

## Foreword

My mother came from a home where there were always servants, but she married a man who took her off to Belgium as missionaries. When they returned to the United States, Mother realized she needed some help in training her daughters. She hardly knew where to start, and it seems to me that Laurie Latour is a veritable GODSEND in today's world.

Have all the old wonderful cooks disappeared? Many indeed have, but not girls who have studied under Laurie! Future Christian Homemakers' Handbook is a treasure, with everything from Egg Cookery to Cookies and Congratulations!

I'd love to put on my apron in Laurie's kitchen and start all over again, learning homemaking skills and Biblical truths which are coupled with practical skills and the virtues of Godly womanhood.

*Elisabeth Elliot*  
*Magnolia, MA*  
*November 13, 2001*

## Preface

“She watches over the affairs of her household.” Proverbs 31:27

Welcome to Future Christian Homemakers where girls learn to cook, sew, and take care of a home.

Today, unfortunately, these skills are rarely taught. A generation or two of women have grown up without the basic instruction they need to run a home well. Families suffer. Fast food meals eaten on the run often replace family mealtime at home, devouring a large portion of the family budget and undermining the health of children and adults. The sharing and caring that used to accompany daily dinner time has vanished from many homes.

Preparing meals is one essential for a healthy family, but there are others. Keeping the home clean and organized creates a refuge from the stresses of the world. Sewing skills help the homemaker maintain clothing in good repair, and create clothes and household items of her own design. Menu planning and thrift enable women to be wise stewards of the Lord’s gifts and contribute to the family’s financial health.

Learning homemaking skills is essential, but the attitude of the heart is paramount. All the skills in the world are useless unless motivated by a servant’s heart. It is an act of love to joyfully serve our families. As we follow the example of Jesus, we learn to serve. And it is in that service, that self-giving, we find joy.

Biblical truths are coupled with the practical skills learned in Future Christian Homemakers. Jesus Christ is exalted as Lord and Savior, and the virtues of Godly womanhood are shared from Scripture. Prayer and a devotional open each FCH class.

Many churches emphasize the importance of family life. Yet few teach the skills needed to become “keepers at home”. While Titus 2 admonishes older women to teach younger women how to care for their home and family, there are few places for women to turn when they want to learn. Sadly, even Christian homes are often in disarray. This ought not be. Our homes can express the peace and love that we experience in our daily walk with our Lord and should be a witness to those around us.

What should we do? If mothers have not been taught homemaking skills, how can they teach their daughters? And for those who do know these skills, how can they share them effectively?

Future Christian Homemakers provides a mentoring model for women of all ages. FCH began in 1998 as a church-based group where women could teach homemaking to girls in their own church. Designed for elementary age and above, the lessons are also well suited for homeschoolers, for women who want to learn the skills themselves or teach them to their children, and for church community outreach programs.

My prayer is that Future Christian Homemakers will help girls and women of all ages learn how to be successful “keepers at home” and that they will discover the joy of serving the Lord there.

*Laurie Latour  
Jacksonville Beach, FL  
September 2001*

## Acknowledgements

Future Christian Homemakers would not have happened without the help and encouragement of many people. My dear husband, Ted, has lovingly provided the time and resources necessary for me to teach and write, and he has taken many of the photographs in this book. He has shared in the joy of a houseful of giggling girls and, after everyone has left, has never failed to ask me what he could do to help. My gratitude is exceeded only by my love.

Women from my church have been so generous with their time, sharing their skills, helping the girls, cutting fabric, cleaning up – and so much more. Lillian Johnson, Linda Finley, Michelle Mikell, Holly Hacker, Natalie Ruggles and Donna Wittig: you are angels!

Pastors Dave Wittig, Jerry Rouse and Jim Halstead: you have encouraged me, listened to me and guided me as I sought the Lord in building this ministry. Thank you for your Godly advice, your oversight, your prayers – and for your understanding when we turned part of the sanctuary into a sewing room!

A special, heartfelt thank you to the people who have endorsed FCH and encouraged me along the way: I am truly grateful for the time you have taken to encourage me and help this ministry get underway.

Permission to reprint recipes, photos, and information, and the assistance from many companies and organizations is deeply appreciated. Thank you for so willingly sharing your expertise.

To all the girls who have taken part in FCH these past four years: you have been a pleasure to teach! I have learned from you and we've had a lot of fun together. There's much more still to come. I thank the parents who have faithfully brought their daughters to class, juggling busy schedules, but always thanking me for my time. It has been a privilege to work with your precious girls.

Black line drawings and clip art (throughout the lessons) courtesy of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service and Texas A & M University Department of Agricultural Communications (unless otherwise noted).

The contents of this book have been carefully prepared. Recipes have been tested and completed successfully by students in FCH groups. Results may vary. **All activities require adult supervision and diligence.** Future Christian Homemakers and the author are not responsible for injuries or problems resulting from the activities in this book.

## *About the Author...*

Laurie has a BS degree in Education and taught early childhood and elementary education for 26 years. She authored two books for parents, magazine articles, and a newspaper food column.

Laurie and her husband, Ted, reside in north Florida and are active members of their church. They have two daughters and six grandchildren.

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*This book is lovingly  
Dedicated to:*

*The girls who have taken part in  
Future Christian Homemakers™  
and to the families you will one day raise.  
You are a joy and blessing to me and  
your diligence will reap eternal rewards!*

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## *Introduction : Let's Get Started!*

The purpose of Future Christian Homemakers is to teach girls the skills they need to become Godly homemakers.

In January 1998, I started Future Christian Homemakers (FCH) with a group of girls from my church. We met at my house to make banana bread, and what a fun time we had! It was the first time most had experienced the pleasure of holding a warm loaf of bread they had made “from scratch”. Our monthly classes went on to include the lessons you will find in this book.

I enjoy taking care of our home and I especially love to cook. My German grandma was a professional baker, my aunt a home economics teacher. From early years, grandma put dough into my hands and let me work by her side. My aunt always welcomed me into her home and never seemed to mind the endless batches of chocolate chip cookies and brownies we created in her kitchen. My mother bought me a children's cookbook for my 7<sup>th</sup> birthday so my love of cooking was nurtured from a young age.

