

# THE COOKWELL BOOK



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# Introduction

Cookery classes should be fun and no two groups will ever be the same, so the main thing is to enjoy yourselves. The information given in the introduction is a guide to help organisers run a cookery course, and we particularly hope it will help prepare less experienced organisers for the needs of a cookery group and its participants. However, please remember this is just a guide which cannot cover every eventuality, and sessions may need to be adjusted slightly to suit different situations.

We have tried to keep the recipes simple and inexpensive in order to increase participants' confidence and to help motivate them to replicate the dishes at home.

We hope that both class organisers and people taking part will enjoy sharing ideas and tasting the foods made.

## **Aim**

To encourage participants to increase their consumption of fruit, vegetables, fish and high-fibre starchy foods and decrease their consumption of fat.

## **Objectives**

To increase participants' cooking skills and knowledge.

To increase participants' confidence in their cooking skills.

To increase participants' awareness and understanding of healthy eating, healthy cooking techniques and how to create healthy, balanced meals.

To encourage participants and their families to eat a wider range of foods by giving the opportunity to cook and taste a wide range of foods.

To encourage home cooking by demonstrating that home cooked foods are tastier and in many cases cheaper than ready made meals.

## **Setting up a CookWell group**

### **Venue requirements**

A medium sized kitchen, or kitchen area with easy access to another room suitable for food preparation.

At least one 4 ring cooker with oven.

A large sink suitable for food preparation and washing up.

A separate sink for hand washing. This could be situated in a nearby toilet.

Work surfaces or tables for food preparation must be in a reasonable condition, i.e. not chipped, cracked or badly scored.

Cooking equipment. A list of the utensils required for these recipes is contained within the pack. Equipment can be borrowed from the CookWell project.

Access to a creche is recommended, as many parents with pre-school children attend cookery groups.

If there is a creche, a means of keeping children out of the kitchen is essential for their safety.

### **Number of participants**

To a certain extent the number of participants will be determined by the size of the kitchen and the number of cookers available. The CookWell Project can supply small, portable gas rings so that more participants can be accommodated. Each participant should have adequate worktop space for food preparation. An overcrowded kitchen is difficult and dangerous to work in.

Where small classes with up to four participants are held, the organiser will have more time to help individuals and may prefer participants to work individually. Classes of five and over should be organised so that participants work in pairs and can benefit from mutual support. Obviously the amount of help each participant requires will depend on their level of ability and skill. We feel that ten participants is the maximum recommended number for a cookery group.

## **Special diets & food allergies**

Try to ascertain if any participants have any special dietary requirements, such as religious preferences, vegetarian diet, or food allergies, such as Coeliac disease or a nut allergy, before starting the course. This will give you the time to select alternative recipes from the pack or alter an existing recipe. Special diets can provide a useful learning experience for the whole group, but please discuss this first with the individual concerned.

## **How to use this pack**

Each week there is a session plan, discussion points, shopping list, equipment list and recipes. As this course is part of a research project, it is very important that participants follow this particular course rather than other recipe suggestions which organisers may have used previously. This is necessary to ensure that everyone follows the same course and that no other factors influence the final results.

### **Session plans**

The session plan is provided to help the organiser structure the session and make best use of the time available. However, the plan does not have to be adhered to rigidly as long as all the main learning points are covered. Each plan also includes discussion points to cover along the way. These are designed to:

Extend participants' knowledge about the foods they are cooking.

Focus on development of participants' skills.

Demonstrate how a skill or cooking method can be applied, not just to the particular recipe being prepared, but to other similar recipes.

Explain the possibilities for adapting recipes and therefore increase participants' repertoire of recipes.

## **Shopping lists**

The lists are provided to help plan the shopping. Quantities are listed per person or pair and the organiser will need to decide the total quantities required for their group. You may not need to purchase absolutely everything listed as some ingredients are used in several different recipes. Where quantities are not given for group ingredients, only a small amount is required, e.g. salt and pepper for seasoning. Please try to make use of supermarkets' own brands or "value" lines, where possible, as it keeps the cost down and is also a learning opportunity for participants who may not trust own labels.

## **The recipes**

Each cooking session has been designed around a specific theme. Each week consists of a main recipe for participants to prepare, with alternatives following the same theme, accompanied by side dishes. Suggestions or demonstrations have been built into each session plan to show participants how recipes can be adapted to create other dishes. This will help to cater for different tastes in the group as well as increasing participants' repertoire of dishes. Vegetarian recipes, or suggestions for altering recipes to suit vegetarians, are also included for each session.

