



Who are the “new cooks” of the future? Why, kids of course! Children are naturals when it comes to learning new skills, and what better time to teach them than when they show interest in your kitchen activities.

Since kids are present in the kitchen from the time you put them in their highchairs, they know from a very early age that great tasting foods are usually the result of “playing around” in the kitchen. So chances are good that most children are eager to help Mom and Dad, and can easily perform the simplest culinary tasks from age three on.

Cooking is a lifelong accomplishment that should be part of everyone’s range of skills. With today’s busy lifestyles, it’s a real plus if everyone in the family can pitch in to keep things running smoothly – certainly a boon for two-career households.

Aside from the usefulness of learning about cooking techniques at a young age, there’s another important advantage to introducing your child to cooking: Children will be much more apt to sample unfamiliar foods they have helped to prepare. Putting a plate of asparagus or sweet potatoes in front of a child who has never seen or tasted them before will often provoke a look of disgust, and not much else. However, if the same child learns to snap off the asparagus stalks and put them in the steamer basket before you cook them, or gets to help with peeling and mashing the sweet potatoes, he or she will certainly be more enthusiastic about sampling the results!

Getting Your Kids Into the Kitchen

If you’re not a professional “Pied Piper”, you might be puzzled about how to get kids interested in your kitchen activities. The secret is to involve your children in planning your daily or weekly menus.

When you include foods that are their special favorites, kids' taste buds practically jump at the chance to help. Of course, when you let them know that you're happy to have them working alongside you, that's a wonderful form of encouragement from children, too.

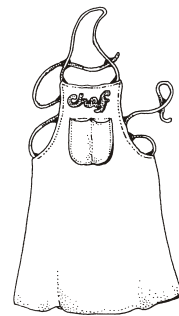
Serving the meal is another key part of the cooking/entertaining process in which kids can participate. Presenting a dish at the family table can give a child the kind of pride that all good cooks feel when the work is done. And a youth with that kind of experience will be a gracious helper when company comes.

Making Your Kitchen a Safe Playground

Setting up some guidelines for helping in the kitchen will ensure that kids learn to cook safely. First and foremost, your pint-sized chefs should always have an adult nearby to help with more difficult tasks, or to use cooking appliances. Make sure your children know this, and wait until they are a bit older and have performed simple tasks, such as chopping, grating, or warming something safely in the microwave or toaster oven.

Here are some safety rules to review with would-be chefs:

1. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water first.
2. If children have long hair, they should tie it back.
3. Wear an apron to keep clothes clean.
4. Read through the recipe before you start, and get all of the utensils and mixing bowls you'll need to make the recipe.
5. Follow recipe directions exactly.
6. Do not use any electrical or gas appliances unless helped by an adult.
7. Clean up all spills right away with a damp dishcloth or a sponge.
8. Never use sharp knives or other sharp utensils without an adult nearby. Pick up a knife by the handle, not the blade.
9. Small children can use small-size kitchen shears instead of knives to cut foods such as fresh herbs and dried fruit.
10. A melon baller is another safe cutting tool kids can use in lieu of a knife. Use for melons and other soft-fleshed fruits, as well as potatoes.
11. To stir food during cooking, always use a wooden spoon, so the handle doesn't get hot.
12. If you handle a hot pan from the oven or on top of the stove, use oven mitts or potholders.
13. Be sure any pots that are on top of the stove have their handles turned inward, not extending over the edge where they can be bumped and spilled.
14. Use a cutting board, not the kitchen counter, for cutting, slicing or chopping.
15. When you have finished cooking, clean up the kitchen and utensils, and put any leftover food away.



Foods Kids Love to Make

Getting started is easy if you begin by allowing your kids to help choose the foods they will prepare. It's not necessary to have a children's cookbook on hand. Take your favorite recipe and break it down into simple tasks your young chefs can master.

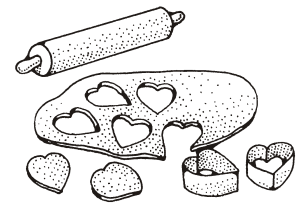
Such jobs as measuring ingredients, stirring, mixing, chopping, slicing, peeling, separating eggs, or kneading dough are all activities that kids, depending on their ages, love to tackle.