Everyone benefits from that kind of encouragement. We learn best from hands-on experience, side-by-side with someone who will show us the way. This is the “**Titus 2 principle**” at work: older, or more experienced women teaching younger women (Titus 2:4-5). And that's what FCH is all about: mentoring or guiding others.

Whatever your age, I'm sure there are girls eager to learn what you could share with them. Reach out to girls in your church, your neighborhood, a homeschool group, your own family or friends. This book is full of materials to help you get started.

There are **five main sections to this book**: Devotionals, Cooking, Sewing, Homemaking Skills, and Resources. Teacher and Student Pages are included along with recipes, skill pages and Extending the Lesson ideas. You have permission to make enough copies of any of the pages you need for your group only.

The following pages tell you more about the program and **how to start an FCH group**.



Working in pairs, the girls mix dough for banana bread.



The girls proudly display their bread!

**The FCH program is flexible!** You can use these lessons with one girl or many, in your home, your church kitchen or any setting that meets your needs. How and where you meet will be unique for your group.

**The age range is flexible.** I began with girls ages 10-14 because that was the age range of the girls in our church who wanted to take part. This year, I have 9 – 13 year olds. I find that a multi-age class works well. When you think about it, families are multi-age groups. Older family members help younger ones, and we encourage this helpful spirit. It blesses young and old alike.

In churches and schools we tend to group kids of the same age together for most, if not all, activities. That can be helpful because they have similar abilities and interests and they enjoy being with their friends. But it can also be a limitation if they rarely have opportunities to work with girls older or younger than themselves.

Determine the age range that works best for your situation. Regardless of the ages, encourage helpfulness among the girls and try to provide mentoring opportunities. Consider inviting a few older girls to be your “assistants”.

**Volunteers are a blessing!** Some people cannot lead a class, but they may be willing to lend a hand. Make the need known in your church. Women who love to cook or sew might enjoy sharing a skill they know. FCH is an opportunity for empty-nesters to work with kids again. Young women who want to improve their own homemaking skills might be happy to help. Look for opportunities to involve women of all ages. Everyone is blessed from the experience and wisdom gained when different generations work together.

**Can younger girls do these lessons?** The curriculum was written for girls from about 3rd grade and above. However, many 6-year-olds are eager to learn to cook and sew! Most of the activities can be used with younger girls if you keep the group small and provide the extra help and supervision they will need. You may need to read the student pages to them. In many chapters, I’ve included some simpler activities. For example, the Puppy Dog Salad in the fruit chapter would be an easy recipe for younger children.

**Can boys attend FCH?** Homemaking skills are life skills that everyone needs to learn, but Future Christian Homemakers was designed specifically to train girls. They will be the mothers and homemakers of tomorrow and the responsibility of preparing meals, mending clothes and keeping house will fall mostly to them.

In a world that strives for “gender equality”, Christians need to celebrate God’s gift of gender uniqueness. In FCH, girls have a place and opportunity to learn some of the skills and values they need to grow to Godly womanhood. If you are teaching your own children at home, everyone can work together. But in other settings, boys need their own class to learn skills essential to Godly manhood.

**How many girls are in a class?** I limit my class size to 10, but you might feel comfortable only with one or two girls. That's fine! I have a large kitchen and I've been a teacher for three decades, so I'm comfortable teaching larger groups. You determine the class size that will work best for you.

The group should be small enough for you to personally get to know and work with each girl. Also take into consideration the size of your kitchen, oven space, and room for sewing activities. Do you have other adults willing to help you? If so, a larger class may be feasible. Whatever the class size, it's vital that each girl participates in the activities. No one should be a sideline observer.

**Where do we meet?** I prefer meeting in our home, but we've met at our church several times when we needed long tables for a sewing project. I know my own kitchen best and can set out materials whenever I have time without concerns about other groups needing to use the same space.

As the girls learn about homemaking, it's good to be in a home setting where I can show them how to vacuum, dust and clean. We even had a window washing lesson on my sliding glass doors!

You'll need easy access to a sink, refrigerator and stove. If you cannot meet in your own home, look for a volunteer who would open their home. Whatever the location, find a place that is convenient and comfortable for your group.

**When do we meet?** Family schedules are already very busy. My group meets one Saturday afternoon each month during the school year (September – May). Monthly meetings are manageable for most families. We meet from 1:00-4:30. That gives us enough time to comfortably finish our activities and have time to clean up.

I try to schedule each monthly class on a weekend when there are no holidays or long weekends. I look at the school calendar for the coming year and I check with my church and try to avoid potential conflicts with special activities. There will never be a "perfect time" for everyone, but do your best to avoid obvious conflicts. I print the dates for the coming year on a sign-up form, which is available in our church during May and June.

Schedule classes to work best for your group. A homeschool co-op might meet weekly. Another group might want to sponsor an FCH summer camp and meet every day for a week. If you're teaching your daughter at home, set aside special mother-daughter time on a regular basis.

**What is the cost?** Future Christian Homemakers is a ministry, not a business. You need to cover expenses for ingredients and any other special materials. That will vary in different areas of the country and depend on the lessons you are teaching.



Some lessons, baking bread for example, cost very little. You only need flour and a few other ingredients. Other activities, such as making a fresh fruit tray, are more expensive. I encourage you to keep fees as affordable as possible and yet cover the costs.

For the first two years, I collected \$2 per class from each girl. I soon realized it took too much class time to collect money every month. Our fee now is \$25/ year payable before classes begin in September. That gives me over \$200 to spend for the year. With careful budgeting, that is usually enough for my group. FCH should be a self-supporting ministry. If your church wants to help cover expenses, that's wonderful, but the families who take part should help contribute to cover the cost if they are able.

**What materials do the girls provide?** For every class, the girls need a ring binder with dividers to organize the recipes and student materials you will give them. For **cooking classes**, the girls bring an apron. If additional utensils are needed - cutting boards, hand mixers, peelers - the girls can bring these from home.

