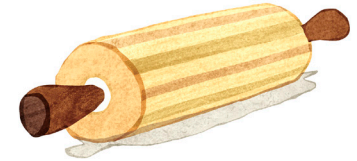


7 EASY KITCHEN TASKS



ANY PRESCHOOLER CAN DO

Children love to help in the kitchen. Preschoolers, in particular, feel a sense of pride when they complete a task. When children help you cook, they are also more likely to try new foods because cooking involves all their senses. They see that carrots and peppers come in many colors and feel how avocados are bumpy and mangos are smooth. They smell fresh herbs, listen to the sounds of cooking and taste the delicious result. Best of all, they get to spend time with you.

BEFORE YOU GET STARTED:

Wash hands. Children and grownups should always wash their hands thoroughly with warm, soapy water before handling food and in between tasks.

Don't stress about mess. It's part of the learning process and subsides with practice.

Demonstrate the task and then let them try. Say things like, "I start, you finish" so they know you are working as a team.

Remember they are little and still learning.

Have fun. If you are enthusiastic about cooking, chances are they will be too.

Be patient. Try not to take over if they are taking too long, and don't get upset when they do something incorrectly.

Praise them for being a good helper.



MIXING Children can combine and mix ingredients in a bowl with a wooden spoon or with their hands.

Good for: Baking, one-pot recipes



MEASURING Measuring ingredients can help children learn simple math concepts, like addition.

Good for: Following recipes, baking, smoothies



POURING & SPREADING Children can help pour sauces on food, butter bread and spread creamy nut butters or soft cheeses.

Good for: Sandwiches, quesadillas, pizzas, lasagna



CUTTING SOFT FRUITS & VEGGIES Children can cut soft fruits and vegetables with a plastic knife or table knife—only with supervision. Make sure the ingredient is placed on a stable surface and does not wobble.

Good for: Soft fruits and veggies, or slices of cucumbers, tomatoes, root vegetables etc.



TEARING GREENS & HERBS Children can tear washed and dried leafy greens into smaller pieces using their hands. They can also tear the leaves off stems of herbs—their tiny fingers are perfect for this task!

Good for: Kale, spinach, Swiss chard, thyme, rosemary, basil, cilantro, parsley



TRANSFERRING INGREDIENTS Children can help add ingredients to a pot by pouring them in from a measuring cup and helping stir with hands protected by an oven mitt. This lets them see how an ingredient changes before and after it is cooked—and it gets them excited to taste the finished product.

Good for: Pasta, vegetables, stir-fried dishes, hard-boiled eggs



SMASHING Children can use a mortar and pestle or potato masher to smash foods.

Good for: Smashing garlic, spices, pesto, mashed potatoes, guacamole

Demonstrate how to hold the bowl with one hand while mixing with the other to prevent spills.

Point out how to make a circle-shaped motion with the spoon to mix.

Treat any knife like a sharp knife—explain that it is a sharp object and they must be careful.

Demonstrate how to use one hand to hold the knife and the other to steady the ingredient. The fingers on the hand holding the ingredient should be curled under (like a claw) to prevent potential accidents.

Remind your child to check that their fingers are safe before they press down with the knife.

Let your child know it is dangerous to touch the surface of a heated pot – they can hurt themselves.

Transfer ingredients carefully by placing them gently into the pot from a low height so it does not splash.

Always keep children away from sizzling pans and popping oils and never leave your child unattended at the stove.

Children can hold the mortar with one hand while using the pestle.

Keep fingers away from the pestle when grinding.