

# How to handle the picky eater

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**Why do you say your child is picky?**

**Does she eat differently from other children?**

**Does she get upset around new food?**

**How can you tell if she is really picky or just normal?**



Children are naturally picky. Some are extra cautious about new food. Some are picky because parents get pushy with feeding.

## **What is normal?**

- Liking a food one day but not the next.
- Not eating much at times.
- Tasting a new food and taking it out.
- Seeing a new food many times before trying it.

## **What is picky eating?**

- Only eating her favorite foods—ever.
- Getting upset when she sees new food.
- Whining or crying at the table.
- Worrying whether she will be able to eat away from home.

You can't make your child eat if she doesn't want to. You can, however, teach her to behave nicely at the table. If she behaves nicely, sooner or later she will push herself along to learn to like new food.

## **Here's how to teach your child to behave well at the table:**

- Do your jobs with feeding and let your child do hers.  
You decide *what*, *when* and *where* your child gets to eat.  
She decides *how much* and *whether* she eats—of what you make.
- Be child-friendly with feeding, but don't cater to her.
- Have the table be pleasant. Include her in conversation.
- Teach her to turn down food politely—to say “yes, please” and “no, thank you.”
- Give her encouragement: “You can find something to eat. You don't have to eat if you don't want to.”

