

Food chaining:

help kids try new foods

Food chaining can help your child become more comfortable with new foods. Children usually feel more confident trying something new when it looks, smells, or tastes similar to one of their favorite foods.

Food chains start with foods your child already likes. Add new foods that are similar in taste, texture, shape, or color.

Notice what your child avoids—like crunchy foods, certain colors, or foods that are hot or cold. This helps you pick the next step without making a big jump.

The goal is to take small steps that help your child eat a few more foods from each food group than they did before.

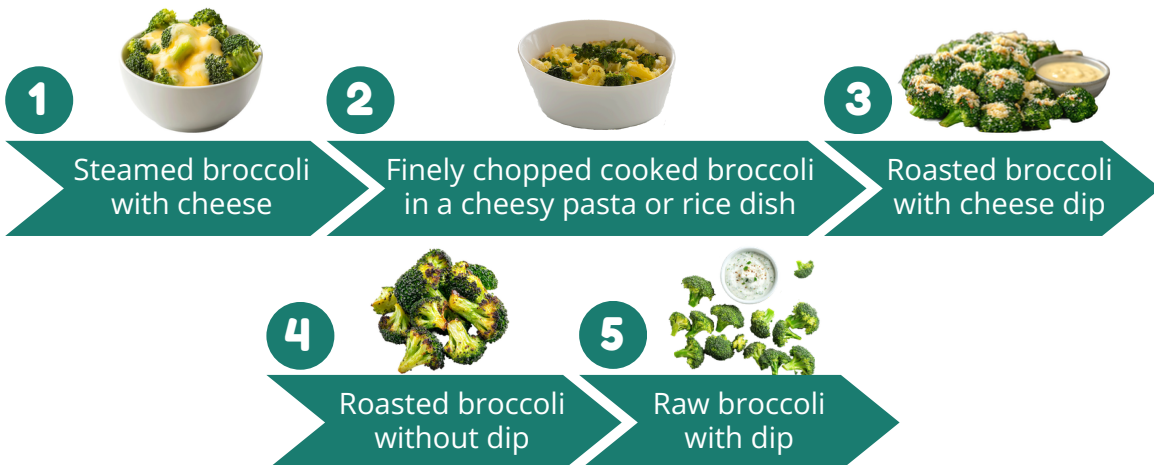
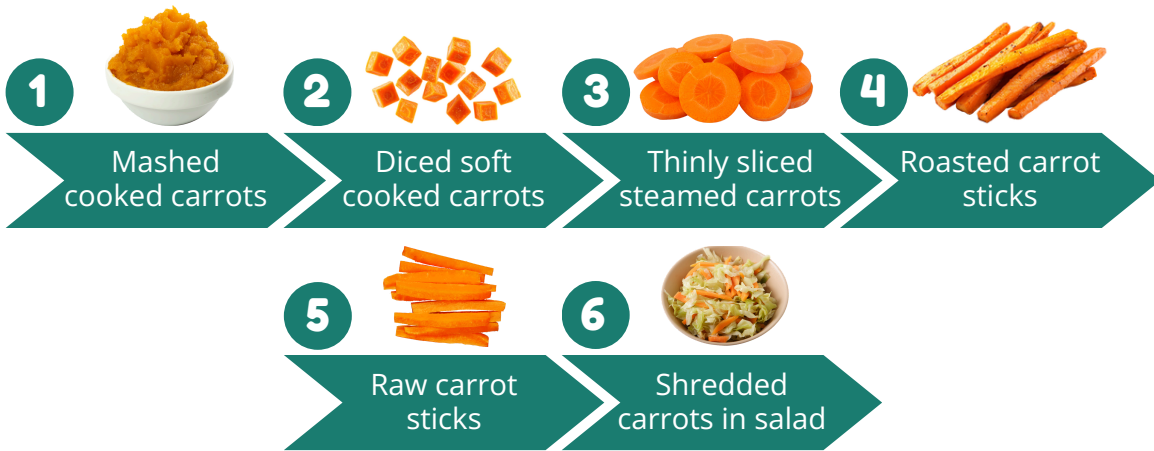
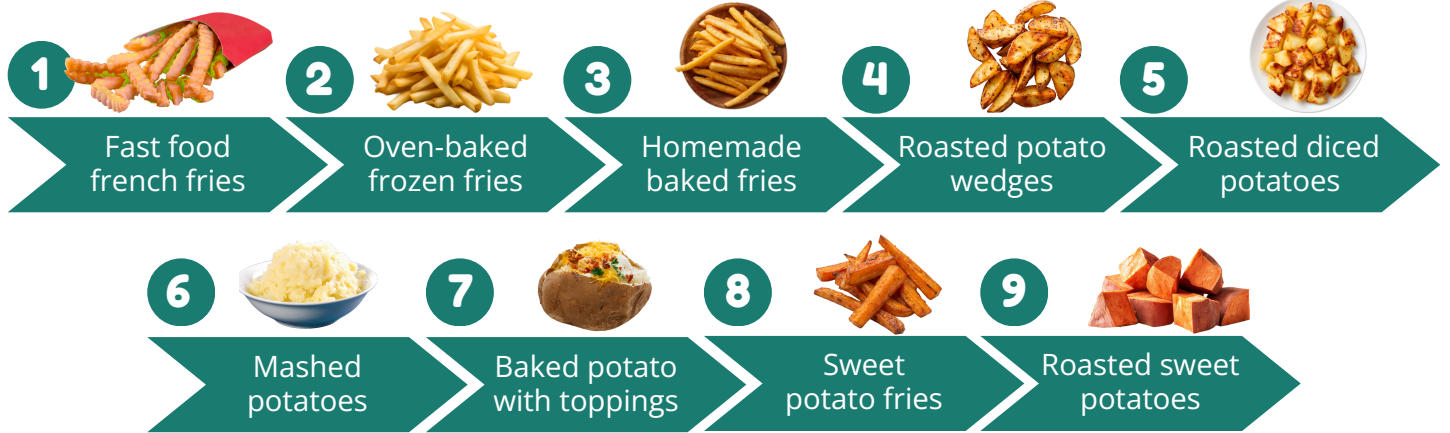
Start slow. Food chaining builds trust between you and your child.

