



TEACHING CHILDREN to COOK

www.everydayfoodstorage.net

{ Teaching how to measure ingredients and to follow a recipe }

PURPOSE:

To teach correct techniques for measuring different items such as flour, sugar, brown sugar, etc. and how to follow a recipe by making chocolate chip cookies.

TIPS FOR MAKING IT SUCCESSFUL:

1. Have children do age appropriate activities (i.e. a toddler can dump ingredients, help pat down brown sugar, count along with you, etc. An elementary aged child can do all activities a toddler can do plus help measure ingredients and help read directions)
2. Don't force participation- I don't know many kids that don't get excited to help make cookies but realize your child's attention span during the process. A toddler may want to help but then may lose interest, then gain it again and that is NORMAL and age appropriate. A good rule of thumb is they can pay attention for a minute for years old they are, i.e. a three year old's attention span would generally be about 3 minutes, a six year old's attention span would be six minutes, and so on.
3. Have fun and relax! I know this can sometimes be easier said than done but realized that yes, messes will happen and it will take longer so make sure you pick a time where you aren't in a rush, won't be judged by how the cookies turn out, and don't have company coming over for you to stress about how your kitchen looks. Remember, you're not only teaching a basic life skill but also math, science, reading, how to follow directions, AND BONDING! This is important!

FOLLOWING A RECIPE:

A recipe explains exactly what you must do to make the food. There are five parts to a recipe: 1) ingredient list, 2) cooking equipment needed, 3) cooking time and temperature, 4) steps to follow, and 5) and yield.

<i>Chocolate Oatmeal Cookies</i>	
yield →	<i>yields: 60 cookies</i>
ingredients <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 c. shortening 3/4 c. sugar 3/4 c. brown sugar 1 t. vanilla 1/2 t. water 2 eggs 2 1/2 c. flour 1 t. soda 1 t. salt 3/4 c. oatmeal 12 oz. chocolate chips 	steps to follow <p><i>Directions:</i> Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Mix together shortening, sugar, brown sugar, vanilla, and water until creamy. Add eggs, flour, soda, salt, oatmeal, and chocolate chips until mixed. Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls on greased baking sheet. Bake for 10-12 minutes and pull out while lightly golden brown.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">equipment needed</p>

cooking temperature and time



TEACHING CHILDREN to COOK

1. Ingredient List:

This list tells the amounts and ingredients you will need. Before you can make a recipe, you'll need to compare the ingredient list to the foods you have on hand. If you don't have an ingredient you will need to add it to a shopping list to purchase at a store. The ingredient list can also save you time. Before making a recipe, use it to get out all the needed ingredients. If you arrange them in the order they are needed, you'll be able to make the recipe without stopping to search for ingredients.

2. Cooking Equipment Needed:

Most recipes may not specifically state what equipment you will need. For example, a recipe may tell you to boil noodles but not state that you will need a pot and pan. It's a good idea to get out all cooking equipment you'll need before you begin. (i.e. measuring cups and spoons, cutting board, etc.)

3. Cooking Temperature and Time:

Some recipes give you an exact cooking temperature and time. For instance, bake the cookies at 375 degrees for 12 minutes. It's important if you're using the oven that the oven is pre-heated before you begin so when you're done mixing ingredients the oven is ready to bake.

4. Steps to Follow:

The steps describe what you must do to prepare the recipe. The steps are listed in the order they should be completed.

5. Yield:

The yield is the number of portions the recipe will make. This is important because it will tell you how many people you can serve. This way you can increase or decrease the recipe depending on what you need.

MEASURING INGREDIENTS:

The ingredients in the recipe are either dry or liquid. Dry ingredients include sugar, flour, and shortening. Liquid ingredients include milk, water, and oil.

Dry Ingredients:

These ingredients are measured with measuring spoons or dry measuring cups. While measuring these ingredients, it's important to follow these steps:

1. Fill the measuring cup or spoon with the ingredient
2. Drag the straight edge of a metal spatula or back of knife over the cup or spoon to level off the ingredient.

However, some dry ingredients need special treatment- flour, brown sugar, and solid fats.



Flour and Powdered Sugar- Gently place spoonfuls of flour into the measuring cup until the flour is higher than the top of the cup. Carefully take a flat spatula or upside down knife to even the top. Make sure to not dip the measuring cup into flour as this causes the flour to pack down. Shaking the measuring cup will also cause the same effect. If you end up with more flour, it can ruin your recipe.



TEACHING CHILDREN to COOK



Brown Sugar- Pack down brown sugar until the measuring cup is full and level it off. You know you've done it correctly when you empty out the brown sugar and it holds its shape.

Ever wondered why?

Have you ever wondered why you have to pat down brown sugar when measuring? White sugar is denser than brown sugar (because brown sugar is white sugar with molasses added to it) so in order to get the same sweetness as white sugar you need to pack in the brown sugar.



Solid Fats- Shortening, butter, and margarine are solid fats (because they aren't liquid at room temperature). Measure solid fat by pressing it into the measuring cup and leveling it off. Use a spoon or rubber spatula to remove it from the cup. If you're using margarine or butter you can also look at the wrapper for measurements. Most sticks are 1/2 cup.



Liquid Ingredients:

Liquid ingredients should be measured in liquid measuring cups or for smaller amounts in measuring spoons. Here's how to measure liquid ingredients:

1. Fill the liquid measuring cup with liquid close to the measurement you need.
2. Place the liquid measuring cup on a level surface.
3. Bend down and look at the measurements written on the side of the measuring cup. Pour or add liquid into the measuring cup until you have the amount you need.



TEACHING CHILDREN to COOK



Math in the Kitchen

Try this experiment with your kids. First fill a one-cup dry measuring cup with spoonfuls of flour. When it's heaping full, weigh it and record its weight. Now, level off the flour filled cup, weigh it, and record its weight. Next, shake the flour-filled cup, add flour, shake, and add flour until no more can be added. Level off the cup, weigh it, and record its weight.

Which cup of flour weighed the most? Which cup of flour weighed the least? What was the difference in the weight of the cup of flour that weighed the most and the cup of flour that weighed the least? Why do the weights vary? What conclusions can you draw from this experiment.



Science in the Kitchen

Try this experiment with your kids. Did you know there is another way to measure shortening? One, that involves SCIENCE! First measure out the specified amount of shortening in a dry measuring cup. Next, fill a liquid measuring cup with cold water doubling the amount of shortening called for. (i.e. if your recipe calls for a 1/2 c. shortening, then fill the liquid measuring cup with 1 c. water-make sure you have a large enough liquid measuring cup for both the water and shortening) Then drop the spoonfuls of shortening from your measuring cup into the water. You'll notice that the water now reaches the measurement of both the shortening AND the water. (i.e. if you have 1 c. of water in your liquid measuring cup and you add in 1/2 c. shortening the water would indicate a measurement at 1 1/2 c.) Not only is this an easier (and cleaner) way to measure shortening but it is also a good lesson in volume and the basic properties of mixing oil and water.

This works because of "water displacement" a common scientific practice for measuring an odd shaped item's volume. Because the shortening takes up the space (or volume) of the water you can then measure the volume of the odd shaped item-in this case shortening. This also works well with shortening because it is an oil and oil and water don't mix causing the shortening to float and not dissolve in the water, making it a great candidate for water displacement.

*If you choose to use this method for measuring you do not need to pre-measure the shortening simply add spoonfuls of shortening into your pre-measured cold water until the amount of water added plus the shortening equals the desired amount (i.e. your 1 c. of water is now reading at 1 1/2 c. water-which indicates you have successfully added 1/2 c. shortening). Be sure to drain off water before adding to your recipe.