

## Fruit and Yogurt Tartlets Sensory Recipe

*These simple tartlets are so refreshing they'll be gone in one bite*

Although this recipe is so easy it doesn't need instructions, we found lots of sensory opportunities even in the simplest task of filling phyllo cups.

When you make these tartlets with your child, you'll help them build fine motor skills and finger dexterity, which are important if your child will read braille one day. Your child can try filling each tart with a spoonful of yogurt, picking up a piece of fruit, and putting it on top of the yogurt. Muffin pans are perfect for sorting the ingredients and give your child a natural opportunity to practice putting fruit in the muffin cups and then taking it out.

The recipe is easily customizable based on your child's favorite fruit and yogurt flavor. If you can't find mini phyllo pastry shells in your grocery store, you can also use mini ice cream cone cups.

This recipe makes 12 tartlets.






*Recipe and photo courtesy of [Healthy Family Project](#)*

## Utensils


- One 6- or 12-cup muffin pan
- A small bowl
- A small knife
- Cutting board
- A tablespoon
- A serving tray or plate

## Ingredients

- 12 mini phyllo pastry shells, found in the freezer section of the grocery store
- Vanilla yogurt (or your child's favorite flavor)
- 2 cups assorted chopped fruit, such as strawberries, blueberries, melon, kiwi, or pineapple. You can save time and buy a pre-cut fruit salad, use berries only, or choose your child's favorites. Even though preparing your own fruit takes longer, it provides many opportunities for sensory learning and concept development. This recipe has some suggestions.)





Recipe	Suggested Sensory Directions
<p>1. Gather the ingredients and utensils. Remove the package of phyllo shells from the freezer.</p>	<p> What do the utensils feel like? Are their textures rough, smooth, or shiny? Brr, the phyllo pastry shells are cold because they were in the freezer.</p> <p> When you tap the muffin pan with the tablespoon, does it make a sound? Count out loud how many cups are in your muffin tin. Are there six or 12? Twelve is twice as many as six!</p> <p> Fruit naturally comes in so many bright colors because of their pigments. Human eyes have pigment in the iris, which is the colored part of the eye.</p>

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<p>2. If you bought your fruit already cut into chunks, open the container and spoon the fruit onto your cutting board. Sort the fruit by variety. Cut the fruit into smaller, ¼-inch pieces.</p>	<p> Count out loud each piece of fruit. How many pieces of melon are there? How many grapes? Name each fruit as you sort them. “Oh, here’s a piece of pineapple. It’s sweet and sticky. The blueberries are round. Daddy likes blueberries on his cereal.”</p> <p> Help your child use a spoon or their finger to poke each piece of fruit and push it across the cutting board or their feeding tray to sort them into separate piles. Do the different fruits feel the same or different? Blueberries and grapes feel like little balls – be careful not to let them roll away! What happens when you press on a berry with your spoon? Mashed berries are different than whole berries. They make jams and jellies smoother.</p> <p> Lick your finger or your spoon. It tastes like fruit juice! Which one is your favorite?</p> <p> Talk about the colors of the fruits. Their bright colors are easy to see on a white cutting board.</p> <p> Using hand under hand, encourage your child to hop on your hand while you cut the fruit into smaller pieces. Hand under hand allows your child to feel the gentle sawing motion and still participate in the cooking activity.</p>







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<p>3. If you bought whole strawberries, wash them and remove the stems. Cut the berries into bite-size pieces.</p>	<p> Where did you buy your strawberries? Maybe you picked them yourself at a farm. Talk about the day your family went to the farm and picked berries. What else did you do at the farm? Did you ride a tractor? Touch a sheep?</p> <p> If your child is interested, let them try using small children's scissors to cut the stems off each strawberry. If you use a knife, encourage your child to place their hand over yours as you cut off each stem.</p> <p> Talk about the color of the red strawberries. When you remove the green stem, the center of the berry is white.</p> <p> Use narration as you describe how you're going to turn the water on at the sink. Listen to the stream of water splashing inside your colander as you rinse the berries and make them clean.</p>