- Keep meal and snack times positive and low pressure.
- Offer one new food with a favorite food.
- Let your child explore new foods at their own pace, even if they just touch or smell the new food first.

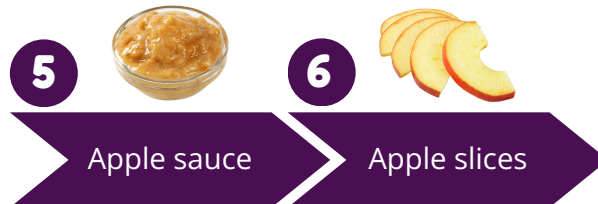
Celebrate small steps—if they look at, lick, or taste it, it counts as progress! It can take up to **15 (or more) tries** before a child starts to accept a new food.



Vegetables



Fruits



Protein

1



Chicken nuggets

2



Different brand of chicken nuggets

3



Homemade baked chicken nuggets

4



Chicken tenders

5



Grilled chicken strips with dip

6



Chicken quesadilla with cheese

7



Shredded chicken in a soft tortilla

8



Small pieces of roasted or baked chicken

1



Scrambled eggs

2



Scrambled eggs with shredded cheese

3



Egg muffin bites

4



Hard-boiled eggs

5



Omelet with cheese

6



Omelet with veggies or diced ham

7



Fried or poached eggs

1



Refried beans on a tortilla

2



Bean and cheese quesadilla

3



Soft black beans in a burrito

4



Black bean dip with chips

5



Chickpeas in pasta or soup

6



Roasted chickpeas

7



Hummus with pita or veggies

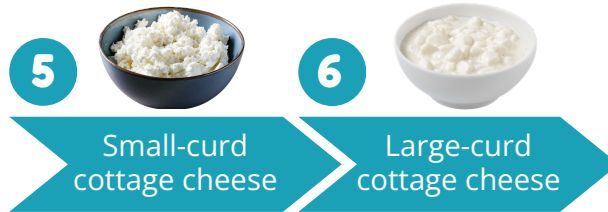
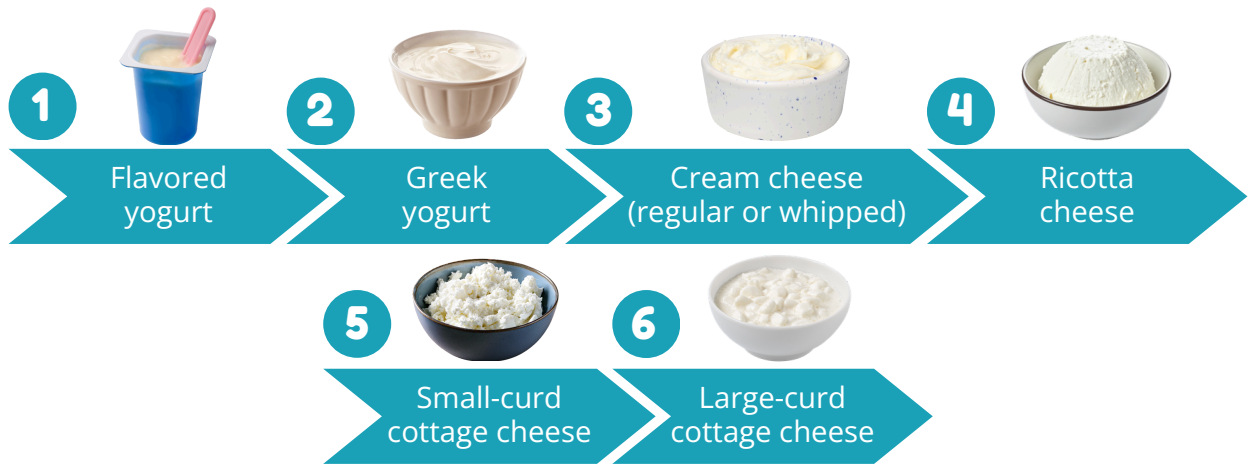
8



