



## The Benefits of Cooking with Kids

Cooking with your kids is a great way to spend time with them. Sure, it can make the kitchen a good bit messier, but that's not a bad trade-off for all the benefits.

**Math and Measuring.** Little kids can count 1-2-3 as they add three tablespoons of milk or flour to a recipe. Older ones can practice fractions with measuring cups and measuring spoons, especially when halving or doubling recipes.

**Reading Skills.** Reading labels and recipes is great real-life practice with language and vocabulary skills. Even new readers who can't tackle a whole recipe can look for words they know on the page.

**Following Directions.** Recipes teach great project management. Kids can learn to read through all the steps first, gather all ingredients, and then put it all together—a careful process that works for any type of project, in or out of the kitchen.

**Love of Science.** Baking is basic chemistry; watching dough or batter rise and transform itself into something delicious can be fascinating. If you tell them that your kitchen experiments are cooking science, they'll love the idea of science from an early age.

**Better Eating Habits.** Kids are more likely to try new foods if they've taken part in growing or cooking them. For picky eaters, trying a nibble while they're cooking is often less daunting than facing a full serving of a new food on the dinner plate.



**Quality Time Together.** You want to spend more time with your kids, so do it in the kitchen, where kids can have the pleasure and pride of contributing to family meals. It's something you can both enjoy. Wouldn't you rather cook together than play Candyland for the 342nd time?

**Lifelong Skills.** For centuries, children learned the basics of cooking from their parents and grandparents. Today, fewer and fewer of us cook, and that chain of passing on cooking knowledge is too often broken. Kids reach adulthood without even knowing how to boil an egg, making them dependent on processed foods and takeout. Cook with your kids regularly and rest assured that they will be learning a skill that will bring them enjoyment and health the rest of their lives.