

Fruit Animals

Got a fussy eater on your hands? Here's a great way to make fruit appear more appealing, and make eating it a lot more fun, too! Research shows that kids that get involved in the food preparation tend to enjoy eating it more. He'll use dried and fresh fruit to make a "Fruity Friend"—a creature with an apple face and features made from other fruit types, nuts, seeds, and fruit "leather." If you wish, you can also sweeten it up a little more with a few candy embellishments.

What You Need:

- 1 mango
- 1 cored apple
- Small pieces of colorful dried fruit
- Slices and pieces of fresh fruit (seeds and skin removed as appropriate)
- Nuts
- Seeds
- Fruit "leather"
- Ready-to-use icing (to use as 'glue')



What You Do:

1. Gather all the ingredients and display them on a tray, so your child can easily view the materials that he has available to work with.
2. Get your child to stick two small pieces of candy onto the apple as "eyes," using the icing as glue.
3. Invite him to decorate the rest of the creature using the dried fruit. Here are some suggestions:
 - Use mango strips or halved dried apple rungs as ears.
 - Use fruit leather cut into fine strips as hair.
 - Use halved fresh seedless grapes, small nuts, raisins or seeds for eyes.
 - Use a peeled, cored halved fresh pear into a mouse! Just add raisin eyes, almonds as ears, and a thin strip of fruit leather as a tail.
 - Make a fresh mango hedgehog! Slice a side of mango and cut the flesh in a criss-cross pattern, being careful not to cut through to the skin. Then carefully turn it inside-out to reveal a hedgehog shape. He can also add eyes, a raisin nose, and fruit leather whiskers!
4. When your child has finished decorating, his fruity creature will be ready to eat!

Here's a fun variation: Cut fresh fruit into pieces and slices and get your child to make a fruity picture using the plate as his canvas. You will not need icing "glue" for this.