



Best 100 Juices for Kids

Totally Yummy,
Awesomely Healthy,
& Naturally Sweetened
Homemade Alternatives
to Soda Pop, Sports
Drinks, & Expensive
Bottled Juices

Jessica Fisher

Best 100 Juices for Kids



To N, J, C, J, C, and E:

my six sweet children, who have given
my life more joy and meaning than
I could ever have dreamed possible.
I love you to the moon and back.



Introduction

Kids love sweet drinks. Juices, sodas, and sports drinks—they all offer cool refreshment on a hot day or after the big game. They bring comfort when a cold or flu strikes. They make great accompaniments to pizza on a Friday night.

In a word, they're just plain fun!

They can also be laden with sugar, artificial colors, and artificial flavorings. I know, leave it to a mom to be the bearer of bad news. But many of the beverages marketed to kids are just plain junk.

Rather than be a killjoy, though, I choose to be a "Yes Mom." I want to say "Yes!" when my kids ask for something sweet and refreshing on a hot summer day. I want to say "Yes!" and celebrate a hockey goal with a chilled bottle of lemon-lime sports drink. I want to say "Yes!" to ginger ale on our family pizza night.

I can do all that by preparing and serving homemade juices, sodas, and sports drinks.

Making homemade juice is a fun and creative alternative to purchasing commercially made versions. Sending fruit, juice, and crushed ice through the blender produces a frosty smoothie that can rival the local juice bar's selection. Mixing a bit of sea salt with water, juice, and honey creates a homemade sports ade that beats the bottle. Blending mint and honey syrup with juice and soda water creates a sparkling beverage to please kids of all ages.

With the great variety and quality of fresh produce available to us today, there's no reason not to whip up homemade juices, smoothies, sodas, and sports drinks. You can say "Yes!" and provide a healthier alternative to your kids at the same time.

Trust me. I'm a mom. I know these things.

Our Story

Years ago, I was a soda pop junkie. I drank a minimum of one soda every day. It was the thing that got me through the day: vanilla-flavored cola, served over crushed ice and savored through a straw.

During that season of life, I also gave birth to six children. And as children are apt to do, they all shared my love of fizzy sugar-laden drinks. (Well, except one. She likes her drinks flat.) I had a hard time telling them "No," knowing the wise child would inevitably reply, "But you drink it." I knew daily indulgence

wasn't the best thing for my kids, but I compromised by allowing them a weekly soda binge over pizza as well as a few sips from my daily glass.

Eventually our family was hit with a few bad dental check-ups and a number of cavities to fill—mine as well as the children's. At about the same time, I started to do some in-depth food research about processed sugars, additives, and the American food supply as a whole. I realized then that I wasn't feeding my children (not to mention myself and my husband) the best possible food and drink. Without watching a single panic-inducing documentary, I simply concluded that we could be eating better.

Slowly, taking baby steps, I set out to reform our eating habits. I reduced our intake of processed foods, limited our fast food meals, and became intent on buying the best ingredients our budget could handle. My family's health became a bigger priority. Along the way, I ditched my soda-drinking habit and curbed theirs as well. (Coincidentally or not, our large dental bills have all but disappeared, too.)

Our new diet included more whole foods, more meals cooked from scratch, and more organic ingredients when we could afford them. Obviously, feeding six children isn't an inexpensive endeavor, but I decided to make every bite count. At this time, we also joined an organic produce co-op that delivered a ginormous box of fruits and vegetables each week. The weekly price of \$36 for all the fruits and veggies we could eat was well worth it.

With the produce box came the opportunity to try a number of foods that I'd never purchased before—as well as some I'd never even heard of! My kids, my husband, and I were in for a new adventure. I wasn't following some faddish "eat-all-the-weird-things-you-can-eat" diet. I simply wanted to see what else the world had to offer in terms of good taste and nutrition. And I had an inkling that it didn't come in a brightly colored box or can marketed with a memorable jingle.