For **sewing**, each girl brings her own sewing basket, or plastic craft tote, with basic supplies: sharp scissors, tape measure, seam gauge, pins, needles and thread.

Some sewing projects are mostly hand sewn, others require a **sewing machine**. Before the school year begins, I ask mothers if they have a portable sewing machine their daughter may use. Most have one, but if not, several machines were donated by church members for the girls to use. When lessons require machine sewing, the girls bring their machine to class.

Depending on the sewing project, you may decide to purchase **fabric** using FCH fees, or ask the girls to bring their own. Most of our sewing projects are small and I prefer to provide the materials. Then I know everyone has exactly what they need.

**What materials do you provide?** A supply list accompanies each cooking lesson. Most require only basic kitchen items such as mixing bowls, measuring cups and spoons, spatula, paring knife, cutting board, basic pots and pans. If you have a larger group, you will need to divide the girls into small groups to make the recipe and you will need more sets of utensils. Girls can bring these from home if you give them a list ahead of time. You may be able to borrow some things from your church kitchen. I bought very inexpensive plastic bowls, measuring cups and measuring spoons from dollar stores and at garage sales. For extra bread and cake baking pans, I've used disposable foil pans which are very convenient for the girls to take home.

To practice homemaking skills, you need only the cleaning tools you probably already have on hand: broom, mop, vacuum cleaner, dust rags, paper towels, sponges, basic cleaning products.

For sewing, you will need your own basic sewing supplies (see the girls' list above), a sewing machine, iron and ironing board. The sewing books provide a supply list for each project.

If you need more bowls or measuring cups, fabric or notions, tell the women of your church. You'll find many are happy to donate things they no longer use.

**What is a typical class schedule?** After greeting the girls, each class session starts with prayer and a short devotional. Choose from devotionals in this book, use another devotional book, or share a Scripture and some thoughts from your heart. After a brief overview of the day's activities, I hand out the student pages for the lesson. You may copy any of the pages you need for your group, or students may purchase a book. We read and discuss the student page that provides background for that lesson, and then do the cooking or sewing activity. Some sewing activities may take more than one class session.

We stop at least half an hour before it's time to go home so there is ample time to clean up and review the day's activities. During most classes, I teach at least one homemaking skill. I like to demonstrate a kitchen cleaning skill when we are cooking, and some other homemaking skill when we sew.

**How do I get an FCH group started?** You may want to teach girls in your own family. Consider inviting a few of your daughter's friends to join you. FCH is a great way to reach out to families in your neighborhood.

I started my first group with girls I knew in my church. I spoke to my pastor and youth pastor first, then approached the mothers. The FCH program was announced in the church bulletin and application forms were available at church. We accepted girls on a first-come, first-served basis and occasionally placed others on a waiting list.

Homeschoolers may wish to start an FCH class with an established co-op group, or meet with other homeschooling mothers and daughters to pool your efforts and resources. Many of the cooking and sewing activities require 2-3 hours of class time to complete. Be sure to allow an adequate block of time.

**Does the FCH program run one year?** I ask the girls and their parents to make a commitment for monthly classes for one school year, September – May. At the end of the year, they decide if they want to continue another year. Many of the girls do.

Cooking, sewing and homemaking involve so many skills and activities. We never learn all there is to know! It has been a special joy for me to watch the

girls grow up in the program, becoming more capable and soon able to help the new girls.

There are enough different activities in this Handbook to provide material for several dozen lessons, at least! For example, in the Ground Beef section, you might choose to make meatballs for one class, meatloaf another time, and sloppy joes in the future.

At the end of each school year, I give each girl an **achievement certificate**. Our last class of the year includes some type of special activity. One year we held a luncheon at a fancy restaurant. Most years, we plan a special cooking activity and then invite the mothers to join us for refreshments and presentation of certificates. Do something special to mark the completion of the year and recognize the girls' achievements. You'll find sample certificates you may copy in the Appendix.

**The curriculum** allows you to choose which skills you want to teach. Since my group meets just once a month during the school year, that's only 8 or 9 classes a year. Usually 4 or 5 classes are devoted to cooking, and the others to sewing. At the beginning of each year, I choose which lessons I plan to teach, taking into account the needs and skill level of the girls. I also ask the girls what they would like to learn and include those activities if possible.

Class time is devoted mostly to either cooking or sewing, but I also try to teach a **homemaking skill**. Often that fits in with what we are doing, e.g. when we are cooking, I teach the girls how to wash the dishes, the countertops and the other activities they will need to clean up. When we sew, they may sweep or vacuum to clean up threads and scraps.

**When you cook**, I encourage you to do the first three lessons first - Egg Cookery, Introduction to Baking, and Quick Breads – as these teach basic cooking skills that are prerequisites for the lessons that follow. A Skills Checklist is included to help you identify which skills are emphasized in each lesson. **Sewing skills** are listed for each book in the sewing section.

**Ho do I prepare for class?** Read all of the materials for that lesson. Make copies of the student pages for the girls. Purchase any ingredients or supplies you need and set out the materials the girls will need. I like to set up the day before, but if that is not possible, be sure to allow yourself enough time to set up before the girls arrive. If you are teaching your own children at home, they can learn valuable lessons by helping you set up. Above all, pray for the girls and the time you will spend together.