Recipes are suitable for preparation by individuals or in pairs. However, the organiser will need to consider the cooking facilities available when planning each session. For example, there is no point in preparing a large number of pizzas if there is only one small oven available in which to cook them.

One of the objectives of this project is to increase participants' confidence in following written recipes. For this reason, organisers should encourage participants to read through recipes before starting to prepare a dish. Following the demonstration of a recipe, participants should be encouraged to be self-reliant and follow the written recipe. This does not mean that organisers should not help participants, but those asking "What do I do next?" could be referred to the written recipe. However, please be aware that some participants may have literacy problems and this is an area that requires sensitive handling.

Try to encourage participants to complete recipes and use all the given ingredients. The finished flavour of some dishes can be adversely affected by missing out certain ingredients. These sessions also offer the ideal opportunity to taste new foods and encourage participants to eat a more varied diet. Reluctance to try certain ingredients may be overcome by tasting the finished demonstration dish.

Towards the end of each session try to create a suitable, comfortable environment where all participants can sit down together, sharing and tasting the foods they have made. In this setting people may find it easier to taste new and unfamiliar foods, but bear in mind that it may take several sessions to coax the most reluctant group member to try something new. But don't give up or be disheartened!

### **Attendance**

Please keep an informal record of attendance. This enables us to present those that attend the majority of sessions with a certificate in the final week.

### **Evaluation**

Weekly evaluation sheets are provided for organisers. These are to help us evaluate how suitable the pack is for both organisers and participants.

## Tips for Cookery Groups

1. Decide whether participants will be cooking individually, in pairs or in small groups and where they will be working. Ensure there is a enough space for food preparation. Set out the equipment required by each person or group. This allows participants to devote more time to cooking.
2. Place any food that is to be measured or weighed, e.g. flour, lentils, frozen peas, in large bowls and provide a suitable scoop or spoon. This is quicker, easier and less messy than measuring directly from bags.
3. Where there are only 1 or 2 sinks available for washing utensils it is suggested that a washing up rota, or other system agreeable to participants, is devised so that time is not wasted queuing to use the sink.
4. Remind participants to bring suitable containers to transport food home, if they wish. Providing participants with foil “carry-out” containers is very expensive.
5. If there are a large number of participants and only one sink available for food preparation, it saves time if vegetables that do not require peeling are washed beforehand.
6. Have copies of the relevant recipes available for each participant. Gaining experience and confidence in following a recipe is a valuable part of the cookery group.
7. It is advisable to buy slightly more of some foods than is required, especially cheap dried ingredients such as pasta or rice. For example, it is better to have a little extra flour or milk when baking in case someone makes a mistake when measuring. Eggs are easily broken so it is advisable to have a few spare. Always buy 1 or 2 more onions than required as occasionally they can be rotten in the middle.

8. When using the oven try to avoid opening the door too often as this allows heat to escape. If the oven cools down too much dishes may not cook properly or will take longer to cook than they should. Wait until all the participants have finished preparing their food for baking then open the oven and place them all in at once. If using a conventional oven, rotate the food half way through so that all the dishes cook evenly.

## **Safety First**

1. Explain how to use any unfamiliar equipment.
2. Organise the layout of equipment and ingredients in a way than minimises congestion in the kitchen.
3. Ensure the kitchen is kept tidy. Clean up any spills or food that falls on the floor immediately to prevent people slipping.
4. Don't leave pot handles sticking out over the edge of the cooker.
5. Use oven gloves or a clean, dry tea towel, folded several times, to remove food from the oven. Wet tea towels do not protect hands!
6. Try to organise the food preparation in such a way that participants do not have to carry pots of boiling water long distances from the cooker to the sink.
7. Never put sharp knives into a sink full of water as someone may cut their finger. Leave all dirty knives at the side of the sink.
8. Do not allow small children into the kitchen while cooking is in progress, or while ovens are still hot.
9. Make sure there is a first -aid kit available.

## Food Hygiene

Always wash your hands thoroughly with soap:-

- Before preparing food.
- After using the toilet.
- After blowing your nose.
- After a break or smoking.
- After touching pets.
- After emptying the bin.
- After handling raw meat or fish.
- After handling unwashed vegetables.

Personal hygiene:-

- Cover cuts with a waterproof plaster.
- Remove all jewellery, where possible, before preparing food.
- Keep long hair tied back. Avoid touching hair while preparing food.
- Avoid sneezing or coughing over food.
- Use a clean spoon every time food is tasted. Never lick a spoon and return it to the food.