I'm happy to report that we've discovered the beauty of leeks, pea tendrils, pomegranates, and leafy greens. (We've also decided that we're happy to share our persimmons and collard greens with whatever friends and neighbors will take them off our hands.) While we still eat burgers and fries and pizza, and indulge in the occasional fountain drink, we enjoy more homemade whole foods, and our family's health is much better for it.

True to their roots and their mama's sweet tooth, my kids still crave a sweet drink. In the early years, we incorporated bottled juices and juice-based sparkling drinks into their pizza-night menu and let them enjoy the occasional smoothie-bar beverage or frozen juice pop. But all that glitters is not gold.



I started reading labels. *Ahem.* The labels on those bottles and frosty treats may boast of good nutrition, but these products often contain hidden sugars and additives that we'd be better off avoiding. I was stunned when I realized what was going into the blender at the local smoothie bar.

Enter the juice extractor, citrus press, blender, and ice pop molds.

In my efforts to have my sweet, tasty drinks and enjoy them with a clear conscience, too, I've taken my family to the next stage of the adventure: making these items at home.

A few small kitchen appliances are really all I need to make healthier versions of these special drinks my children crave. In the process, I also save money and introduce my kids to new tastes and flavors. Did you know that beets turn juice a beautiful shade of pink? And the produce-box parsnips that we once shunned work really well in homemade juices. Honey can be used in place of sugar in simple syrup, making a perfect natural sweetener for smoothies, slushies, and other cold drinks.

This book documents our family's journey down the road to creating homemade juices, smoothies, sports drinks, sparklies, slushies, and ice pops. I don't make any health claims. I'm a mom trying to feed her children well—and stay under budget. I don't know that drinking homemade juices will cure what ails us. I can't promise that your family's cavities will disappear, as ours seem to have done.

I do look at our homemade juices and other beverages as a fun part of our increasingly balanced and healthy diet. Kids love them. Adults do, too. Homemade juices are a great sweet treat we can enjoy daily; drinking them is a simple way to add some extra vitamins and minerals to our diet. They come in every color of the rainbow, without added colors, preservatives, or ingredients whose names you can't pronounce. And—speaking as a reformed soda junkie—that's something all moms and dads can celebrate.

Meet the Tasters

Once upon a time, I was a career woman with a master's degree and a leather satchel. I took a break from teaching public high school to have my brood of beautiful children 16 years ago, a decision I've never regretted. I've been honored to be their primary teacher and provide them with an at-home education.

Quite inadvertently, I re-entered the working world eight years ago, when I started writing for parenting magazines. My husband and children were a



source of inspiration and encouragement to me. They continued as such later, when I began blogging at Life as Mom and Good Cheap Eats. For my first cookbook, *Not Your Mother's Make-Ahead and Freeze Cookbook* (The Harvard Common Press, 2012), they were my first and best taste testers and critics.

The same holds true for this book. Meet the tasters.

On the Web, I'm known as FishMama; my children are the FishKids. We called them this in real life, before I began blogging. Once the blogs started, we kept up their pseudonyms to give them some sense of privacy. After all, I was divulging everything else.

FishChick5 is the baby in a family of six children, clocking in at five years of age at this writing. She protests that she doesn't like a certain vegetable—until I tell her she loves it. Then she gobbles it down. May she always hold such simple trust in her mama! She loves anything pink, beet juice included.

FishChick7 is a helper and encourager. She loves to cook, offering her services to make homemade tortillas, peel shrimp, or juice up a bunch of fruit. Although she's a relatively good eater, appreciating the same "chick food" as her mother, she turns up her nose at cooked leafy greens.

FishBoy9 is my resident food critic and the youngest of my four sons. At age nine, he is quick to voice protest against squash and spinach. If a recipe passes muster with him, chances are good that anyone would enjoy it.

FishBoy11 is the third of the four brothers. He has a love of music, art, and culinary endeavors. While he will typically "eat anything," he does not hesitate to express his preferences. His culinary vocabulary and food descriptions can rival those of Alton Brown. One recent summer, he insisted that we learn how to make ravioli from scratch.

