

Kids in the Kitchen

Help kids develop a love of healthy foods.
Teach them to create healthy meals.

Kids aged 2 and younger can:

- Play with plastic measuring cups, spoons, containers, or a bowl of water and a whisk
- Learn to say names and colors of foods being used
- Smell foods and, depending on the food, taste small amounts



Let 3-year-olds try to:

- Rinse and scrub fresh produce
- Tear, snap, or break foods
- Use a cookie cutter to cut shapes in dough
- Pluck fruits or leaves from stems
- Dip foods into dips
- Arrange foods on a plate
- Help stir ingredients together in a bowl



Let 4-year-olds try to:

- Measure ingredients
- Cut with a plastic or dull butter knife
- Squeeze juice from fruits
- Shake ingredients in small containers, such as jars or zip-top bags

Let 5-year-olds try to:

- Help grate cheeses and vegetables
- Crack and beat eggs
- Peel oranges



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Let 6-8-year-olds help:

- Read the recipe
- Crack eggs
- Measure small amounts of ingredients
- Use an egg beater
- Rinse, scrub, and peel onions, carrots, cucumbers, and other produce
- Grate cheese and vegetables
- Decorate cookies
- Spread soft frostings and spreads
- Roll out and shape dough
- Cut soft foods with a plastic or dull butter knife

Let 9-13-year-olds start to:

- Follow recipes and make simple meals by themselves
- Use electrical tools like blenders and mixers
- Open cans
- Drain cooked pasta in a colander
- Remove trays from the oven with adult supervision

Kids can also help:

- Set and clear the table
- Clean up
- Get out ingredients and equipment and put them away

- **Start simple.** Make recipes with just a few steps until you learn what each child can do.
- **Let your experience be your guide.** Adjust the tasks you assign based on your child's skills.
- **Supervise.** Make sure kids know the rules of kitchen safety from the start.

