

# KITCHEN SKILLS *by age*

## Preschool (2-5 yrs)

Preschoolers can begin to learn basic concepts that they will need in the kitchen. Keep in mind that their attention spans are short, so small tasks are usually best, particularly those that don't call for actual prep work.

- Stirring batter in a bowl.
- Rinsing and straining fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Pouring liquid ingredients.
- Spreading peanut butter and jelly on bread.
- Mashing potatoes and other cooked vegetables.
- Rolling bread or pie dough.
- Using cookie and biscuit cutters.
- Whisking pancake batter.
- Cutting soft fruits and vegetables with a dull butter knife or plastic knife.
- Measuring liquid and dry ingredients.

## Young Cook (6-8 yrs)

As kids learn to read, the perfect activity is to read cookbooks and follow recipes with your child. An important decision you have to make: When is your child ready to begin using adult knives, the stove and oven? Close and constant supervision are required at all times.

- Whisking eggs.
- Frosting cupcakes and icing cookies.
- Mixing cookie dough and brownie batter.
- Using a can opener, juicer and garlic press.
- Grating cheese with a box or hand grater.
- Peeling fruits and vegetables.
- Mixing and rolling pie and tart dough.
- Making fresh pasta dough and using a hand-cranked pasta machine.
- Melting chocolate in a microwave.
- Whipping cream with a hand mixer.
- Making ice cream with a countertop ice cream maker.
- Using paring or other small knives.
- Boiling eggs and pasta.
- Frying eggs and grilled cheese sandwiches.

## Preteens (9-12 yrs)

Preteens should be able to read labels, follow recipes and prepare many parts of simple dishes themselves. They should feel comfortable with basic knife skills, turning on appliances and in some cases be ready to cook on their own.

- Trimming and slicing vegetables.
- Putting foods in the oven and removing them.
- Working with timers and thermometers.
- Baking quick breads and muffins.
- Kneading dough and letting it rise.
- Cooking soup.
- Using specialty appliances such as a panini press and waffle maker.
- Steaming rice.
- Roasting vegetables.
- Cooking pancakes on a griddle.
- Using a food processor, blender and stand mixer.
- Frying hamburgers.
- Using a chef's knife and other larger knives.

## Teenagers (13-16 yrs)

Teenagers shouldn't need close supervision and can choose what they would like to cook. They can prepare meals for the family.

- Using all kitchen appliances, including safely handling and cleaning the sharp blades of food processors and blenders.
- Developing knife skills to efficiently chop, dice and mince.
- Baking more complicated yeast doughs and pastries.
- Making risotto.
- Marinating foods.
- Pan-frying and grilling steaks, chicken breasts and other meats.
- Using slicers and mandolines.
- Using and cleaning outdoor gas and charcoal grills.
- Deep-frying French fries and chicken.

## REMEMBER TO:

Wash hands, listen to the grown up in charge, ask questions, pay attention and

# HAVE FUN!