

SAFE BOTTLE PREPARATION



Properly preparing formula is a straightforward, yet crucial step to ensure your baby receives the correct nutrients and reduce the risk of contamination. Formula must be prepared according to the instructions on the label, with clean and sterilised equipment every time. Formula is best made up fresh for each feed and consumed within 2 hours. Formula should not be diluted or concentrated or have any food, beverage or medicine added unless on the advice from a health practitioner.

Cleaning and Sterilising Bottles and Teats



- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water.
- Dry them with a clean cloth or single-use paper towel.



- Check and throw away any damaged teats (as bacteria can grow in the cracks).



- Wash bottles and teats in hot, soapy water.
- Ensure holes of the teats, caps, discs and screw-top areas are cleaned with a bottlebrush specifically used for this purpose.



- Rinse under cold water.
- Squirt water through the teat to clear the holes.



Sterilise your equipment:

- **Boiling:** Put everything into a large pot and cover with water. Bring to a rolling boil. Boil for **5 minutes**. Once cool enough, remove equipment using tongs to avoid scalding. Shake off excess water.
- **Using chemicals:** You can use specially designed antibacterial solutions that come in liquid or tablet form. Store out of the reach of children. Follow manufacturer's instructions carefully. Use tongs to remove equipment from solution and shake off excess solution.
- **Other:** Steam and microwave steam sterilisers are available for purchase. Always follow the manufacturers instructions carefully.

Store sterilised equipment in a clean container in the fridge and resterilise after use or after 24 hours.

Please be advised this is not intended to replace professional advice. You should not use this information to diagnose a health or medical condition or problem, or alter, commence, or delay any medical treatment.

Breast milk is best for babies. A healthy diet is important for breastfeeding. A decision not to breastfeed, or partial bottle feed, may reduce milk supply making it difficult to reverse. Consider the cost and social impact of feeding methods. Use formula as directed, as improper use can affect baby's health.

Steps for Preparing a Feed Using Powdered Infant Formula



1. Clean and disinfect a surface on which to prepare the feed.
2. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water and dry them using a clean cloth or single-use paper towel.



3. Boil a sufficient volume of safe drinking water to last the day. If using an automatic kettle, wait until the kettle switches off.
4. If using a non-automatic kettle let the water come to a rolling boil, then boil for **3 minutes**.



5. Assemble the cleaned, sterilised teat(s) and bottle(s) according to the manufacturer's instructions.
6. Pour the measured boiled water into the sterilised bottles and leave them capped on the bench. Keep this water for **no longer than 24 hours**.



7. When baby needs a bottle, sit the bottle of prepared water in a pot of hot tap water (**about 55 °C**) to warm up for about **2 to 3 minutes**.
8. If you do not have a prepared bottle of cooled boiled water, use water of **about 40°C**.



9. Each bottle should be prepared individually. Add the scoops of formula to the water already in the bottle. Always use the scoop provided with the formula because different formulas may have different scoop sizes.
10. Cap the bottle and swirl or shake it to mix. If any powder has not dissolved you can give the bottle a quick shake and then swirl again.



11. Test the temperature of the formula on your wrist before feeding; it should be skin temperature (**about 37 °C**).
12. After **2 hours** at room temperature, any leftover formula should be discarded. Do not leave prepared formula in a warm place.

If Formula Must Be Prepared In Advance For Later Use

- Store prepared formula between 2-4°C towards the back of the refrigerator. Use within 24 hours.
- If transporting formula, keep the powder separate from the cooled boiled water mix just before use. If transporting a prepared bottle of formula, keep cold in an insulated carrier.
- Discard formula that has been out of the refrigerator for more than 2 hours.

Other Considerations

- Always keep formula in its original can and cover with the lid to prevent contamination of the powder.
- Do not transfer the powder to another container because there is a high risk of contamination. Storing an open tin in the fridge or freezer is not recommended either as moisture will get into the powder and cause clumping.
- Once a tin has been opened, store in a cool, dry place and use within 4 weeks.

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1. National Health and Medical Research Centre. Infant feeding guidelines: Information for health workers [Internet]. Australia; Australian Government NHMRC; 2012 [cited 2024 June 20] <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/infant-feeding-guidelines-information-health-workers>

2. Raising Children Network. Infant formula preparation: in pictures. Australia; Raising Children Network Australia; 2024 [cited 2024 June 23] <https://raisingchildren.net.au/newborns/breastfeeding-bottle-feeding/bottle-feeding/formula-prep-pictures>

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BREASTMILK IS BEST FOR BABIES: Professional advice should be followed before using an infant formula. Partial bottle feeding could negatively affect breastfeeding. Good maternal nutrition is important for breastfeeding and reversing a decision not to breastfeed may be difficult. Infant formula should be used as directed. Improper use of infant formula may affect the health of the baby. Social and financial implications should be considered.