Very young children can help you wash or scrub fruits and vegetables. It's fun for them to stir up a batter while you take care of the measuring chores. For these kids, recipes for one-bowl cookies, stirred-up muffins, or one-step cakes or brownies are perfect. If they want to help with chopping or slicing soft foods, give them a table knife to use for this task.

Children over five years of age can begin to use a small paring knife, and learn to peel, shred, or chop foods with you. When making salads, let them wash and tear up the lettuce, while you prepare the dressing. Sandwiches are fun to stack, and can include any "combo" of favorite ingredients.

Snack or trail mixes, a yogurt sauce for a fruit compote, or nutritious shakes are snack projects perfect for kids. Teach them how to skewer fruit chunks on bamboo sticks, or provide them with simple snack spreads they can put together when hunger pangs strike.

Rolling and shaping cookies, as well as decorating them, are favorite "pint-size" projects. Cookie balls rolled in nuts or coconut before baking are great fun for kids. Decorating the top of muffins or cupcakes allows children to add their own personalized finishing touches.



Kid Friendly Appliances

You should know your child's abilities well before introducing him or her to kitchen appliances. If your child can read, and shows real interest in learning to use a microwave oven for example, it's probably a good idea. In general, it's usually a plus for kids to be taught to use the simplest kitchen appliances, as long as they are impressed with the fact that appliances are not intended as toys, and can be trusted to follow the rules for using them.

Appliances such as the microwave and the toaster oven are simple ones for kids aged 7 or older to master. They can learn to safely toast foods, heat up snacks or lunch concoctions, or thaw foods from the freezer.

When teaching children to use these appliances, store the proper utensils close by. For example, keep microwave-safe dishes near the microwave oven, along with clear plastic wrap. Be sure the metal pans and aluminum foil are stashed elsewhere.

Ranges are safest when their controls are above the burners, rather than at a level that very young children can reach and accidentally turn on. That way, adults can be in control of the temperature settings.

Keep potholders and oven mitts nearby if you can trust your child to stir a pot of soup or pull out a pan of cookies. Teach him or her to use a cooling rack or hotplate under a hot pan or pot that's placed on the counter or dinner table.

A blender is much safer than a food processor when kids are cooking. They can mix up shakes or chop nuts, and watch the action while it's happening. Teach kids to always put the cover on before running the machine.

Before teaching a child to use a mixer, you might acquaint him or her with a wire whisk first, then a rotary beater. By the time they "graduate" to using a hand mixer, they'll be confident about doing more complicated mixing jobs.



Teaching Basic Cooking Techniques to Kids

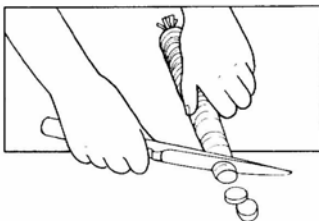
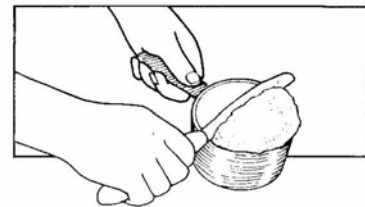
Preparing a recipe is nothing more than a step-by-step process. By breaking it up into simple tasks, you can teach your kids all the cooking basics they need to know. Start with the simple techniques outlined below. Once mastered, your kids will readily learn more complicated steps as they mature.

Measuring Ingredients:

- Use the dry or stacking measuring cups for dry ingredients.
- Measure by spooning food into the cup, filling it to the brim, then level off with the blade of a table knife.
- Use glass measuring cups for liquids.
- Measure liquids by reading the measure on the cup at eye level.
- When using a measuring spoon, read the measurement on the spoon to find the correct one to use.
- Fill measuring spoons to the top, keeping the food as close to the top level as possible.
- Follow measurements exactly as given in the recipe.

Chopping or Slicing:

- Use a cutting board.
- Pick up your knives by the handle, not the blade.
- Always hold the knife with the blade away from you.
 - Chop or slice the food while holding it on the cutting board; never cut food while holding it in your hand.
 - Hold the food carefully to keep your fingers out of the way from where the knife will be cutting.
 - Use scissors to cut tortillas or pita bread, fresh herbs or dried fruit.



