

Food and meal ideas for 2 to 3 year olds

A wide range of nutritious foods should be offered to children to ensure enough essential nutrients are provided for good health, growth and development. Remember to offer water throughout the day and that after 2 years of age, children can drink reduced fat milks like the rest of the family.



The recommended dietary intake for children aged around 2 to 3 years is shown in the table below. There may be some variations in nutritional requirements for children of this age, due to different activity levels -the table provides a general guide. Appropriate growth and development will indicate whether food intake is at an appropriate level for an individual child.






Food	Serve size	Serves a day
Vegetables and legumes/beans	75g	2 ½
Fruit	150g	1
Grain (cereal) foods	40g bread equivalent	4
Lean meat, poultry, fish, eggs, tofu	65g meat equivalent	1
Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/ or alternatives	250 mls milk equivalent	1½

For this age group, there are 0 - 1 additional serves available from across the five food groups, unsaturated spreads & oils or discretionary choices which have not been included in these meal plans. 4 - 5g (approx. 1 tsp) unsaturated spreads or oils, nuts/seed pastes are also allowed each day for this age group.



How much should kids eat?

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2 to 3 year olds	Option one	Option two	Option three
Breakfast	1 ½ breakfast wheat biscuits with ½ cup (125 mls) of milk 	1 slice wholemeal toast with ½ cup reduced salt baked beans & ½ cup (125 mls) of milk	2/3 cup breakfast cereal flakes with ½ cup (125 mls) of milk
Morning tea	2 thin wheat crackers with ¼ avocado (mashed) & 1 slice cheddar cheese	1 slice fruit toast with jam	 1 crumpet with honey
Lunch	½ small pita bread made into 2 pockets, filled with 20g grated cheese & ½ cup lettuce & sliced tomato	1 thin medium wrap with 40g chicken breast & ½ cup salad e.g. sliced tomato, sliced cucumber, grated carrots, capsicum strips	Egg (1) & lettuce sandwich (on 2 slice wholemeal bread)
Afternoon tea	2 kiwi fruits, chopped 	 1 orange cut into segments & 100 mls plain unsweetened yoghurt	100g tub plain unsweetened yoghurt & 1 cup mixed fruit salad
Dinner	A serve of Spaghetti bolognese (made with 2/3 cup cooked spaghetti with 65g meat) & ½ cup seasonal salad e.g. beetroot, corn, lettuce, carrot	Tuna and pasta bake – made with 2/3 cup pasta shapes, 50g tinned tuna or other fish & 20g cheddar cheese. Serve with ½ cup steamed vegetables e.g. broccoli, cauliflower, green beans	 ½ baked potato with 1 medium slice of lamb roast & ½ cup steamed vegetables ½ cup (125 mls) milk to drink