What a privilege it is to teach these precious girls – enjoy them! Someday, they will use the skills you teach them to serve their own family. Biblical values, and practical skills will be passed on to future generations. Teaching shapes future generations and has eternal value. **What a priceless gift you give!**

# *Future Christian Homemakers' Handbook*

## INDEX & SKILLS LIST - COOKING

### **Lesson One - Eggs**

Crack eggs  
Beat eggs  
Measure liquids  
Cook two recipes using eggs  
Write a breakfast menu  
Work safely in the kitchen

### **Lesson Two - Introduction to Baking**

Use oven safely to bake muffins  
Measure dry ingredients correctly  
Mix dry & liquid ingredients by hand  
Introduce teaspoon & tablespoon

### **Review:**

Measuring liquids (Lesson 1)  
Kitchen safety (Lesson 1)

### **Lesson Three - Quick Breads**

Grease a pan  
Differentiate between baking soda & b. powder  
Cream butter using portable electric mixer  
Recognize abbreviations for cup, T. & t.  
Test quick bread for doneness

### **Review:**

Measuring dry ingredients (Lesson 2)

### **Lesson Four – Yeast Breads**

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Knead & shape bread dough  
Test yeast bread for doneness

### **Review:**

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(Lessons 1-3)  
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### **Lesson Five - Cake Baking & Decorating**

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Frost a cake

### **Review:**

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Difference between baking soda & powder  
(Lesson 3)

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Use a master recipe with variations  
Use a meat thermometer

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**Lesson Eight – Microwave Cooking**

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**Lesson Nine – Casseroles**

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**Review:**

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Safely using sharp utensils (Lesson 1)

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Learn terms: Dice, chop, mince, cube  
Create vegetable centerpieces

**Review:**

Food Guide Pyramid (Lesson 9)  
Safely using sharp utensils (Lesson 1)

**Lesson Twelve – Cookies**

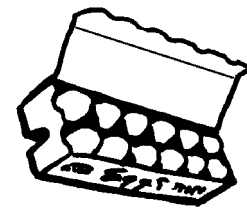
Recognize different ways to prepare cookies  
Make at least one type of cookie

**Review:**

Correctly measuring flour (Lessons 2 & 3)  
Creaming butter (Lesson 3)

## Lesson One - Egg Cookery

Many girls have never cracked an egg. This is a good place to start cooking lessons since many recipes include eggs. Even when you use a cake mix, you need to crack some eggs. And the final product will be much nicer if there are no eggshells in the batter!



### In this lesson, the girls will learn to:

- Crack eggs
- Beat eggs
- Measure liquids
- Cook two basic egg recipes
- Write a simple breakfast menu
- Work safely in the kitchen

### Give each girl a copy of :

- Kitchen Safety Skill Page
- Before I Cook Eggs
- Scrambled Eggs & French Toast for Two Recipe

### Read and discuss “Before I Cook Eggs” and “Kitchen Safety”.

Show the girls how to safely operate the burners on your stove, and any other appliances you may be using in this lesson. Have them put these pages in their notebooks and bring their recipe to the kitchen.

The recipe was designed so the girls can work in pairs. Adjust the recipe, if necessary, to accommodate your group. Read through the recipe together, stopping to **demonstrate** the following:

**Crack an egg** into a small bowl, being careful not to get any bits of shell in the bowl. Pour it into a larger bowl. Crack each egg separately into the small bowl first, then pour it into the larger bowl. It's much easier to remove bits of eggshell from just one egg, than from the whole bowl full! Show the girls where to dispose of the shells.

Demonstrate **beating the eggs** with a whisk or fork. A **whisk** makes the job easier and incorporates more air into the eggs, making them light and fluffy. A hand mixer or rotary eggbeater can also be used.

To **measure liquids**, use a glass or plastic measuring cup that has clearly marked lines and a pouring spout. Put the measuring cup on the counter. Slowly pour the milk until it reaches the 1/4 Cup mark. Bend down and look closely at the measuring cup to be sure you've measured accurately. It may be difficult for the girls to pour the exact

amount from a heavy milk jug; put some milk into a small pitcher for the girls to use.

A medium-sized frying pan will work fine to **cook** the French Toast and then the eggs. A non-stick pan will be easier to use. If you do not use a non-stick pan, you may need to add a little oil between cooking the French Toast and the eggs. If you use an aerosol oil spray, do not spray it near an open flame (i.e. gas stove). Turn the burner off first.

Show the girls how to **safely operate your stove**, keeping apron strings, sleeves and long hair away from the burner! If you need additional cooking space for a larger group, use an electric frying pan or griddle, or have the girls take turns at the stove.

As the girls finish eating and cleaning up, ask them to use the back of their recipe page to write other foods they could serve with the eggs and French toast to complete a **breakfast menu**.

Add interest to the meal by selecting foods that are different in temperature, color and texture. For example, cold fruit salad, applesauce, or a bowl of berries would make a nutritious accompaniment. Ask each girl for her suggestions. Write several menus on a chalkboard or large sheet of paper so everyone can see.

### **What You'll Need for this Lesson:**

#### **Ingredients for each pair of girls:**

4 large eggs  
1/4 Cup milk  
2 slices of bread  
1 Tablespoon oil (or cooking oil spray)

#### **Supplies for each pair of girls:**

Measuring Spoons  
Measuring Cup for liquids  
Small Bowl  
Medium Mixing Bowl  
Whisk, Fork or Egg Beater  
Frying Pan  
Pancake Turner  
2 plates  
Paper Towels

#### **Set out on the table:**

Napkins  
Glasses or Cups  
Knives and Forks  
Milk or Juice  
Pancake Syrup  
Butter or Margarine  
Salt and Pepper

### *Sample Breakfast Menu*

*French Toast with Honey*

*Scrambled Eggs*

*Crisp Apple Slices*

*Milk*

**Tip:** If there's not enough room at the stove to accommodate everyone at once, plug in an electric frying pan or griddle nearby. Be sure to show the girls how to use it safely.

Name:

## *Before I Cook Eggs*

God created a wonderful food source when He made eggs! Eggs are the highest quality food protein known. They are rich in **vitamins and minerals**, and one of the few food sources of Vitamin D. Because eggs are a complete protein, they are included in the same food group as meat. They are a very inexpensive source of protein.



Used with permission, The Eggman

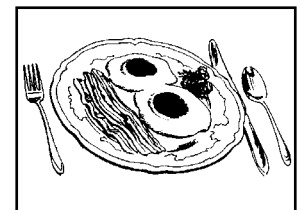
In the grocery store, you will find different **sizes** of eggs, varying from small to jumbo. Unless otherwise stated, most recipes for baked goods use **large** eggs. 5 large eggs = 1 Cup 4 X-large or jumbo eggs = 1 Cup

**Store** eggs in their cartons inside the refrigerator, not in the refrigerator door where temperature fluctuates every time the door is opened. Eggshells are porous; the carton helps keep the eggs from picking up odors in the refrigerator. Eggs will keep 4 to 5 weeks beyond their pack date. Stores vary on how they date eggs; check with the dairy manager.

