

Strawberry Watermelon Smoothie Sensory Recipe

Watermelon and strawberries are two of our favorite fruits! Combined in a smoothie, they are refreshing and not too sweet.

Smoothies are a healthy and delicious snack for the whole family! The smooth texture is appealing to picky eaters. A smoothie can be sucked or sipped. Try dabbing a little on your child's tray so they can feel the smoothie with their fingertips.

You can make this smoothie with fresh or frozen strawberries and pre-cut watermelon, which saves time. This recipe also includes vanilla Greek yogurt which adds protein and calcium, and ground flax seed which adds omega-3 essential fatty acids and fiber.

Don't be fooled by the simplicity of making a smoothie. There are still plenty of opportunities for sensory learning as you prep and measure each ingredient into separate bowls before whirling them up in the blender.

This recipe makes four medium smoothies or eight small ones.







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





Utensils





- Measuring cup
- Bowls to assemble the fruit and yogurt in
- Cutting board if using fresh strawberries
- A small knife or kitchen scissors if using fresh strawberries
- Colander if using fresh strawberries
- Teaspoon
- Rubber spatula
- Blender









Ingredients








- 2 cups fresh or frozen strawberries (about 12 medium strawberries)
- 1 cup pre-cut watermelon (about 8 cubes)
- 1 cup vanilla Greek yogurt
- ½ cup milk of your choice
- 2 cups ice
- 1 teaspoon ground flax seed (optional)

Recipe	Suggested Sensory Directions
1. Gather the ingredients and utensils. If you're using frozen strawberries, take the bag out of the freezer.	<p data-bbox="732 264 1435 411"> What do the utensils feel like? Are their textures rough, smooth, or shiny? Touch the bag of frozen strawberries or the milk carton. They're cold!</p> <p data-bbox="732 432 1435 779"> What happens when you bang the utensils together or turn the blender on? What sounds do they make? For children who use switch-activated toys or communication devices, your home blender can be easily connected to a switch to allow your child to help with turning the blender on and off. As your EI-TVI or assistive-tech consultant for more information!</p> <p data-bbox="732 800 1435 947"> Allow your child to feel the blender base, buttons, pitcher, and lid (before the sharp blade is inserted).</p> <p data-bbox="732 968 1435 1295"> Cooking with your child can introduce many concepts. As you assemble the blender, you could say, "The blade of the blender is sharp! Mommy has to be careful when she holds it, so she doesn't cut her fingers." What else is sharp in your kitchen? Knives have sharp edges, but rubber spatulas don't.</p>

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<p>2. If you're using fresh strawberries, remove their stems and rinse them in a colander.</p>	<p> Where did you find the strawberries in your refrigerator? Talk about the day you went to the grocery store to buy the strawberries and saw so many fruits and vegetables. Maybe you snacked on a free banana.</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 the water splashing inside your colander as you rinse the berries and make them clean.</p>

Recipe	Suggested Sensory Directions
3. If you're using frozen strawberries, open the package. Put two cups fresh or frozen strawberries in a bowl.	<p data-bbox="732 268 1433 453"> Touch a frozen strawberry. It's hard and cold. If you let it sit on your counter for a few minutes, the strawberry gets softer as it thaws. Does a frozen strawberry feel different than a fresh strawberry?</p> <p data-bbox="732 478 1433 856"> Do you pour the frozen strawberries from the package into a measuring cup, or do you pick up one strawberry at a time and place it IN the cup? Action verbs make cooking come alive and help your child learn simple concepts such as in/out, warm/cold, etc. Count the strawberries out loud as you measure two cups. "One, two, three, four...there's almost 12!" Try counting backwards too!</p> <p data-bbox="732 882 1433 1108"> Taste a strawberry. It's sweet and juicy. If it's too big for your child's mouth, cut it into smaller pieces. Touch a little bit to your child's lips with your fingertips if your child is picky about new textures or flavors.</p> <p data-bbox="732 1134 1433 1257"> The bright, red color of the berries pops in a white serving bowl.</p>