FishBoy13 has always been quick-witted, the keeper of odd knowledge. He is brilliance incarnate. He also prefers his food to be white or brown, although he is growing in his love of vegetables. He's not a fan of tomatoes, but he willingly downs all the recipes in this book, albeit issuing a reminder that the ones containing tomato aren't his favorites.

FishBoy16, my oldest, towers over both his parents. He has proven to be quite knowledgeable about health and nutrition. He gladly piles his plate high with spinach and other greens and sneaks all kinds of weird things into the protein drinks he mixes. He also hits a mean slap shot.

FishPapa, my main squeeze and confidant, is the glue that holds all this together. He puts up with all my wild and crazy schemes—and tries every juice and dish I hand him to taste. Well, almost.



Berry Daze

This berry-based blend is ideal for summer, when these fruits are at their peak. The refreshing, tart flavor of this jewel-colored juice makes it a huge hit. If your berries are too tart, add another apple or a pear for a bit of extra sweetness.

MAKES 15 TO 20 OUNCES

3 cups strawberries

1 medium apple

1½ cups blueberries

1½ cups blackberries

- 1 Remove the hulls from the strawberries. Core the apple.
- 2 Juice the berries and apple according to the directions on your juicing machine. Whisk to combine.
- 3 Add water to taste if you or your children prefer a milder juice.

Jazzy
Fruit
Juices



The Produce Basket

This bright pink juice, one of our favorites, includes a large variety of common fruits and vegetables.

MAKES 20 TO 25 OUNCES

Best 100
Juices
for Kids

- 2 medium pears
- 1 medium apple
- 1 large carrot
- 1 medium beet
- 2 medium oranges
- 1 medium lemon
- 1 medium lime

- 1 Core the pears and apple. Trim the carrot. Trim, peel, and quarter the beet. Cut the oranges, lemon, and lime in half.
- 2 Juice the pears, apple, carrot, and beet according to the directions on your juicing machine.
- 3 For a larger yield of juice, juice the oranges, lemon, and lime with a citrus juicer or reamer. (If you prefer, you can juice them in the juicing machine, following the manufacturer's directions. Peel the fruit, if desired, prior to juicing.)
- 4 Pour the two juices into a pitcher, and whisk to combine.
- 5 Add water to taste if you or your children prefer a milder juice.



Orange You Glad?

Serve this juice up with a generous helping of knock-knock jokes to complement its vivid orange color. Juicing the oranges in a citrus juicer will yield the most juice. Even kids who disdain sweet potatoes won't realize that one is in here.

MAKES 15 TO 20 OUNCES

2 large carrots

1 large orange sweet potato or garnet yam

2 medium oranges

1 (½-inch) slice fresh ginger

- 1** Trim the carrots. Peel the sweet potato. Cut the oranges in half.
- 2** Juice the carrots, sweet potato, and ginger according to the directions on your juicing machine.
- 3** For a larger yield of juice and less waste, juice the oranges with a citrus juicer or reamer. (If you prefer, you can juice them in the juicing machine, following the manufacturer's directions. Peel the fruit, if desired, prior to juicing.)
- 4** Pour the two juices into a pitcher, and whisk to combine.
- 5** Add water to taste if you or your children prefer a milder juice.

Brilliant
Fruit &
Vegetable
Blends





The Dirty Dozen and the Clean Fifteen

It's common knowledge that organic produce, grown without chemical fertilizers and pesticides, is better for the environment and better for our health. In an ideal world, we'd be buying all organic.

Unfortunately, organic produce still costs more at the checkout than conventionally grown produce. Until that changes, we sometimes find ourselves in a quandary about what to buy. If you have to choose between best quality and better pricing, the Dirty Dozen list can at least help you know what to avoid.

Each year the Environmental Working Group, a research and advocacy organization, releases lists of the Dirty Dozen and the Clean Fifteen. These lists identify the fruits and vegetables that have the highest and lowest levels, respectively, of pesticide residue from conventional farming. It might be worth spending the extra money for organic versions of items on the Dirty Dozen list. But you can save a few pennies by buying conventionally grown produce from the Clean Fifteen list.

