you are using a hand blender don't try this one it needs to be made in a liquidiser to make the nuts smooth)

1 dessertspoon of raw unsalted cashew nuts
½ an avocado pear
Enough white grape juice to fill the glass
Honey to sweeten (optional)

1. Tip the ingredients into your blender and process until smooth.
2. Check the consistency and if it is too thick add a little more juice.
3. Pour back into your glass and drink immediately

Tip swap the grape juice for Soya milk

Raspberry and pear

Ingredients to fill a glass (use a glass for each portion)

1 very ripe pear, peeled and roughly chopped
A handful of raspberries (fresh or frozen)
1 dessertspoon of natural yogurt
1 teaspoon honey
Enough semi-skimmed milk to fill the glass

1. Tip the ingredients into your blender and process until smooth.
2. Check the consistency and if it is too thick add a little more juice.
3. Pour back into your glass and drink immediately.