Peeling:

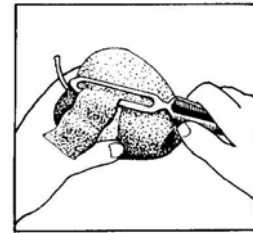
- When peeling, hold the food firmly in one hand, over the sink or trash container. If you peel into a sink, put a paper towel down before you start. Then pick up all the leftover peels with the paper and toss in the trash. Do not put your hands down the garbage disposal.



- Scrape the food a safe distance from where your fingers are holding it.
- Use the peeler in a motion that is away from you, not toward you.
- To scrape all sides of the food, turn it by rotating it on all sides.
- If it's a long or large food, such as a carrot or a potato, peel off one end, then turn the food around and peel off the other end.

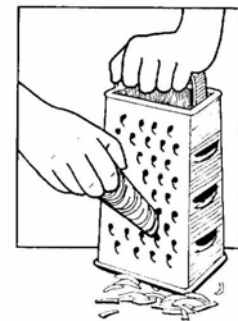
Shredding:

- Place a paper towel or waxed paper under the shredder to catch the food.
- Hold the shredder in one hand; hold the food in your other hand.
- Draw the food across the shredder away from you to make long, skinny shreds.
- Watch that your fingers or knuckles do not get too close to the blade edges. You will have a small piece of food left over that cannot be shredded safely.



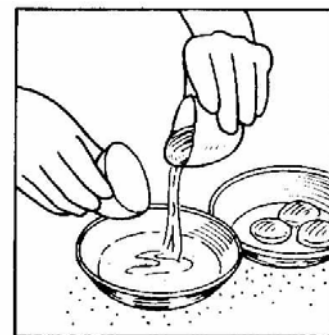
Separating Eggs:

- Have a small bowl ready for the yolk.
- Hold the egg over a small dish to catch the egg white.
- On the side of the dish, gently crack the egg in the center.
- Holding the shells in both hands, slip the yolk from one shell to the other without breaking it while the egg white slides out into the bowl.
- Drop the yolk into another bowl.



Kneading Dough:

- Start with a large board or counter top that is lightly covered with flour.
- Sprinkle your hands with flour so they will be less apt to get sticky.



- Sprinkle a small amount of flour over the dough and place it on a floured counter or board.
- Use your hands to turn and fold the dough, then push your fists into it. Keep turning and folding the dough, adding a little more flour if necessary to the counter to keep the dough from sticking.
- Keep kneading until the dough is smooth and no longer sticks to the board.

Cooking Activities with Kids

It's raining, so why not start pouring? Ingredients into bowls, that is. Just because messy weather has the kids cooped up doesn't mean the whole family can't have fun.

Scratch baking with the family can do more than just deliver savory baked goods – it can be a fun, educational activity that will put an end to the kids' calls of boredom.

Baking also adds meaning to the math, science or social studies they are learning in school. From baking bread, brownies and cakes to decorating cookies, children of all ages can take a creative plunge indoors when it's not so nice outdoors.

From simple ideas to all-day projects, the baking options are unlimited. Children find the following kinds of cooking projects especially fun. You can even help them think of clever names for the finished creations.

- **Finger foods** – baked fries, sandwiches.
- **Messy projects** – shucking corn, crushing whole canned tomatoes, scooping spaghetti squash, greasing pans, shredding cheese
- **Assembly required** – tacos, baked potato with toppings, homemade pizza
- **Recipes with layers** – lasagna, casseroles

The following suggestions provide budding bakers a little incentive when looking for their next home-from-school activity:

Let's do dinner. Have children melt two teaspoons of butter or margarine with one teaspoon each of dill and minced garlic. Brush onto biscuits and bake. Let the kids serve the biscuits at dinner.

Brownies by Brownies. Have a scout in your pack? Help them whip up brownies then bake and frost with homemade or ready-to-use icing after they cool. Let kids decorate the finished product and serve.