Some people avoid eggs because of concerns about **cholesterol**. A large whole egg contains 213 mg. of cholesterol, all of which is found in the yolk. Cholesterol is a fat-like substance found in every cell in our bodies; it is essential for life. But, if we have too much cholesterol in our blood, the risk of heart disease increases. Fats in the diet, especially saturated fat, can raise blood cholesterol. If this is a problem, follow your doctor's advice.

**Egg whites** are fat- and cholesterol-free. Egg substitute products (which are mostly egg whites) are available in supermarkets. Or, you can mix one yolk with two or three egg whites to make scrambled eggs or egg salad.

Raw eggs may contain the bacteria **salmonella**, which can cause food poisoning. Thorough cooking kills salmonella. It is important to practice safe food handling habits in the kitchen. Anything that comes in contact with raw eggs - hands, dishes, countertop - must be washed with soap and hot water. Use paper towels to dry your hands and wash the countertop. Throw them out as soon as you finish.



Eggs are so versatile! Think of the many ways we cook eggs: scrambled, poached, fried, hard-cooked, soft-cooked and baked into custard, quiche, soufflés, and meringue. Look in a cookbook and see the variety of recipes featuring eggs. Ask your mother if you can try some of the recipes together or share them with your FCH group.

Information from:  
"Eggyclopedia", American  
Egg Board. Used with  
permission.



# Kitchen Safety

Cooking and baking are lots of fun! You'll be more successful if you follow these basic rules for safety and cleanliness.

## Whenever you cook:

- Wear a clean apron and make sure your clothes have no loose ties or other parts that could catch in a burner or the oven door.
- Brush your hair out of your face. If you have long hair, tie it back. No one likes hair in their food!
- Always wash your hands before you work in the kitchen.
- If you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and turn your face away from the food. Wash your hands again.
- Ask permission before you use any appliance.



French chefs call this "mise en place" (meez eh plas). It means to put everything in place.

## Getting ready to cook:

- Read through the recipe carefully.
- Set out everything you will need: all ingredients and utensils.

## Using sharp utensils:

- Work on a cutting board.
- Cut or peel away from yourself.
- Be sure to wash the cutting board in hot soapy water after every use. It's best to have a separate cutting board for raw meat or fish, which may contain harmful bacteria.

## Keep food safe:

- Don't leave perishable foods out of the refrigerator more than 2 hours. Refrigerate leftovers promptly.
- Keep hot foods hot, and cold foods cold. Bacteria that can make you sick grow quickly when food is between 40-140 degrees.

## Before turning the oven on:

- Look inside and make sure it's empty.
- Place the oven racks in position for the items you'll be baking.
- Have oven mitts or hot pads ready.
- Know where to place the hot pans when they come out of the oven, or have an adult help. Cooling racks are very helpful.

## Be sure to clean up your workspace:

- Wash, dry and put away the dishes and utensils you used.
- Wash the counter with paper towels or a clean dishrag.
- Check the floor around your work area. Sweep, and wipe it with a paper towel if necessary.

Name:

## Scrambled Eggs and French Toast For Two

### Ingredients:

4 large eggs  
1/4 Cup milk  
Bread, 2 slices  
1 Tablespoon oil

### Method:

1. Crack an **egg** into a small bowl. Remove any pieces of eggshell, then pour the egg into the mixing bowl. If you are working with a partner, take turns cracking the eggs until all are in the mixing bowl.
2. Measure the **milk**, pouring slowly until it reaches the 1/4C line on the measuring cup. Add the milk to the eggs.
3. Beat the eggs and milk with a whisk or fork until well blended.
4. Spread the **oil** in the frying pan.
5. Dip both sides of the **bread** in the egg mixture. Cook on medium-high heat in the frying pan until both sides are browned. Use the pancake turner to carefully turn the bread.
6. Put one slice of French toast on each plate. Turn the heat down to medium. If necessary, add a little more **oil**.
7. Pour the **rest of the egg mixture** into the frying pan. As the eggs begin to set, gently draw the edge of the pancake turner across the bottom of the pan, moving the egg mixture around until all of it is cooked.
8. Put half the scrambled eggs on each plate next to the French toast. Eat and enjoy!

**Menu Ideas:** What else could you serve with the eggs and French Toast to make a complete breakfast? Don't forget a beverage! Write your ideas on the back.

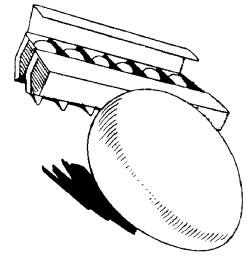
French Toast, or "Pain Perdu" (peh pear doo) in French, means "lost bread". Thrifty cooks long ago developed this recipe to use stale bread, which otherwise would have been lost or wasted.





## Extending the Lesson... "Egg-citing" Eggs!

Eggs are so versatile! You may want to try cooking them in different ways in future lessons. Or, if time permits, try some of the recipes below after you've finished the French Toast and Scrambled Eggs.



**Hard-Cooked Eggs** - Many people call these "hard-boiled" eggs, but boiling eggs causes them to become tough and rubbery. A grayish ring may form around the yolk. Although the discoloration is harmless, it is unsightly, especially if you're making deviled eggs.

Here's an easy way to properly make hard-cooked eggs: Place a single layer of eggs in a saucepan. Fill with water to cover the eggs. Bring the water just to the boiling point. Cover the pan, remove from the burner and let it stand 15 minutes. Empty the hot water and immediately fill the pan with ice water. When the eggs have cooled, remove them from the water and store in an egg carton or other covered container in the refrigerator for up to one week.

It can be difficult to **remove the shell** from hard-cooked eggs if the eggs are very fresh. If possible, use eggs that are 7 – 10 days old and the shell will come off much easier. Tap the egg all over, roll it gently between your hands to loosen the shell, and peel it under cold water.