Here are the most recent lists as of this book's publication. Visit ewg.org for the current lists or download their mobile app.

DIRTY DOZEN

- 1 Apples
- 2 Strawberries
- 3 Grapes
- 4 Celery
- 5 Peaches
- 6 Spinach
- 7 Sweet bell peppers
- 8 Nectarines (imported)
- 9 Cucumbers
- 10 Potatoes
- 11 Cherry tomatoes
- 12 Chile peppers

CLEAN FIFTEEN

- 1 Sweet corn
 - 2 Onions
 - 3 Pineapple
 - 4 Avocados
 - 5 Cabbage
 - 6 Sweet peas (frozen)
 - 7 Papayas
 - 8 Mangoes
 - 9 Asparagus
 - 10 Eggplant
 - 11 Kiwis
 - 12 Grapefruit
 - 13 Cantaloupe
 - 14 Sweet potatoes
 - 15 Mushrooms
- 



Blueberry- Banana- Coconut Blender

Canned light coconut milk is a useful item to keep on hand in your pantry. It's an ideal substitute for regular milk, offering a shelf-stable alternative to dairy. Try to find a variety without added ingredients. The blueberries and banana in this smoothie add sweetness, antioxidants, and a good dose of potassium.

SERVES 1

- 1 cup fresh or frozen blueberries
- 1 small banana, broken into chunks
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup crushed ice
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup canned light coconut milk

- 1 Place the blueberries, banana, ice, and coconut milk in the blender cup or pitcher.
- 2 Blend until very smooth.

Super-
Simple
Smoothies

Yogurt-Peach Ice Pops

These layered ice pops take a few more steps to prepare than the other ice pops, but they are quite the novelty. Who doesn't like layers of flavors and colors? Feel free to make layered pops with other fruit purees, adjusting the sweetener to taste.

MAKES ABOUT 2 CUPS ICE POP MIXTURE

2 peaches, peeled, halved and pitted (or one 15-ounce can peaches in juice, drained)

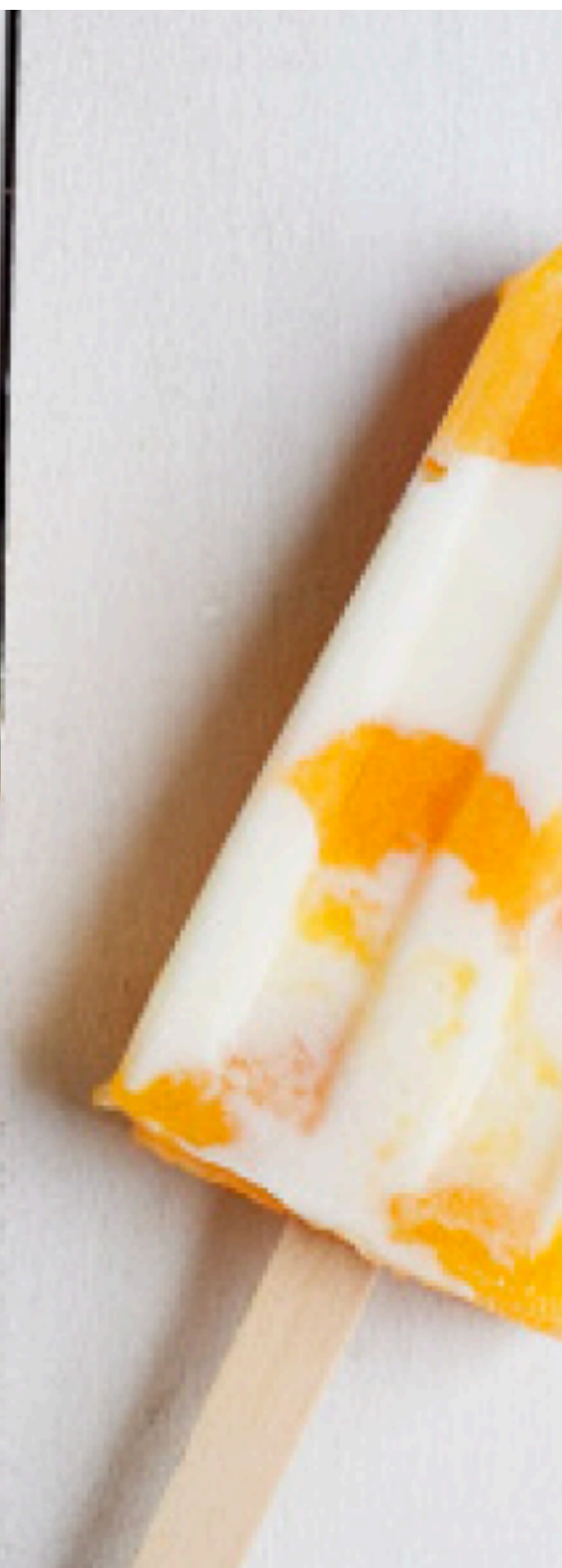
$\frac{1}{4}$ cup Honey Syrup (page 154)