To avoid cross-contamination:-

- Thoroughly clean chopping boards and knives between preparation of fruit and vegetables, cooked meat, and raw meat
- Keep pets away from work surfaces.
- Cover food that is sitting out to prevent contamination by flies.

In the fridge/freezer:-

- Keep food covered.
- Place raw foods at the bottom of the fridge in case juices drip.
- Never place hot food in the fridge. Cool food quickly and thoroughly before storing in fridge or freezer. The quickest way to cool food is by placing it in a wide dish, sitting the dish in a sink of cold water and stirring frequently.

- The fridge should be at or below 5C. Use a fridge thermometer to check.
- Keep eggs in the fridge.
- Defrost food thoroughly before cooking, unless the packaging states otherwise.
- Don't store food in opened cans, put into a plastic, glass or china container.
- Clean the fridge regularly, check use-by dates and throw out any leftovers that are more than 3 days old.

Bacteria grow quickly at room temperature, so store and serve food at the correct temperature:-

- Cook food thoroughly, especially burgers, sausages and chicken or turkey. The juices should run clear when pricked with a knife.
- Reheat food until it is piping hot. Stir frequently to ensure all the food is equally hot. This is especially important when using a microwave.

Some foods are more likely to cause food poisoning, but if prepared correctly are perfectly safe to eat:-

- Chicken: - Ensure chickens are completely defrosted before cooking. Cook thoroughly until juices run clear when the thigh is pricked with a knife.
- Cold meat - ensure cold meats are kept cool. Cold meat sandwiches should be kept in a fridge or cool box, or eaten within 4 hours of preparation if stored at room temperature.
- Stews and casseroles: - Any leftovers should be cooled quickly and stored in the fridge. Make sure they are reheated until piping hot.
- Burgers, sausages, pies and similar meat dishes: - Always cook or reheat until the centre is piping hot. There should be no pink meat in the centre of burgers or sausages.
- Soup, gravy, sauces and custard :- These should be kept piping hot until served. Cool any leftovers quickly and store in the fridge. Do not leave any of these foods sitting at room temperature for several hours or reheat more than once.
- Cream: - Cream cakes, trifles and other dishes made with real or imitation cream should be stored in the fridge.

- Rice: - Rice should be eaten immediately after cooking. Leftovers should be cooled quickly and stored in the fridge. Leftover rice may be eaten cold or reheated very thoroughly - a microwave is best.
- Eggs :- Store in the fridge. Do not eat cracked eggs. Egg dishes for the very young, elderly or sick should be thoroughly cooked until the yolk is firm.
- Wash salad vegetables

If food looks or smells peculiar then bin it!

Important points when cleaning up:-

- Wash dishes, utensils and chopping boards in hot soapy water. Rinse if possible. Change the water before it starts to look like soup!
- Change dish cloths and tea towels regularly.
- Clean work tops with hot water, paying particular attention to grooves or cracks where crumbs could gather.

## Food Storage Tips

**Potatoes:** remove from plastic bag. Store in paper bag in a cool, dark place, e.g. under the sink, in the shed. Exposure to light causes potatoes to turn green.

**Tomatoes:** will ripen faster and have a better flavour if stored at room temperature.

**Mushrooms:** place in a paper bag, then inside a plastic bag and store in fridge.

**Bananas:** store at room temperature. Keep separate from other fruit as ripe bananas produce a gas that causes other fruit to ripen very quickly.

**Citrus fruit:** can be stored at room temperature but will keep longer if stored in the fridge.

**Other fruit:** remove from packaging and store at room temperature. In hot weather ripe fruit will keep longer in the fridge.

**Root vegetables:** remove from packaging and store in paper bags or vegetable rack in a cool place.

**Green vegetables:** store in a cool place. The fridge is ideal for keeping them crisp and fresh.

**Salad vegetables:** store in the fridge.

**Dried goods, e.g. flour, sugar:** store in a dry cupboard. Airtight plastic containers are best, but if these are not available seal bags shut with a clip or clothes peg.