1-2-3 Action! Bake muffins and videotape each of your children measuring or mixing as if they are the "stars" of a television baking show. Have them "demonstrate" their actions as they go. Watching the tape is a fun activity while you enjoy eating the muffins.

Grab bag guessing game. Provide children with items that can be baked inside dough such as dry fruit, chocolate chips and nuts. Let kids roll the goodies inside the rolled out bread dough. Let dough rise and follow the recipe's directions for baking. Take turns choosing a treat and guessing what may be inside. The surprise? Take a bite to find out.

Better to give . . . Have kids prepare a special bread, muffins or cookies from their culture or family tradition. Cool, wrap individually or together and tie with ribbon. Deliver to grandma, teachers or area shut-ins.

Tortilla factory. Children would never guess that tortillas are made by hand in many parts of the world. Combine in mixing bowl: 2 cups unsifted flour and 1 teaspoon salt. Use a large fork, table knives or pastry blender to cut in $\frac{1}{4}$ cup shortening. Slowly add, stirring with the fork, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup lukewarm water until dough forms a ball and knead on lightly floured counter until it is very smooth and has a stretchy feeling. Knead until no more flour is needed to handle the dough.

Lightly grease the dough ball, place in a sealed bag and refrigerate 2 to 24 hours. Create fillings while the dough chills. Divide into 8 to 11 balls. Roll as thin as possible using only a little flour. On a preheated, ungreased skillet, drop the tortilla. Bake on the skillet until brown freckles appear. Turn and repeat. Serve or cool, wrap and refrigerate. Reheat as you would for store-purchased tortillas.

Reading, writing and refrigerating dough. Prepare basic bread or biscuit dough and let children twist each piece into letters of the alphabet. Bake the breadsticks and spell out words. See who can make the most words with the letters. For an ethnic and healthy twist, have kids shape pretzels, brush with water and sprinkle with sesame seeds to reduce sodium. Did you know that sesame seeds, or *benne*, are a good luck symbol in Africa?

Sweet tooth special. Bake a cake from scratch so kids can see which ingredients make a cake. While still warm, let the kids punch holes in the cake with a wooden spoon handle. Pour a can of sweetened condensed milk over the cake and top with whipped cream and fruit toppings or sprinkles. Want something a little lighter? Pour prepared liquid gelatin over the cake then refrigerate until set.

Muffin mania. Bake muffins and place on a serving tray. Play restaurant bakery store or tea party and let your children serve or "sell" you the muffins they helped bake.

Experiment with science. Prepare a basic yeast bread recipe so children can observe what yeast does. After dough rises, punch down. Pinch off small pieces of dough, roll into balls and place in greased, shallow pan. Cover. Let rise again and bake as directed. Brush with butter. The bread "bubbles" will pull apart easily for eating.

Butter me up! Have kids whip up flavored butters to serve with muffins and breads they help make. To one stick of softened butter, add 3 to 4 Tbsp. jam, peanut butter, honey, maple syrup, cinnamon, lemon or fresh herbs.

And the winner is . . . Everyone! Bake sugar cookies or cupcakes and have children decorate them as they wish. Judge cookies for most original, most use of color and other categories. Give prizes in many categories so that each child wins. Take pictures to capture the boastful chefs and their creations!

Is it worth it to invite children into your kitchen? Here are 3 good reasons to answer YES!

1. Cooking builds self esteem. Helping in the kitchen builds confidence and early skills of independence. Most kids feel proud and important if they help prepare food. Sharing in family tasks helps them feel that they belong in the family.
2. Cooking teaches. Kitchen tasks give your child a chance to measure, count, and see food change. That's early math and science learning. Your child can learn new words and symbols by cooking with you. Talk about the food and what you are doing. Read words together on food containers. Small muscle skills develop, too, when your child uses his or her hands to help with kitchen tasks. Clean up teaches responsibility. It's part of many creative, messy things we do.
3. Cooking together is fun family time. Kitchen time offers a special parenting chance. Cooking together creates closer bonds and lifelong memories. It's also a chance to talk and hear what your child has to share.

