

Troubleshooting

#	Scenario	Your Response
1	You are missing an essential ingredient	If it is possible to go to the store, do so. Modify the recipe or make something different with what you have. Try to have some food ready to eat for the class. Use this as an opportunity to talk about making substitutions and improvising when cooking.
2	You are missing an essential cooking utensil, pot/pan, blender, etc.	Is there another tool that can be used? Try to modify the recipe so you can make a similar dish with a different tool. Another option would be to make a different dish with the same ingredients. This is a great opportunity to talk about ways to change recipes according to what supplies you have, or about different foods you can make with the same ingredients. If you are unable to make the dish, consider cooking it later and bringing it the next week
3	There isn't enough food	Make smaller servings so everyone gets to try the food. Use this as an opportunity to talk about ways to measure serving sizes and manage how much food to prepare. Encourage the participants to try the recipe on their own with the ingredients provided in the grocery bag
4	There is no hot water	Boil water and mix with cooler water to wash hands. Hot water is needed for the class and is part of the Collaboration Agreement. Speak to the site coordinator about how you can make sure there is hot water for the remainder of the series.
5	There is no soap	See if there is any soap at the site that you can borrow. If possible, go to the nearest store to purchase soap. Soap is necessary for everyone to handle food. To avoid this situation, the coordinator should make sure the car kit has soap in it.
6	The knives are not working well or are missing entirely	Is there another tool that can be used (such as a grater)? If not, encourage participants to practice their knife skills anyways, even if it doesn't work perfectly. Give them positive feedback for their hard work. This would be a great time to review that a sharp knife is safer and how to properly care for knives!
7	The oven doesn't work	To prevent this issue before it becomes a problem, remember to always pre-heat the oven when you get to class. Even if the oven worked correctly the previous week, you don't want to discover it is broken midway through class. However, if the oven doesn't work, don't stress – just use another cooking method, such as cooking the ratatouille in a skillet rather than roasting it in the oven. And use this as an opportunity to talk about substitutions and improvisation!
8	A participant sneezes into prepared food	Remove the food that the participant sneezed into. The recipe may have to be altered to make do without the ingredient/s the participant was working with. This is a great opportunity to talk about ways to be healthy, especially in public spaces. Talk about precautions we can take if we are feeling unwell. If a participant is ill, they can participate without handling any of the food the group is preparing.
9	Someone made a mistake and the food doesn't taste good at all	Modify or adjust what you can. Do not place blame on anyone. Explain what might have gone wrong, and ask participants to determine what could happen next time to improve the recipe. Encourage participants to try again at home. As always, use it as a learning experience!

10	Someone cuts themselves and needs only a band-aid	Notify the site coordinator. If the injury is minor, the injured participant can clean up the cut and put on their own band aid. Make sure to sanitize their work area and tools, and do not use the food they were working with when they cut themselves. If they return to the kitchen, they must wear a glove on their bandaged hand. This would be also be a good time to review knife safety.
11	Someone cuts themselves and needs to go to the hospital	Get the site coordinator immediately and have them take the injured participant to the hospital. Make sure to sanitize the injured participant's work area and tools, and do not use the food they were working with when they cut themselves. Check in with other participants to make sure everyone is okay, and review knife safety tips.
12	A participant has a dietary restriction that was not shared before the class	Is it possible to modify the recipe for the week? If it's a food allergy, determine how severe. For example, can they be in the same room as the food? If they cannot, do not use the allergen and make the recipe without the ingredient. If they can, try to make a portion of the recipe without that ingredient so that they can try it. Adjust the menu for the following weeks so that the participant can fully participate.
13	A participant follows a diet you don't know about	For the first couple weeks, the coordinator will bring recipes that are easily adaptable so that participants can opt out of any ingredient that is not included in their diet. Do research to learn more about the diet. Reach out to other staff and volunteers who may know more about it. Ask the participant what they do and do not eat. Adjust the menu for the following weeks so that the participant can fully participate.
14	You forget about an allergy but have already included the ingredient	Is there a part of the meal the participant can eat that has not touched the allergen? If so, serve them that part of the meal. If there are extra ingredients, cook a separate small batch. This is an opportunity to review what allergies and dietary restrictions are present. You can also talk about different ways to make substitutions and modifications for the recipe according to what you can and like to eat.
15	No one wants to participate in cooking	Ask participants to share their cooking knowledge with the group. Encourage participants to get involved in different parts of the cooking process. If someone is not comfortable using a chef's knife or standing over the fire, see if they would like to open cans, peel produce, or do other tasks. Model cooking techniques in a positive and fun way. Create a welcoming space that celebrates food and cooking together.
16	No one wants to try the food	Remind the group that part of the experience of the course is trying new foods! Take a bite yourself and encourage everyone else to do the same. Have participants take a "bravery bite" or a "no-thank-you bite." Ask them what about the dish is unappealing to them. Explain to them that even specific dishes vary depending on the recipe and cooking methods. Remind everyone that the most expensive food is the food that we waste.
17	There are 5 min left and food isn't ready	Explain to the class that time ran out and ask if they are willing to stay to finish the recipe (as long as the room is available). If they're not able to stay, that's okay – they may be on strict schedules for their jobs, childcare, etc. If possible, serve part of the meal to the class, or have them take some home. Debrief to determine what caused the timing issue, and make a plan to improve for the next class.

