{Food}
{Additives}
What are food additives?

Processed foods often contain a very small amount of ingredients called additives which are added to:

• Extend the shelf life (the length of time the food is safe to eat)
• Improve the colour
• Improve the texture
• Improve the flavour
• Improve the smell
• Improve the consistency (thickness)
• Increase nutritional value
What are food additives?

Food additives can be natural or synthetic (chemical).

**Natural example** = salt & acids such as vinegar or lemon juice.

**Chemical example** = saccharin or aspartame which are sweeteners (add sweetness).
Safety

• The possible health risks of food additives are the subject of fierce controversy. However, food additives allowed by law in the UK are generally considered safe.

• For example, several studies, have now been published which show additives such as colourings or sodium benzoate (preservative) can adversely affect the behaviour of children aged between three and nine years old.

• Some scientists have linked additives in general use, particularly tartrazine or E102 to:

• Hyperactivity in children/Allergies/ Asthma/ Migraines/Cancer.
European Union (EU) legislation
Requires most additives used in foods to be labelled clearly in the list of ingredients, with their function, followed by either their name or E number. **An E number means that it has passed safety tests and has been approved for use here and in the rest of the EU.**

**Label:** E-numbers, e.g. E440. or they may be shown as their chemical name, e.g. pectin, or both, e.g. E440 - pectin.
- E100-E199 – colours
- E200-E299 – preservatives
- E300-E399 – antioxidants
- E400-E499 – stabilisers/emulsifiers
Safety?

• Certain additives, like certain foods, can cause a small number of people to react badly to them. Such people need to avoid the food or food additive to which they are sensitive. To do this they must learn how to read the labels on food packages.

• Some products would not exist at all if additives were not used e.g. cheese spreads, processed cheese, low fat products.
Colours
E100-E199

**Used to:**
• Adds colour to products.

**Used in:**
  Sweets
  Yoghurts
  Desserts
  Tinned peas
  Soups
Preservatives
E200-E299

Used to:
• Prevent decay
• Make food safe to eat for longer periods (increase shelf life)

Used in:
Bacon
Sausages
Cooked meat
Pies

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8uHxRwQqWEo&feature=related
Antioxidants

E300-399

Used to:
• Prevent fats and oils from becoming rancid.

Used in:
Products that include fat such as
Cakes
Biscuits
Pastries
**Emulsifiers (E400-499)**

**Used to:**
- Mix water and oil together in a stable solution.
- Prevent separation.

**Used in:**
- Salad dressings
- Mayonnaise
- Low fat spreads

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**Stabilisers (E400-499)**

Prevent separation like emulsifiers, used in many products such as cook-in sauces & yoghurts.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Flavourings</th>
<th>Flavour Enhancers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flavourings don't have E numbers because they are controlled by different laws to other food additives.</td>
<td>(E600-699)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Used to:</strong> Add flavour to products.</td>
<td><strong>Used to:</strong> Give more intense flavour to foods.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Used in:</strong> Ice cream, Chocolate mousse, Crisps, Soft drinks</td>
<td><strong>Used in:</strong> Meat, Ready-made meals, Cook-in sauces</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Well known = monosodium glutamate (MSG) E621</td>
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</tbody>
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Sweeteners
(E900-999)

Used to: Sweeten products:
e.g. Aspartame

• Aspartame is an intense sweetener, approximately 200 times sweeter than sugar, which has been used in soft drinks and other low-calorie or sugar-free foods throughout the world for more than 25 years. It is also referred to as E951.