Sources:

- *Cooking with Kids, Libby's Division of Carnation Company*
- *Scratch Baking Remedies Cabin Fever for Families, Texas Cooperative Extension, Texas A&M University System.*
- *Cooking with Kids – A Recipe for Lifelong Health, American Institute for Cancer Research NEWSLETTER, Winter 2005.*
- *Nibbles for Health, "Let's Cook Together", Nutrition Newsletter for Parents of Young Children, USDA, Food and Nutrition Service.*

Nutrition Websites for Kids!

Here is a list of favorite websites – some are just for kids and some provide resources for parents. In no particular order:

www.burgertown.com — More than an ordinary town – this one's packed with games, nutrition fun facts and recipes shared by other kids!

www.dole5aday.com — Exciting 5 a day nutrition program and resources with a Fruits and Vegetables encyclopedia, nutrition center and lots of fun activities.

www.moomilk.com — A dynamic adventure into the dairy industry with everything you want to know about cows and milk.

<http://www.kidshealth.org> — provides health information about children from before birth through adolescence.

www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhard/ — Eat Smart Play Hard is about making America's children healthier. It's about practical suggestions that will help you motivate children and their care givers to eat healthy and be active.

www.kidnetic.com — healthy eating and active living website for parents and kids.

<http://www.kidscook.com/> — cooking fun for kids.

www.jollytime.com — This is a fun site! Don't miss the recipe section, the kids recipe section, craft ideas and games.

www.kidsdomain.com/craft/index.html — Click on "Craft Recipes." This whole website is great for kid ideas for your family.

www.getkidsinaction.org — This easy to follow, fun and informative Web site offers exercises, food facts vs. myths and has a BMI calculator geared toward kids ages 2 to 20. A link for parents is also very informative.

July 18, 2006

Healthy Snacks for Children

Serving healthy snacks to our children is important to providing good nutrition for growth and development, supporting lifelong healthy eating habits, and preventing costly and potentially disabling diseases, like heart disease, cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure, and obesity.

Snacks are a bigger part of kids' diets than in the past. Snacks can make positive or negative contributions to kids' diets, depending on the choices we offer. Below are ideas of healthy drinks and snacks for teachers, care givers, children's programs, and parents to serve to children in the classroom, in after-school programs, at soccer games, home and elsewhere.

- **Fruits and Vegetables** - Almost all the snacks served to children should be fruits or vegetables. Do taste tests or let kids choose (or vote for) new fruits and vegetables to try. Fruit can be served whole, sliced, cut in half, cubed, or in wedges. Canned, frozen and dried fruits are easy and usually need little preparation. Healthy options include: fresh fruits and vegetables; frozen fruit; applesauce; fruit cups or canned fruit (in juice or light syrup); dried fruit and fruit leathers (without added sugars); fruit salad; fruit juice popsicles; and homemade smoothies. Vegetables can be served with dips like hummus, bean dip, or salad dressing; in salads; or veggie pockets in whole-wheat pita.
- **Healthy Grains** - (whole grains that are low in fats and sugars) - Serve mostly whole grains, which provide more fiber, vitamins, and minerals than refined grains. (Whole wheat or other whole grain should be the first ingredient listed.) Healthy whole grain options can include: English muffins, pita, or tortillas; breakfast cereal; crackers; rice cakes, popcorn; tortilla chips; granola; cereal bars; breadsticks; or flat breads. Refined grains, such as pretzels and goldfish, should not be everyday offerings. Be sure to read nutrition labels to pick options that are low in sugars, saturated fat, and trans fat.
- **Low-Fat Dairy Foods** - To protect children's bones and hearts, make sure all dairy foods are low-fat or fat-free, such as yogurt and low-fat pudding. Since cheese is the No. 2 source of heart-damaging saturated fat in children's diets, choose lower-fat cheeses, serve small portions, and serve cheese with other foods like fruit, vegetables, or whole-grain crackers.
- **Nuts and Trail Mix** - Since nuts are high in calories, it is best to serve small portions (a small handful) and serve them along with another snack, such as fruit.

