

Pears

School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme

Your delivery

- Each pack contains: 10 pears
- Number of pieces per pupil: 1
- **Storage:** Somewhere cool, dry, away from direct sunlight and chemicals, and ideally off the ground
- **Preparation:** Wash



What to expect

Unlike most other fruits, pears ripen best off the tree – pears left to ripen on the tree can become gritty. They are meant to be ripened after purchase and therefore may arrive at school hard. To ripen, pears should be kept covered and stored at room temperature. Some varieties of pear have a natural russet (darker colouring on some parts of the skin) on them. Smooth russet is perfectly acceptable. The shape of pears can vary from an elongated to a squat shape. Their colours can also vary between green, red, yellow and mixed. Black scarring or blemishes are caused by the fruit rubbing against branches of the tree before picking, or are due to poor handling after harvest. These are perfectly safe to eat.

The School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme provides schools with Conference, Concorde, and Rocha varieties. Occasionally Packhams, Williams and Forelle may be included.

Nutritional information

- ✓ Good source of vitamins C and K
- ✓ A rich source of dietary fibre
- ✓ All fruit and vegetables are low in sodium, calories and fat
- ✓ Source of minerals such as copper and potassium

Place of origin

Pears originate from South east Europe and western Asia. They are now grown all over the world in counties with a moderate climate, such as England, Portugal, France, Holland, Germany, Belgium, Chile and South Africa.

Pears



Tips for storing, handling and eating pears at home

- Check the ripeness of a pear by gently applying pressure to the stem end with your thumb. When it yields to the pressure, the pear is ready to eat (hard pears usually take a few days to ripen).
- Pears should be stored at a cool temperature between 7°C and 10 °C
- Pears are great to eat as a snack, with or without skin. Sliced raw pears are popular additions to fruit salads. Cut pears should be brushed with lemon or lime juice to prevent discoloration. Pears can also be juiced, made into cider, poached whole, grilled, sautéed and even barbequed.
- Pears can be substituted for apples in most recipes

Interesting fact

- Pear trees can live for 100 years, but they are usually replaced in orchards after 30-40 years
- Pear trees can grow to between 12 and 15 metres tall
- Pears do not float
- There are over 3000 varieties of pears grown around the world

How pears are grown

- Pears grown on pyramid-shaped deciduous trees
- Pear trees are not usually grown from seed. Instead the shoots of a particular variety of pear are grafted on to a different root stock.
- A pear tree will take five to seven years to bear its first fruits
- In spring (normally a bit earlier than apple trees), the trees are covered in pollen from flowers from another kind of pear tree.
- Beehives are often placed in orchards to increase pollination.
- The flowers produce the pears
- Pears are picked when green, firm and mature – just prior to turning soft and ripe
- The pears are picked by hand as their skin is very sensitive to bruising.
- Pear trees rest during winter months when they are pruned and prepared for the next growing period.

Simple recipe

Cut and fry chunks in hot butter for 5-10 mins, sprinkle with sugar to sweeten and turn up the heat until the sugar caramelises.

Serve straight away with ice cream or cream.

For more information

www.nhs.uk/5aday, www.nhs.uk/change4life, www.food.gov.uk, www.nhs.uk/healthyeating and www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk