

The Thrill of Skill

Age-Appropriate Kitchen Tasks

Let older children help teach younger ones – everyone benefits!

2 years old:

Proper hand washing
Wipe table tops
Play with safe utensils
Scrub, wash, tear, snap, break into pieces
Move pre-measured ingredients from one place to another
Add ingredients to a bowl

3 years old: All of the above plus...

Handle dough, begin kneading, simple shaping
Pour cool liquids into mixture
Mix dry ingredients with wire whisk or spoon in extra large bowl
Shake liquids
Spread soft spreads
Place things in trash

4 years old: All of the above plus...

Peel loose skinned oranges; hard cooked eggs
Form round shapes with dough
Mash fruits (bananas) or cooked vegetables
Cut with dull scissors (snip green onions, dried fruits)
Set table

5 to 6 years old: All of the above plus...

Help measure dry ingredients (stir, spoon, level)
Cut with a blunt knife (plastic or tableware)
Use a hand held egg beater or whisk
Crush crackers in a bag with a rolling pin
Sprinkle ingredients on salads, cakes, cookies, casseroles

6 to 8 years old: All of the above plus...

Clean surfaces before and after
Wash fruits and/or vegetables
Gather ingredients and equipment
Grease or spray baking pans
Measure dry ingredients
Measure liquid ingredients
Add measured dry and liquid ingredients into mixing bowl
Learn to crack eggs
Cut fruit, butter or margarine sticks on cutting board (plastic or table knife)
Push buttons on blenders, processors with adult
Knead dough
Preheat oven (adults help load products in hot oven)
Wash dishes, put away ingredients or utensils

9 to 12 years old: All of the above plus...

Learn safe knife skills (chopping, dicing, and cutting)
Handle food equipment safely
Place oven racks and load oven (while oven is cold)
Safe operation of electric equipment (mixer, microwave, bread machine food processor, etc.)
Follow a recipe (measure accurately, prepare a product)
Read ingredient and food labels
Safely handle/store ingredients/finished products
Plan and prepare simple meals, snacks
Clean up (how and what to wash in dishwasher or by hand)

13 years old and up: All of the above plus...

Tasks requiring multiple preparation steps or close timing
Create new flavor combinations, shapes or decoration
Plan and prepare whole menus for meals or entertaining
Make shopping lists and shop for ingredients
Help younger children learn about food and how to prepare
Enjoy cooking with peers



Ten Tips for Baking Success

1. Allow time for family baking.

- Turn off distractions of television, cell phones and computer.

2. Wash hands and counter tops before starting.

- Wear apron or large T-shirt to protect clothes.
- Long hair should be banded or covered.
- Roll-up long sleeves.

3. Stay safe! See The Thrill of Skill Fact Sheet for age-appropriate baking tasks.

4. Before you start: Read the recipe top to bottom.

5. Gather all the ingredients and equipment.

6. Use the right tools and measure correctly.

- Pour liquids in a clear liquid measuring cup placed on the countertop and read at eye level.
- Use standard dry measures for dry ingredients.
- Use measuring spoons for small amounts less than ¼ cup.

7. Ingredient basics.

- Use butter or hard stick margarine (80% fat), not a spread or reduced-fat product.
- Stir dry ingredients and spoon into dry measuring cups and level with a flat-edged utensil.
- Sift only if the recipe specifies to pre-sift before measuring.
- Avoid measuring ingredients over the mixing bowl.
- Large eggs are the standard used in home baking.

8. Take it one step at a time.

- Gather ingredients.
- Do pre-preps for ingredients and equipment as needed.

9. Oven ins and outs.

- Before preheating, make sure the oven racks are in the right place for the pans and recipe.
- Allow 10 minutes for oven to preheat.
- Place pans in the oven so they do not touch each other or the oven sides. Do not place pans on racks directly below or above another pan.
- Keep clean, dry oven mitts or pads close by.
- Have cooling racks ready.

10. Clean up during preparation and while the product bakes.