Healthy Beverages

- **Water** should be the main drink served to kids at snack times. Water satisfies thirst without adding calories or sugars (and it is low cost)!
- **Seltzer or Sparkling Water** - Look for calorie-free varieties; flavored and unflavored.
- **Low-Fat and Fat-Free Milk** - Milk is a terrific source of calcium and vitamin D, but it is also the #1 source of heart-damaging saturated fat in children's diets. Choose fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) instead of whole or 2% (reduced-fat) milk. Soy and rice "milks" (fortified with calcium and vitamin D) also are healthy options.
- **Fruit Juice** - Choose only 100% fruit juice, but limit juice to no more than 6 ounces (a little less than a cup) for 1 to 6 year olds and no more than 12 ounces (1½ cups) for 7 to 18 year olds. Avoid juice drinks, which, nutritionally, are no better than soda pop. The label should list 100% juice and avoid drinks with sugar or high fructose corn syrup in the ingredient list.

Apple-Raisin Ladybug

- 2 lettuce leaves
- 1 medium apple, quartered and cored
- 2 teaspoons creamy peanut butter
- 2 tablespoons raisins
- 5 red grapes

Place lettuce leaves on two salad plates. Arrange two apple quarters, peel side up, on the lettuce. Use dabs of peanut butter to place raisins in the space between apple quarters. Place on grape at the stem end of apple for head. For the legs, cut the remaining grapes lengthwise into four pieces; place three on each side of ladybugs. Place small dabs of peanut butter on remaining raisins; gently press onto apples for spots. 2 servings.

Honey Bear French Toast

- 18 slices Texas toast bread
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup milk
- 3 eggs, beaten
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 36 miniature chocolate chips
- Warm honey

Using a 3 ½-inch bear-shaped cookie cutter, cut bread into bear shapes. In a bowl, combine flour, sugar, salt, milk and eggs until smooth. Dip both sides of bread into egg mixture. In a skillet, melt butter. Fry French toast for 2-3 minutes on each side or until golden brown. Transfer to serving plates; insert chocolate chips for eyes. Drizzle with honey.



Sailboat

Salads

- 1 package (3 ounces) berry blue gelatin

- 1 cup boiling water
- 1 cup cold water
- 1 can (29 ounces) peach halves, drained
- 4 toothpicks
- 2 thick slices processed American cheese
- 2 cups torn lettuce

Place the gelatin in a bowl; add boiling water and stir until gelatin is dissolved. Stir in the cold water. Pour gelatin onto four salad plates; refrigerate until firm. For boat, place a peach half, cut side up, in the center of each plate (refrigerate any remaining peaches for another use). Cut cheese slices in half diagonally. For sail, carefully insert toothpick into the top center of each cheese triangle. Bend cheese slightly; push the toothpick through bottom center of the cheese. Insert toothpick into edge of peach. Arrange lettuce around plate. 4 servings.

Cucumber Canoes

- 2 medium cucumbers
- 2 cans (6 ounces each) tuna, drained
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 1 celery rib, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon finely chopped onion
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 8 cherry tomatoes
- 1 medium carrot, cut into eight sticks

Slice cucumbers in half lengthwise; with a spoon, remove and discard the seeds. Cut a thin slice from bottom of each cucumber half if necessary so it sits flat. In a bowl, combine the tuna, mayonnaise, celery, onion, salt and pepper. Spoon into cucumber halves. Add tomatoes for people and carrot sticks for paddles. 4 servings.

Tuna Boats

- 2 cans (6 ounces each) tuna, drained and flaked
- 1 hard-cooked egg, chopped

3 tablespoons finely chopped celery
1 tablespoon finely chopped onion
½ cup mayonnaise
1 teaspoon sweet pickle relish
4 submarine sandwich or hoagie buns
4 lettuce leaves
4 slices cheddar cheese
8 wooden skewers
Fish-shaped crackers

In a bowl, combine the tuna, egg, celery and onion. Stir in mayonnaise and pickle relish; set aside. Make a 2-inch wide V-shaped cut in the center of each bun to within an inch of the bottom. Remove cut portion and save for another use. Line each bun with a lettuce leaf and fill with tuna mixture. Cut cheese slices in half diagonally. For sails, carefully insert a wooden skewer into the top center of each cheese triangle. Bend cheese slightly; push skewer through bottom center of cheese. Insert two skewers into each sandwich. Place on a serving plate. Sprinkle fish crackers around boats.

