** MAKE YOUR OWN CORDIALS**

Cordials are a great way to use surplus fruit and very easy to make. You don’t need special equipment, and they are quick to do. The flavours are often quite different to shop bought squashes – more grown up but still suitable for children.

**Equipment needed**

* Scales to weigh the ingredients
* Large saucepan for cooking fruit.
* Jelly bag to strain the juice out of the fruit.
* Funnel to fill the bottles
* Glass bottles with screw caps to store the cordial. Bottles can be sterilised in the oven. Caps can be sterilised by pouring boiling water over them.

**Typical ingredients**

* Fruit
* Water
* Sugar – usually granulated
* Herbs and spices to add flavour e.g. mint, fennel, star anise, ginger etc.
* Citric acid. Not all recipes call for this, but it is a preservative and will allow you to store many cordials for up to a year. It used to be sold by chemists, although not many stock it now. It can easily be bought online.

**Typical method**

* Simmer the fruit in the water until it is soft and the juices have run out.
* Strain through a jelly bag overnight. Do not be tempted to squeeze the bag, as this will make your cordial cloudy.
* Add the sugar to the juice and bring to the boil.
* Add the citric acid
* Flavourings may be added at different stages, according to the recipe
* Bottle in sterilised bottles and store.

**Drinking**

* Dilute to taste.
* Once opened, store in the fridge and drink within a couple of weeks.