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Recipe	Suggested Sensory Directions
4. If you bought a whole melon, cut the melon in quarters and remove the flesh from the skin. Cut the melon into bite-size pieces. Peel kiwi easily by cutting off each end and running a spoon around it between the skin and the flesh.	<p data-bbox="732 264 1429 453"> Touch the melon. Is the skin smooth or bumpy? A watermelon has smooth, green skin. Cantaloupe has bumpy skin. The skin of a kiwi is fuzzy! Melons are big and heavy compared to a kiwi!</p> <p data-bbox="732 474 1429 663"> Talk about the round shape of the melon and the kiwi. What else is round in your home? Balls are round. The wheels on a child's wheelchair are round.</p> <p data-bbox="732 684 1429 789"> Smell the melon. The fragrance will tell you if it's ripe.</p> <p data-bbox="732 810 1429 915"> When you cut your melon, what's inside? Is the flesh orange or pink? Do you see any seeds?</p> <p data-bbox="732 936 1429 1083"> Using hand under hand, encourage your child to hop on top of your hand while you cut the melon into bite-size pieces.</p> <p data-bbox="732 1104 1429 1293"> It's hard to resist melons. They're a favorite snack for children with sensitive palates because the pieces are soft, juicy, and sweet. You can chew or suck on them.</p>

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<p>5. Put the cut-up fruit into the muffin tins, sorted by variety. Spoon some yogurt into a separate bowl. Open the package of phyllo shells and put 12 on your serving tray or plate.</p>	<p> Muffin tins have so many uses besides baking. They're great for sorting similar items like the fruit in this recipe, but you can also use them for sorting beads, balls, pegs, or other small toys. Your child can practice putting things in the tins and taking them out or moving the items from one tin to the other. A six-cup muffin tin resembles the six dots of a braille cell! What letters can you make? Fill up the cups to make your child's first initial.</p> <p> Use verbal descriptions as you narrate how you're spooning the yogurt out of the container into another bowl or picking up a piece of fruit with a spoon or tongs and placing the fruit into the muffin tin. "In," "out," "on top of," and "under" are directional concepts that are important for early orientation and mobility as your child learns about their surroundings.</p> <p> Count out loud the phyllo shells. If the package has 15 shells and you take out 12, how many shells are left? Maybe you should make three more tartlets!</p> <p> Food with smooth, sweet textures like yogurt or pudding appeal to kids with sensitive palates. Lick the spoon or dab a little on your child's lips.</p>

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<p>6. Scoop about a tablespoon of yogurt with your spoon and put a dollop in each phyllo shell.</p>	<p> Oops, some of the yogurt spilled on your work surface. Let your child try tracing shapes in the yogurt with their fingers or put a dollop on their feeding tray and fingerpaint with the yogurt.</p> <p> Use verbal descriptions to explain how you're spooning the yogurt into each shell. Does the yogurt slide off your spoon into the shell or do you use a spatula to scrape the yogurt off your spoon?</p> <p> Time to lick the spoon or your fingers!</p>
<p>7. Sprinkle a few fruit pieces on top of the phyllo shell.</p>	<p> Use the hand-under hand strategy and ask your child to help you take a spoonful of fruit from the muffin tin and sprinkle it on each tartlet.</p> <p> "Whom should we make the tartlets for? Let's make a special one for Grandma – she likes blueberries the best!"</p> <p> The bright colors of the fruit "pop" on top of the white yogurt.</p> <p> Stop to count out loud how many tartlets you've made. "One, two, three, four. We need to make eight more." Try counting backwards.</p>
<p>8. Serve the tartlets immediately so the pastry shells don't get soggy.</p>	<p> If your child has difficulty with mixed textures, put the fruit into the phyllo cup without yogurt. Your child can eat the fruit and then eat the cup separately.</p> <p> Although an adult can eat the tartlets in one bite, you might need to cut your child's tartlet into smaller pieces. The shell is crispy!</p>