4 servings.

Banana-Pear Caterpillar

1 lettuce leaf
1 medium banana, peeled
½ medium red pear, cored and sliced
2 raisins

Place the lettuce on a salad plate; top with the banana. Cut ¼-inch V-shaped slices halfway through the banana, spacing cuts 1 inch apart. Place a pear slice, peel side up, in each cut. For eyes, gently press raisins into one end of banana. Serve immediately. 1 serving.

Fruity Fido

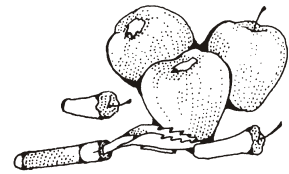
1 lettuce leaf
2 mandarin orange segments
1 canned pear half

1 red maraschino cherry
1 prune half
1 raisin

Place lettuce on a salad plate; place pear cut-side down over lettuce. For ear, place the prune on the wide end of pear. Place orange segments along the bottom for collar. Place cherry at the narrow end of pear for nose. Add raisin for the eye. 1 serving.

Fruit Kabobs

Cut your favorite fruits into 1-inch chunks and stick them on a wooden skewer. (Remember to coat apples, bananas and pears with lemon juice to keep them from turning brown). Dip kabobs into fruit dip (recipe below); or just eat them plain.



Sprinkle Fruit Dip

1 ½ cups strawberry yogurt
¼ cup colored sprinkles, divided
1 ½ cups whipped topping

In a bowl, fold together yogurt, whipped topping and half of the sprinkles. Cover and refrigerate for 20 minutes. Just before serving, top with remaining sprinkles. Serve with fruit

Vegetable Coins

Cut carrots, cucumbers, radishes and zucchini into ½-inch circles to look like coins. Dip coins in your favorite dip and enjoy.

Popcorn Hands

Pop light popcorn; allow to cool, then fill clear disposable gloves with popcorn within 3 inches of the top of glove. Use a twist tie to close top of bag. For spooky hands, put 1 caramel corn, point down, into each finger hole first, then add popcorn.

Peanut Butter Logs

1 cup honey
1 cup dry milk
1 cup peanut butter

Coating:

Crushed peanuts, chocolate sprinkles, granola, rice cereal

Mix honey, dry milk and peanut butter; shape into 2 logs and roll in coating of your choice. Refrigerate until hard and slice.

Pretzels

1 tablespoon yeast
1 ⅓ cups flour
½ cup warm water
1 egg
1 teaspoon honey
Coarse salt
1 teaspoon salt

Dissolve yeast in warm water. Add honey and salt, stir. Add flour and knead on a lightly floured surface. Divide into 4 sections and roll each into a 6- to 8-inch rope. Twist into a pretzel shape. Beat egg and brush on pretzels. Sprinkle lightly with coarse salt and bake for 20 minutes at 425°.

Saturn Slush

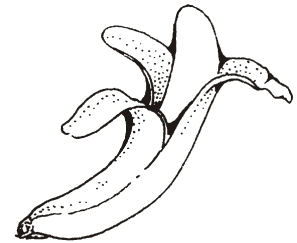
1 package (20 oz.) frozen unsweetened strawberries, unthawed
3 cups orange juice, divided
¼ cup confectioner's sugar, divided
2 cups frozen blueberries
Orbital Garnish:
6 fresh strawberries, hulled and halved width-wise
6 unpeeled orange slices

In blender, combine frozen strawberries, 2 cups of orange juice and ½ cup of confectioners sugar. Cover and process until smooth; set aside. Rinse the blender container. Add blueberries and remaining juice and sugar. Cover and blend until smooth. Alternate layers of strawberries and blueberries in glasses; stir layers a few times to create a swirl. For garnish, thread a strawberry top, hulled-side first, and orange slices and a strawberry tip, cut-side first, through a drinking straw or stirring stick; place in glass. 6 servings.

Banana Pops

1 cup vanilla yogurt
½ cup orange juice
1 medium ripe bananas, cut into chunks

In a blender, combine the yogurt, orange juice and banana; cover and process until smooth. Pour into popsicle trays, or pour into small plastic disposal cups and insert popsicle sticks. Freeze until firm, about 5 hours or overnight. 6 servings.