To prepare **egg salad**, finely chop 2 hard-cooked eggs. Mashing the eggs slightly with a fork makes the job quick and easy! Add 1 T. sweet pickle relish, 2 T. finely chopped celery, and enough mayonnaise to make a creamy consistency. Salt to taste. Spread on bread, toast, English muffin, or fill a hollowed out tomato with egg salad.

**Deviled eggs** are simple to make. Cut 3 hard cooked eggs in half lengthwise; remove the yolks. In a bowl, combine the yolks with 2-3 t. of vinegar, 1-2 T. mayonnaise, and salt to taste. Mash or beat till creamy. The amount of vinegar and mayonnaise you use depends on how creamy and tart you like the filling. Some recipes add prepared mustard. Experiment and find the combination you enjoy. Stuff the egg whites with the yolk mixture and serve cold.

For an **attractive look**, put the yolk mixture into a decorator's bag and, using a large star tip, pipe the mixture into the egg whites. Garnish with bits of pimiento, green or black olive slices, or sprinkle the tops with chives or other herbs.

To make **soft-cooked eggs**, follow the same procedure as for hard-cooked, but let the eggs stand in the hot water for only 4-5 minutes. Place the eggs in ice water briefly to cool, then in an egg cup. Slice off the large end of the egg and eat it from the shell.

**Egg whites** are used in many recipes: Angel Food cake, Royal Icing, and meringues to name a few. Since egg whites and yolks may contain Salmonella, it is important to cook them. If the recipe uses raw eggs (e.g. Royal Icing is not cooked), use a pasteurized egg white product or powdered egg whites (found in the baking or dairy section of grocery stores and where cake decorating supplies are sold).

The girls will enjoy making and eating little **Meringue Cookies**. You can use an egg white product, but this is a good opportunity to demonstrate how to **separate eggs**. Many of us learned to crack the egg, then transfer the yolk back and forth between halves of the egg shell, allowing the white to drip down into a bowl. Try using an egg separator instead. This little device sits across a cup or bowl. Break the whole egg into it. The yolk remains in the top while the white flows into the cup below. Egg separators are available inexpensively in kitchenware stores. A funnel will also work: Set the funnel in a glass; crack the egg into the funnel. The white will flow into the glass. Whichever method you use, do not let even a little yolk get into the egg whites. They will not beat up stiff if there is any yolk or other fat in the bowl.

To make **Meringue Cookies**, preheat the oven to 225 degrees. Beat 3 egg whites at high speed with a mixer. Add 1/4 t. cream of tartar and continue beating. Add 3/4 C. sugar, two tablespoons at a time, beating constantly until the mixture stands in stiff peaks. Place spoonfuls on a cookie sheet lined with foil, or parchment or waxed paper. Do not grease the foil or paper. Bake for 1 1/2 hours. Turn the oven off and leave the meringues inside until cool, dry and crisp – at least another hour. These cookies are fat free. Eat and enjoy!

Use the cookie recipe to make **Meringue Nests**. Drop about 1/3 Cup of the egg white mixture onto the foil or paper. Use the back of a spoon to make an indentation in the center, like a little bowl or nest. Bake in the same way. When cool, fill with ice cream and top with strawberries or other fruit. A delicious treat, especially in summer!

Check your cookbooks for other egg recipes. Try an omelet, a frittata, quiche or a soufflé. Encourage the girls to look for egg recipes in cookbooks at home and bring them next time to share with the class.



Information from:  
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## Lesson Two - Let's Bake Muffins!

Everyone loves to eat homemade goodies fresh from the oven. Using Bisquick® baking mix makes preparation a snap! In this introductory baking lesson, the girls will use Bisquick® baking mix to make blueberry muffins. In future lessons, we'll bake "from scratch".

### In this lesson, the girls will learn to:

- Use the oven safely to bake muffins
- Measure dry ingredients correctly
- Mix dry and liquid ingredients together by hand
- Recognize teaspoon and tablespoon measuring spoons

### Review:

- Measuring liquid ingredients (Lesson 1)
- Kitchen Safety (from Lesson 1)

### Give each girl a copy of:

- Learning to Bake Muffins
- Blueberry Muffin recipe

**How many pans of muffins should we bake?** Each girl needs an opportunity to help prepare the recipe. Unless you have only 2 or 3 girls, it's probably not feasible for each girl to make her own batch of muffins. Encourage the girls to do so at home. In class, they can work in small groups and take turns measuring, stirring, and putting the batter in the muffin pan. No one should simply stand and watch.

Most ovens will easily accommodate 2 pans of muffins and some ovens will hold more. Be sure you have at least 1"- 2" of space between the pans so the muffins will bake evenly. Determine how many pans will fit in your oven at one time. Divide your class into small groups so each group of girls has one muffin pan (with 12 holes).

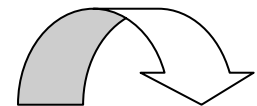
**Read and discuss "Learning to Bake Muffins" together. Review the "Kitchen Safety" page from Lesson One, emphasizing the oven section. Show the girls how to turn on your oven. Always supervise the girls any time they use the oven – or any appliance! Depending on the age and experience of your group, you may prefer an adult take things in and out of the oven. With experience and supervision, the girls should learn to do this.**

Have the girls bring their recipe to the kitchen. **Demonstrate** the recipe step-by-step, emphasizing the following:

**Measuring dry ingredients (Step 2):** Spoon Bisquick® baking mix into a one cup measuring cup designed for dry ingredients. Do not sift. Slightly



The girls are eager to make muffins after watching the demonstration.



Don't forget to  
**preheat the oven**  
to 400 degrees.

over-fill the cup, then level off with the straight edge of a knife. See illustration on the Student Page.

**Stirring in liquid ingredients** (Step 6): Show the girls a set of **measuring spoons** and look at the difference between a teaspoon and a tablespoon. For this lesson, you will only need the tablespoon to measure the oil.