18	Dialogue gets off track	If the information being shared is relevant to your learner’s experiences with nutrition or food safety, budgeting or cooking, you may wish to simply let it happen, knowing that it’s relevant and important to your participants! However, if the conversation is too far off track, you could use a “bike rack” to acknowledge and remember to revisit ideas or questions. Or you could make a time-check announcement and remind learners about core objectives
19	There are a couple of disruptive participants	Bring the focus of the class back to the main topics- try using facilitated discussion, an activity, or a game. Review the community agreements and remind participants about the agreed-upon methods of communication. If necessary, speak to the disruptive participants after class
20	Someone shares misinformation with the class	Thank the speaker for their contribution, and gently correct them by summarizing current research or referring the idea back to the group to see if others disagree. Make sure that you emphasize the worth of the speaker’s experience before correcting them or asking others about their experience.
21	Two participants get in an argument	Diffuse tension- change the topic, find a point of common ground, etc. If either or both of the participants need to step outside for a moment, give them that time. This is a great opportunity to review the community agreement and to remind the participants about good ways to talk when there is a disagreement.
22	There are 5 min left and you haven’t covered everything	Explain to the class that time ran out. Adjust the timing of the following classes to make room for the lesson content. If this topic will be covered again in the future or is less important, it can be skipped.
23	There is too much time left	Ask participants if there is anything they want to discuss about cooking or nutrition. Use this time to delve into topics there may not be time for in the main curriculum. Discuss different ways to modify the recipe, ideas for what to cook in future classes, etc. If there is nothing to do with the time, end the class a little early. With your team, figure out why the class was short- was the recipe too simple, can you improve on facilitated dialogue methods?
24	Your class takes place in a common area, and non-participants are disruptive	If possible, create soft barriers to signal the class space. Work with the site coordinator to manage who is in the class and who is not. Limit other distracting activities that may take place in the common area (i.e. if there is a TV, turn it down). Communicate clearly that this is a 6-week series and participants are committing to the whole series
25	The participants cannot understand the facilitator	Chat with the facilitator about ways to bridge the gap between them and the participants. It may be helpful for them to speak more slowly or more loudly, or to use more visual aids such as white boards. If necessary, be available to mediate any difficulties in communication.
26	A participant is unable to see the handouts/recipes	Use other methods to provide the information. Read the handouts/recipes aloud and discuss them audibly with the class. For future lessons, provide a magnifying glass or a larger version of the handouts and recipes. Work with the site coordinator and the participant to learn what works best for them.
27	The site coordinator is not there and you can’t get in	Attempt to contact the site coordinator through email or phone. Before the class series begins, share contact information among the coordinator, the site coordinator, and the volunteers. To avoid this situation, clearly communicate and establish meeting times and locations beforehand.

28	No one shows up	Allow 30 minutes for the participants to show up. Ask the site coordinator to contact them and find out if any are on their way. If the site is regularly low on participants, this would be a reason to discuss whether the class series should continue.
29	Everyone is late and you start class 45 minutes after the start time	Adapt your lesson and recipe to fit into a smaller time frame. If necessary, wrap up the cooking in the background while the nutrition lesson begins. Find out why the participants arrived late and develop a plan to avoid this situation in the future. Make sure the site coordinator is reminding the participants every week about the class.
30	Participants regularly show up late and/or leave early	Make sure the site coordinator is regularly reminding participants about the class and the time commitments for the class. Find out why the participants are arriving late and/or leaving early. Do other activities interfere with the timing of the class? For the time being, adapt your lesson and recipe to fit into a smaller time frame. If the site is unable to have participants the whole time, it may be time to revisit the Collaboration Agreement with them.
31	Someone attends your classes but they have attended the series multiple times before	Politely but firmly let them know that Cooking Matters classes, curriculum, and surveys are for first-time participants. Suggest to them that they can enroll in other curricula or get involved as a volunteer. If they have attended the class before, they can be present in this series but the priority goes to the other participants. This means that they should not be dominating the conversation or preparing a majority of the ingredients. They would not receive groceries or a gift card
32	A participant brings a small child with them	A Cooking Matters for Adults class should only have adult (18+) participants. A Cooking Matters for Families class should only have children 8+ years old. Ideally, if there is a need for childcare, the site would provide it. To avoid this situation, clearly communicate with the site coordinator that the class is for adults only, and explore childcare options at the site. Make sure the site coordinator is communicating with their participants and is aware of possible needs for childcare. Let the participant know that the class is for adults and that they would be able to participate more fully if they don't have to watch the child.
33	There are not enough groceries for everyone	Distribute what food you have as equally as possible. Be honest with the participants and let them know what happened. If possible, provide the missing groceries the next week. If necessary and applicable, prioritize the participants who are enrolled in the course and have been regularly attending.

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