Recipe	Suggested Sensory Directions
<p>4. Put one cup or about eight cubes of pre-cut watermelon into another bowl.</p>	<p> Using pre-cut watermelon saves time because you don't have to buy a whole watermelon and cut it up. Talk about where those juicy watermelon pieces came from – a big, round, heavy fruit with a hard green skin! The fruit is inside the skin.</p> <p> Count out loud the watermelon cubes as you fill the measuring cup and pour them in a bowl.</p> <p> Allow your child to touch a watermelon cube or put a small piece in their palm or on their tray. The cube feels moist and a little sticky. Does the juice dribble down your hand? Does it feel the same as or different than the strawberries?</p> <p> Lick your fingers after touching the watermelon. The juice is sweet. Though it's unlikely you'll find one, watch out for watermelon seeds!</p>
<p>5. Spoon one cup of yogurt into another bowl.</p>	<p> Foods with smooth, sweet textures like yogurt and pudding may appeal to kids with sensitive palates. What does yogurt feel like? Wet? Cold? Put some on your child's fingertips or dab a little on their lips.</p> <p> Smell the yogurt. It smells like milk but it's tangier.</p> <p> Talk about the smooth texture. Describe how you're spooning the yogurt from its container into a measuring cup, pouring the yogurt into another bowl, and scraping the measuring cup with a spatula so it's empty and almost clean.</p> <p> Vanilla is a comforting flavor. Lick the spatula or wipe the measuring cup with your finger to get the last drop of yogurt.</p>

Recipe	Suggested Sensory Directions
<p>6. Open the freezer and take out two cups of ice and put the cubes in another bowl.</p>	<p> Brr, the freezer is cold! It makes the ice hard and frozen. Do some of the cubes stick together or do they stick to your fingers?</p> <p> Listen to the ice clatter as you scoop out some handfuls into your measuring cup. How many ice cubes make one cup of ice? Count each cube out loud as you pick up each one from the ice dispenser or drop each one into the bowl. Ice cubes dropped in a metal bowl will make more sound than in a plastic bowl.</p> <p> If the ice cubes are too cold for your child's hands, use a large spoon or small cup to scoop them up and dump them into the measuring cup.</p> <p> Oops, one of the ice cubes fell on the counter. Watch it melt and make a puddle of water.</p>
<p>7. Assemble the blender and plug the cord into the wall outlet. Add all the ingredients, one at a time, and finish with a half cup of milk and the flax seed, if using. Put the lid on the blender.</p>	<p> Talk about the purpose of a blender. Why do you plug the cord into the wall? Kitchen appliances are tools that make cooking faster and easier.</p> <p> What colors do you see in the blender? Do you see different shapes too? Is the milk on top of the fruit or did it sink to the bottom of the blender?</p> <p> Let your child help put the lid on the blender.</p>

Recipe	Suggested Sensory Directions
<p>8. Turn the blender on and blend for about one minute on high until all the ingredients are incorporated.</p>	<p> Give your child a warning that they are about to hear a “big” noise. Try counting so they can anticipate exactly when it will happen. “One, two, three...go!” Or, let your child push the start button when they’re ready.</p> <p> Children with visual impairments learn through their hands. Allow your child to touch the jar of the blender while it’s whirling the ingredients or use hand under hand to encourage your child to hop on your hands. The vibration of the blender can be soothing to some children.</p> <p> The blender is noisy! If your child is sensitive to loud noises, talk about how the blender is busy making the smoothie smooth. Turn the blender on and off or use the “pulse” feature if the constant noise is too much for your child.</p>
<p>9. Serve the smoothie in your child’s favorite cup – with a straw or in a sippy cup. Or pour a little bit on your child’s tray so they can touch the smoothie and bring the fresh fruit to their lips. Eating it with a spoon is just as yummy!</p>	<p> The smoothie is cold! If your child is sensitive to temperature, let the smoothie come to room temperature.</p> <p> If the texture is too wet, put a small amount of smoothie into a Ziploc bag or your child to squish with their hands.</p> <p> What flavors can you taste now that they’re all mixed up? The strawberries or the watermelon? Maybe you just like the smoothie because it’s cold and refreshing! What type of fruit smoothie will you make next time?</p>