

# Kids in the Kitchen

Involving young kids in the kitchen is a great way to bond, build their skills, and have fun together. It may seem intimidating at first, but with a few tips and tricks, you can include kids of all ages into your mealtime routines!

## Choosing recipes

Including your kids in choosing recipes is a great way to help them build agency and ownership over the food in their life, helping them develop a better relationship with food, and making it more likely that they'll try new things. Kids will be more excited to eat foods they get to customize and assemble themselves, so try recipes with toppings (like tacos, pizza, and spring rolls), recipes that have flavors kids might be familiar with (like tajin, ranch, and ketchup) and recipes that don't require precise measurement (like salads, soups, and sandwiches).



## Before cooking together...

- Give kids a job such as stirring batter, measuring ingredients, peeling oranges, etc.
- Use kid-friendly knives and tools.
- Accept that it will likely be messy.

## What's your responsibility?

Your role as a caretaker is to provide healthy food options, create a positive eating environment, and model healthy eating. Your kid's role is to decide whether and how much to eat of something. Children often have little control over their lives, so creating space for them to learn about, enjoy, and choose food options is important!

# Kids in the Kitchen

Kids can help in the kitchen with different tasks as they grow up. Start with simple recipes, adjust tasks you assign based on your kids' skill levels, and supervise kids as they learn new things. Abilities vary from person to person, so these age ranges are approximate.

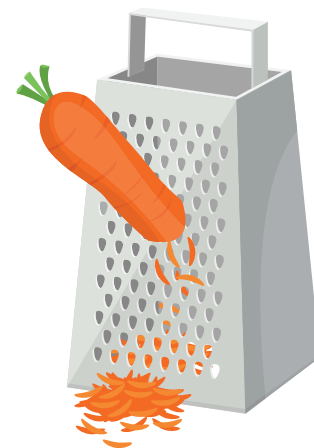
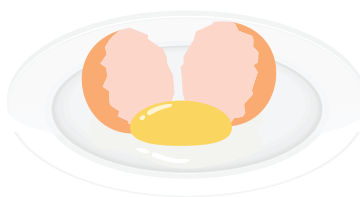
## 2-to-3-year-olds

- Play with plastic measuring cups, spoons, containers, or a bowl of water
- Learn to say names of foods being used
- Smell and taste foods
- Rinse and scrub fresh produce
- Tear, snap, or break foods
- Pluck fruits or leaves from stems
- Help stir ingredients together in a bowl



## 4-to-5-year-olds

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



## 6-to-8-year-olds

- Read the recipe
- Rinse, scrub, and peel onions, carrots, cucumbers, and other produce
- Spread soft frosting and spreads

## 9-to-13-year-olds

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