1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup plain yogurt

1 tablespoon honey

- 1 Place the peaches, honey syrup, and lemon juice in a blender or a food processor fitted with a metal blade. Blend until the mixture is very smooth.
- 2 In a small bowl, combine the yogurt and honey. Stir until well combined.
- 3 Pour half of the peach mixture into ice pop molds. Make a second layer, using the yogurt mixture. Top with a layer of the remaining peach mixture. Freeze until firm.
- 4 Remove the frozen ice pops from the molds and serve. You may need to hold the molds under warm water for a moment to thaw the pops slightly and loosen them from the molds.





Lemon-Lime Sports Ade

This lemon-lime drink tastes like the bottled or powdered version I enjoyed as a child. Inexpensive to mix up, it's delightfully refreshing. Use freshly squeezed juices for the best flavor. Feel free to use one of the flavored honey syrups on page 155 if you prefer a twist of ginger or mint.

MAKES 1 QUART

3½ cups water

6 tablespoons Honey Syrup (page 154)

2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice

2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lime juice

¼ teaspoon fine sea salt

- 1 In a pitcher, whisk together the water, honey syrup, lemon and lime juices, and salt.
- 2 Store in a covered jar or container in the refrigerator. Serve chilled.



Juice It Up...

... and your kids will love you for it! When you create yummy homemade juices without all the sugar, artificial flavors, high-fructose corn syrup—and cost—of store-bought drinks, you, too, will love the fact that you are doing something awesomely healthy and good for your children.

It's time to bring the juicing revolution home for everyone in the family, kids included. Every parent knows about the effects on children of drinks loaded with junky ingredients. But what can you do? Most kids want something more interesting than plain water and something sweeter than a glass of milk.

Jessica Fisher, food blogger and mom of six, discovered the answer the day she brought home a juicing machine. She tried hundreds of flavor combinations and discovered a wealth of recipes that could pass the rigorous six-kid test in her home. In *Best 100 Juices for Kids*, Fisher shares the sparkly fresh and tasty results. *Best 100 Juices for Kids* includes:

- 45 fruit-based juices and 25 veggie-based juices
- 30 other kid-pleasing drinks, including homemade sports drinks, luscious smoothies, icy "slushies," and "sparklies"—club soda-based carbonated drinks that replace soda pop
- Friendly, expert advice on how to get the most from your juicing machine

Jessica Fisher's popular blogs, *Life as Mom* and *Good Cheap Eats*, have established her as a go-to authority on cooking inexpensively for a family. Her bestselling first book, *Not Your Mother's Make-Ahead and Freeze Cookbook*, added to her reputation as a writer with loads of clever ideas for feeding a family cheaply and nutritiously. She lives in the San Diego area with her husband and with their six children—all of them now fans of homemade juices, smoothies, and sparklies!

Front cover photographs by Dimitris66, Stockphoto

Recipe photographs by Brian Samuels

Author photograph by Sharon Leppelgren

The Harvard Common Press
www.harvardcommonpress.com

Cookbook / \$16.95 US

ISBN 978-1-55832-829-7