Use a large spoon to **combine the liquid and dry ingredients**. Caution the girls against over-mixing the batter. Kids love to stir and stir, but that will produce muffins with a tough texture. All the ingredients should be moistened, but some lumps will remain.

**Blueberries stain** clothes and countertops! Drain the berries (and thaw, if needed) ahead of time. Use paper towels to wipe up blueberry juice.

**Put your muffins in the oven** and set the timer for 13 minutes. A range of baking times is given in most recipes because ovens vary. The muffins are done when golden brown on top. Check them after 13 minutes and add more time if needed. You'll need more baking time when several pans of muffins are baking at once.

When baking, open the oven door only when necessary. It's especially important not to open the door during the first 10 minutes while the muffins rise. Constant fluctuations in oven temperature can adversely affect your baked goods. Allow the muffins to cool 10 minutes in the pan, then remove them to a cooling rack or plate. Eat & enjoy!

**What you'll need for this lesson:**

**Ingredients for each batch of muffins:**

2 Cups Original Bisquick® baking mix  
1/3 Cup sugar  
2/3 Cup milk  
2 Tablespoons vegetable oil  
1 egg  
3/4 Cup fresh or frozen blueberries (thawed and drained)

**Supplies for each batch of muffins:**

Muffin pan (12 holes, standard size)  
Paper baking cups ("cupcake papers")  
Medium Mixing Bowl  
Set of graduated measuring cups for dry ingredients (1C, 1/3C)  
Measuring Cup for liquids  
Measuring Spoons  
Small Bowl or Cup for cracking the egg  
Large spoon for Mixing  
Colander or sieve to drain blueberries  
Cooling Racks or Trivets for the hot pans  
Oven Mitts or Hot Pads  
Timer  
Optional: 1/3 or 1/2 Cup measure to ladle batter into the muffin pan

**To serve the muffins:**

Small Plates  
Napkins  
Milk or juice  
Cups or Glasses  
Butter or margarine  
Knife to spread

Name:

## Learning to Bake Muffins

Muffins are a delicious accompaniment to any meal. They can be sweet, like the blueberry muffins we'll make. Or, they can be savory, like cornbread or cheese muffins.

To make quick and easy muffins, we'll use **Bisquick®** baking mix. Bisquick® baking mix contains flour, baking soda, fat and salt already mixed together so you will only need to add a few ingredients to complete the recipe. You can find more Bisquick® recipes on the box or on their web site [www.bisquick.com](http://www.bisquick.com).

When baking, it's important to **preheat the oven**. It takes 20 minutes or more for the oven to reach the temperature stated in the recipe. If you do not preheat the oven, the muffins may not rise properly. Always read your recipe in advance and allow enough time for the oven to reach the correct temperature. Only use the oven with adult permission!

You will bake the muffins in a regular-size **muffin pan** with 12 holes. Pans for mini-muffins or jumbo muffins will require different baking times. Lining each hole with a **paper baking cup** ("cupcake papers") makes clean up easier. If you choose not to use paper liners, you will need to grease the bottoms of the muffin cups.

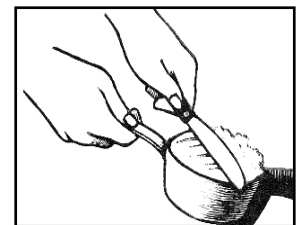
Muffins should be light and tender, with a uniform texture, not full of tunnels or holes. **Correct measuring and mixing techniques** are very important. You don't want heavy or chewy muffins!

Spoon the Bisquick® baking mix into a one cup measuring cup designed for dry ingredients. These come in a graduated set with 1/4, 1/3, 1/2, and 1 cup measures. The straight edge along the top allows you to fill the cup full, then level off by running the straight edge of a knife across the cup. Do not shake or tap down the Bisquick® baking mix in the cup. You will end up with too much, and the muffins will be dry.

To **mix the dry and wet ingredients together**, stir just until the dry ingredients are moistened. Over-mixing causes tunnels or holes and a tough texture in the muffins.



The girls set out the things they need before they make muffins.



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King Arthur Flour Co.



## Blueberry Muffins



### **Ingredients:**

2 Cups Original Bisquick® baking mix  
1/3 Cup sugar  
2/3 Cup milk  
2 Tablespoons vegetable oil  
1 egg  
3/4 Cup fresh or frozen blueberries (thawed & drained)

### **Method:**

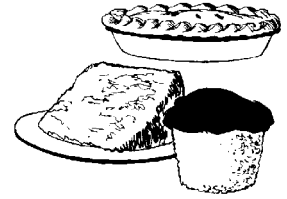
**Yield:** 12 muffins

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Place a paper baking cup in each of 12 regular-size muffin cups.
2. Measure the **Bisquick® baking mix** into a mixing bowl.
3. Add the **sugar** to the **Bisquick® baking mix** and stir.
4. Measure the **milk**; add the **vegetable oil** to the milk. Set aside
5. Crack the **egg** into a small cup or bowl. Remove any pieces of eggshell.
6. Stir the **milk**, **oil** and **egg** into the dry ingredients. Mix just until the dry ingredients are moistened. There will be lumps!
7. Gently stir in the **blueberries**.
8. Spoon the batter evenly into the 12 muffin cups, filling each about 3/4 full.
9. Bake 13 – 18 minutes or until golden brown.

High Altitude Directions (3500-6500 ft.): Heat oven to 425 degrees.

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Recipe reprinted from [www.bisquick.com](http://www.bisquick.com). For more great recipes visit  
[www.bettycrocker.com](http://www.bettycrocker.com).

## *Extending the Lesson...* *Learning to Bake*



Introducing girls to baking teaches them valuable skills they'll use for a lifetime. Someday, they'll bake muffins for their own family, a special cake for their child's birthday, or brownies for a bake sale.

Plan other simple baking experiences for your group. Depending on their prior experience, they may need several more easy recipes before they move on to baking completely "from scratch".

On the next page you will find another delicious muffin recipe from Bisquick® baking mix. With chocolate chips and bananas, it's sure to be a hit with kids! Try the variations at the end of the recipe, or create some of your own.