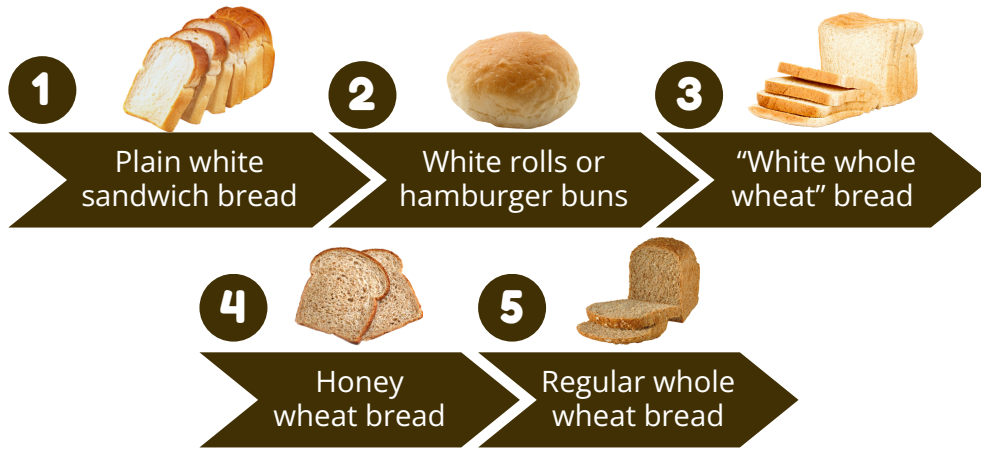
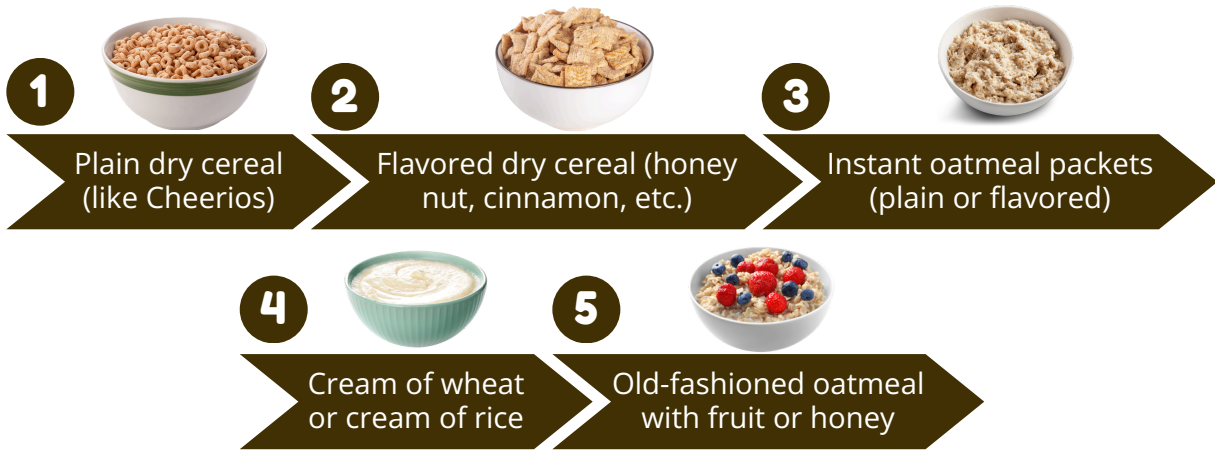
Lentil soup

Dairy

Food chains aren't one-size-fits-all. You may use flavored milk or yogurt, or you may skip those steps—both are okay! There are lots of ways to build a food chain.



Grains



Build your own food chain