Mozzarella Sticks

2 eggs
1/8 teaspoon pepper
1 tablespoon water
12 sticks string cheese
1 cup dry bread crumbs
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
2 1/2 teaspoons Italian seasoning
1 tablespoon butter or margarine, melted
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1 cup marinara or spaghetti sauce, heated

In a small bowl, beat eggs and water. In a plastic bag, combine bread crumbs, Italian seasoning, garlic powder and pepper. Coat cheese sticks in flour, then dip in egg mixture and bread crumb mixture. Repeat egg and bread crumb coatings. Cover and chill for at least 4 hours or overnight. Place on an ungreased baking sheet; drizzle with butter. Bake, uncovered, at 400° for 6 to 8 minutes or until heated through. Allow to stand for 3 to 5 minutes before serving. Use marinara or spaghetti sauce for dipping. 4 to 6 servings.

Hot Pizza Dip

1 package (8 oz.) cream cheese, softened
1 cup (4 oz.) shredded Cheddar cheese
1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
1/2 cup pizza sauce
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 cup finely chopped green pepper
2 cups (8 oz.) shredded mozzarella cheese
1/2 cup finely chopped sweet red pepper

In a bowl, combine cream cheese, Italian seasoning and garlic powder; spread on the bottom of a greased 9-inch pie plate. Combine cheeses; sprinkle half over the cream cheese layer. Top with the pizza sauce and peppers. Sprinkle with the remaining cheese. Bake at 350° for 20 minutes. Serve warm with tortilla chips or bread sticks.

Chocolate Icebox Crunchies

2 cups (12 oz.) semi-sweet chocolate chips, melted
1/2 cup raisins
4 cups cornflakes, crushed
1/2 cup chopped pecans (optional)

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Drop by tablespoonfuls onto wax paper-lined baking sheets. Chill until firm, about 15 to 20 minutes.

Ants in the Sand

2 graham crackers
Chocolate sprinkles
Snack-size zip-lock bag

Place graham crackers in a plastic snack- or sandwich-size zip-lock bag and crush with a rolling pin. Add a few chocolate sprinkles to make ants, then seal the bag. Give them to the kids to take outside and eat; or let them pour it into a small bowl and eat at the table. Variations: Add raisins (call them beetles), red hots (ladybugs) or mini chocolate chips (spider eggs).

Pizza Pinwheels

1 (8 oz.) can refrigerated crescent roll dough
24 slices pepperoni sausage
2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
1 (14 oz.) can pizza sauce

Preheat oven to 375°. On a large baking sheet, pinch the 8 crescent roll dough triangles into 4 rectangles. Layer each rectangle with 6 pepperoni and even amounts of mozzarella cheese. Roll tightly lengthwise and slice each into 4 or more pieces. Bake in the preheated oven for 12 minutes, or until golden brown. Serve with pizza sauce for dipping.

Participant Satisfaction Survey

Cooking with Kids

Please complete this short evaluation form after completing the Cooking with Kids Click and Learn Course. Return to the Rockwall County Extension Office by:

- email – ednichols@ag.tamu.edu
- FAX – 972-204-6779
- Mail – Emily Nichols, 1350 East Washington, Rockwall, Texas 75087
- Drop off at the Extension office

In December, the participants who submit a completed satisfaction survey will be eligible for a drawing for a free cookbook of their choice (valued at \$25.00).

Overall, how satisfied are you with the online method of receiving information?

- Not at all Slightly Somewhat Mostly Completely

How satisfied are you with the content of the Cooking with Kids Click and Learn Course?

1. Accuracy of information

- Not at all Slightly Somewhat Mostly Completely

3. Helpfulness of the information for you and your family

- Not at all Slightly Somewhat Mostly Completely

4. Length of the information given in the Click and Learn Course

- Not at all Slightly Somewhat Mostly Completely

5. Quality of course materials

- Not at all Slightly Somewhat Mostly Completely

What additional information in this subject area would be helpful to you?

Name and Address or Phone Number (so we can contact you after the drawing for prizes):