

The Visual Food Glossary

All 56 tolerated foods this vault rotates through, each with its own picture and a one-line note — because a name alone (Edamame? Ugu? Tahini?) isn't always enough to know what to put in the trolley.

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· 13 proteins · 13 carbohydrates · 12 vegetables · 10 fruits · 8 healthy fats

Repeated, low-pressure exposure to a food — seeing it, naming it, having it on the table — measurably increases the odds a child eventually accepts it^[13]. This glossary is designed to be looked at often, even before a food is ever served: point to a picture at the shop, name it together, and let familiarity build before the fork is ever involved.



Proteins

13 foods to rotate through



Eggs

Boil, scramble, or slice into rice or beans. One of the easiest first proteins.



Chicken

Boiled, grilled, or shredded small. Mild taste, soft texture when slow-cooked.



Beef

Stewed until fork-tender, or minced fine for sauces.



Turkey

Lower-fat swap for chicken or beef mince in the same recipes.



Fish

Deboned well and flaked. A weekly fish meal is a common, affordable protein anchor.



Edamame

Boiled young soybeans, sold frozen in the pod or shelled

Steam 5 minutes, then pop out of the pod – soft and slightly sweet.



Black beans

Cooked soft and mashed into rice or soup for an easy start.



Black-eyed beans

Also called 'beans' in West African kitchens

The base of moi-moi and akara – boil until it falls apart easily.



Lentils

Cook fastest of all the legumes and blend smooth for very young or texture-sensitive eaters.



Chickpeas

Also called garbanzo beans

Mash into a simple dip, or roast whole and lightly crushed for a snack.



Moi-moi

Steamed black-eyed-bean pudding, wrapped in leaf or foil

Soft, custard-like texture – gentle on sensitive mouths.



Plain yogurt

Unsweetened. Stir in mashed fruit rather than buying flavoured versions.



Tofu

Pressed and pan-fried in small cubes for a crisp edge, or soft-steamed.



Carbohydrates

13 foods to rotate through



White rice

The most widely accepted starch across every household in this guide.



Brown rice

More fibre than white rice – introduce slowly, half-and-half with white rice at first.



Oats

Cooked soft for breakfast, or ground into a fine flour for pancakes.



Sweet potato

Naturally sweet, soft when boiled or roasted – an easy carbohydrate to introduce.



Yam

Boiled or roasted; a staple starch across West Africa, mild in flavour.



Plantain

Boiled when green, fried or baked when ripe and sweet.



Garri

Made from cassava; soaked or made into a swallow – check tolerance carefully as texture is unusual.



Quinoa

Cooks like rice, higher in protein than most grains – good rice alternative.



Whole-grain bread

Toasted, cut into simple shapes, or used for a soft sandwich.



Pasta

A near-universal favourite texture – whole-wheat versions add fibre without changing the shape.



Millet

A traditional grain across Africa, cooked into a soft porridge.



Sorghum

Ground into flour for a soft, mild-tasting swallow or porridge.



Semovita

A smooth, mild swallow that pairs with any soup or stew in this guide.



Vegetables

12 foods to rotate through



Spinach

Blend into sauces or soups where the texture disappears but the nutrients stay.



Ugu

A leafy green common in Nigerian soups

Finely chopped and cooked soft into stews – mild, not bitter.



Carrots

Steamed until soft and sweet, or grated fine into sauces.



Broccoli

Steamed very soft, then cut small – the floret shape makes it easy to grip.



Green beans

Steamed and cut into short, safe pieces.



Bell peppers

Sweet, not spicy – roasted or blended into sauce removes the crunch some children avoid.



Cucumber

Peeled and deseeded for a milder, crunch-free version.



Tomatoes

The base of most West African stews – cooked down until smooth.



Cauliflower

Steamed soft, mashed as a rice or potato swap for extra vegetables.



Okra

Sliced thin and cooked into soup – introduce slowly if the texture is a concern.



Cabbage

Shredded fine and steamed soft, or hidden in a light stir-fry.



Garden eggs

Mild and slightly bitter raw, much softer and milder once cooked into stew.



Fruits

10 foods to rotate through



Banana

The most reliable first fruit for most children — soft, sweet, easy to mash.



Mixed berries

Blueberries, strawberries — naturally sweet and easy to blend into smoothies.



Mango

Ripe and very soft — a natural sweetener for smoothies and breakfasts.



Pawpaw

Soft, mild, and easy to digest — a gentle fruit to start with.



Orange

Peeled and de-seeded, or juiced fresh in small amounts.



Apple

Grated raw for a softer texture, or stewed until soft.



Pear

Very soft when ripe — a gentle fruit for texture-sensitive eaters.



Watermelon

High water content, naturally sweet, easy to cut into safe shapes.



Pineapple

Ripe and well-chopped — soak briefly in warm water to soften the sharp edge of the taste.



Kiwi

Very soft flesh once peeled — mash or blend for younger children.



Healthy fats

8 foods to rotate through



Avocado

Mashed on its own, on toast, or blended into a smoothie for creaminess.



Olive oil

A finishing drizzle on rice, beans, or vegetables — not for high-heat frying.



Red palm oil

Traditional in West African cooking, used in modest amounts in stews.



Peanut butter

Smooth, unsweetened variety — spread thin, or blended into a smoothie.



Almond butter

A milder-tasting alternative to peanut butter, same uses.



Tahini

Nutty and mild — blends smoothly into dips and smoothies.



Chia seeds

Stirred into yogurt or a smoothie; they soften and thicken as they sit.



Ground flaxseed

Milled, not whole, so the nutrients are actually absorbed — stir into oats or a smoothie.