## Common Cookery Terms

<b>Baste</b>	To spoon juices over food while cooking to keep it moist. Usually when cooking meat.
<b>Bind</b>	To add a small amount of liquid to dry ingredients to make them stick together, e.g. to add water to pastry mix.
<b>Boil</b>	Water or other liquid should be bubbling vigorously.
<b>Braise</b>	To cook food in a covered pan or casserole, in the oven or on the hob, using only a little liquid.
<b>Cream</b>	To beat butter or margarine and sugar together until fluffy and light-coloured, usually when making a cake.
<b>Dice</b>	To cut into small pieces about 1 cm square.
<b>Drain</b>	To pour off the cooking water from vegetables, pasta, etc.
<b>Flake</b>	To break into small pieces, usually fish.
<b>Fold in</b>	To very gently mix ingredients together using a large metal or plastic spoon in a figure of eight movement. The aim is to lift and mix ingredients without knocking out the air, e.g. add well beaten egg whites to cake mix.
<b>Fry</b>	To cook in hot fat. To cook in a small amount of fat is called <b>sautéing</b> , to cook in about 1 inch/2½ cm of fat is called <b>shallow frying</b> , to cook in a deep pan of fat is called <b>deep fat frying</b> . <b>Dry frying</b> uses very little or no fat to cook food in order to cut down on the amount of fat in the finished dish.
<b>Glaze</b>	To brush food with milk, beaten egg, melted jam, etc to give a shiny finish, e.g. pastry.
<b>Knead</b>	Use hands to energetically mix, fold and squeeze dough until it is soft and elastic, e.g. bread dough.
<b>A pinch</b>	A very small amount that can be picked up between finger and thumb.
<b>Poach</b>	To cook food in a liquid that is almost at boiling point. The liquid should not be so hot that it bubbles, e.g. fillets of fish or eggs.
<b>Rest</b>	Leave dough sitting for 10 – 15 minutes after kneading and before rolling out or shaping. This makes the dough easier to handle and less likely to shrink when cooked.

<b>Roast</b>	To cook food by dry heat in the oven, e.g. chicken, joint of meat, vegetables. Food may be covered with a thin film of oil if wished, e.g. roast potatoes.
<b>Rub in</b>	To mix butter or margarine into flour using the fingertips until the mixture looks like fine breadcrumbs.
<b>Season</b>	To add salt, pepper, herbs or lemon juice to a recipe to improve the finished flavour.
<b>Shred</b>	To cut into very thin strips, e.g. cabbage.
<b>Sift</b>	To put ingredients through a sieve, e.g. flour.
<b>Simmer</b>	To keep liquid just at boiling point so small bubbles can be seen.
<b>Stir fry</b>	To cook small pieces of food in a wok or frying pan over a high heat, using very little fat. The food is constantly stirred to make sure it cooks evenly.
<b>Whisk</b>	To use a balloon, rotary or electric whisk to beat egg whites, cream, etc until the mixture will form peaks when the whisk is removed.
<b>Zest</b>	The finely grated skin of an orange, lemon or other citrus fruit.

# Conversion Tables

## Weights

<i>Metric</i>	Imperial
25g	1 oz
50g	2 oz
75g	3 oz
100g	4 oz
125g	5 oz
150g	6 oz
175g	7 oz
200g	8 oz
300g	12 oz
400g	16 oz/ 1 lb

## Liquid Measures

Metric	Imperial
2.5 ml	½ teaspoon
5 ml	1 teaspoon
15 ml	1 tablespoon
150 ml	5 fl oz/ ¼ pint
300 ml	10 fl oz/ ½ pint
600 ml	20 fl oz/ 1 pint
1 litre	35 fl oz/ 1¾ pints

## Oven Temperatures

Celsius	Fahrenheit	Gas Mark
140°C	275°F	Gas 1
150°C	300°F	Gas 2
160°C	325°F	Gas 3
180°C	350°F	Gas 4
190°C	375°F	Gas 5
200°C	400°F	Gas 6
220°C	425°F	Gas 7
230°C	450°F	Gas 8
240°C	475°F	Gas 9

## Handy Measures

Measure	Ingredient	Metric weight	Imperial weight
1 cup	Flour	100g	4 oz
1 cup	Sugar	200g	8 oz
1 cup	Icing sugar	100g	4 oz
1 cup	Lentils	150g	6 oz
1 cup	Barley	175g	7 oz
1 cup	Broth mix	200g	8 oz
1 cup	Rice	150g	6 oz
1 cup	Raisins/ sultanas	125g	5 oz
1 cup	Sweetcorn	100g	4 oz
1 cup	Frozen peas	100g	4 oz
1 tablespoon	Sugar	25g	1 oz
2 tablespoons	Flour	25g	1 oz
2 tablespoons	Butter/ margarine	25g	1 oz

Please note all cup or spoon measures are level.

Please use the same cup or spoon throughout a recipe.

## Group Record

Name	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7