For some other easy recipes, try biscuits, cupcakes or a coffee cake made with Bisquick® baking mix. You'll find recipes on the box and many more at [www.Bisquick.com](http://www.Bisquick.com), or call 1-800-336-9331.

Prepare cake, brownies or a quick bread from a mix. Read through the directions on the box together and teach the girls to follow them step-by-step. Have them set out all the materials and ingredients they need before they begin. Show them how to use a mixer, a spatula and other baking tools. Be sure they know how to wash the dishes and clean up their workspace. Establishing good habits in the kitchen promotes successful baking experiences.

Encourage the girls to begin a **recipe file** of their own. They can begin with an inexpensive file box, or a recipe file box with dividers and pretty recipe cards that will serve them well for years to come. If you have a recipe file, show it to the girls. Share a few of your favorite recipes and copy a couple for the girls to include in their own file box.

Check out recipe books from the library and share some cookbooks of your own. Spend a little time with the girls looking through cookbooks and have them select at least one recipe to copy onto a card and put into their recipe file.

The joy you share baking with the girls and beginning a recipe file will be passed on to future generations!



## Cosmic Banana Muffins



### **Ingredients:**

2 Cups Original Bisquick® baking mix  
1/3 Cup sugar  
1 ¼ Cups mashed very ripe bananas (2 – 3 medium)  
1 egg  
3 Tablespoons vegetable oil  
1/3 Cup semisweet mini-chocolate chips

### **Method:**

**Yield:** 12 muffins

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Place a paper baking cup in each of 12 regular-size muffin cups, or grease bottoms only of muffin cups.
2. Measure the **Bisquick® baking mix** into a mixing bowl. Add the **sugar** and stir.
3. Mash the **bananas** with a fork.
4. Beat the **egg** slightly in a medium bowl. Add the **bananas** and **oil**.
5. Stir the **banana mixture** into the **dry ingredients** only until moistened. Do not over mix!
6. Fold in the **miniature chocolate chips**.
7. Divide batter evenly among muffin cups. Bake about 15 minutes or until golden brown.

**Variations:** Instead of chocolate chips, try stirring your favorite treats into the batter, such as 1/3 Cup toffee chips, candy-coated chocolate candies, peanuts, banana chips or raisins.

High Altitude Directions (3500-6500 ft.): Heat oven to 425 degrees. Use 14 medium muffin cups. Decrease sugar to 1/4 Cup.

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Recipe reprinted from [www.bisquick.com](http://www.bisquick.com). For more great recipes, visit [www.bettycrocker.com](http://www.bettycrocker.com).

## Lesson Three - Quick Breads

Quick Breads are simple to make and delicious to eat. The girls will enjoy making their own loaf of banana bread and they will learn important skills that apply to the preparation of many other baked goods.

### In this lesson, the girls will learn to:

- Grease a pan
- Differentiate between baking soda and baking powder
- Cream butter or margarine using a hand-held electric mixer
- Recognize abbreviations for cup, tablespoon and teaspoon
- Test quick breads for doneness

### Review:

- Measuring dry ingredients (Lesson 2)

### Give each girl a copy of:

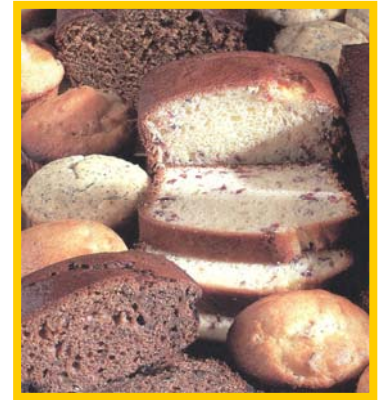
- Learning to Bake Quick Breads
- Best Banana Bread recipe
- Recipe Abbreviations worksheet (see Appendix)

Read the student page together "Learning to Bake Quick Breads".

**Demonstrate the action of baking soda and baking powder.** First, put a quarter cup of warm water in a glass measuring cup or a drinking glass. Add 1 teaspoon of **baking powder**. Watch and listen to it foam and fizz. If it does not foam, it's time to buy a fresh supply of baking powder! To ensure freshness, baking powder should be replaced about every 6 months.

Add a quarter cup of warm water to another glass. This time, add 1 teaspoon of **baking soda**. It dissolves, but there's little foaming action. Next, add 1 teaspoon of lemon juice. Baking soda produces many more bubbles when it's mixed with an acid rather than with water alone. This is the reason lemon juice, or some other acid like vinegar or buttermilk, is often used in quick breads to enhance rising. If kept dry, baking soda may be stored indefinitely.

**Baking soda** and **baking powder** are not the same, but both produce carbon dioxide bubbles to make the bread rise. Why did the baking powder produce bubbles when only water was added to it? Remember: Baking powder is comprised of two acids plus baking soda. Water alone will start the reaction between the acids and the baking soda. That's why it's important to keep baking powder dry and tightly covered.



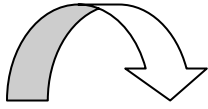
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**Baking Powder =**  
Baking soda + 2 acids +  
cornstarch

**Baking Soda =**  
Pure sodium bicarbonate

Our recipe for Best Banana Bread contains **1 teaspoon of lemon juice**. After this demonstration, students should understand why it's an important ingredient.

### Leader's Tips:



**Preheat the oven**  
to 350 degrees.

**Loaf pans** may be made of aluminum, glass or foil. If you are working with several girls, disposable foil pans may be a good choice. The girls can write their name on the bottom (outside) of the pan with permanent marker before they begin. Since foil pans full of batter are less stable than regular pans, an adult should take them in and out of the oven.

Be sure there is enough room for air to circulate around all the pans in the oven. The back of the oven is hotter than the front, so watch the pans in the back to be done first. You can rotate the pans from back to front after the first 30 minutes of baking.

I found the 8" x 4" disposable foil pans purchased in the grocery store worked very well. I had two girls work together to make one recipe of banana bread and then split the batter between their two pans.

Whatever type of pan you use, show the girls how to **grease the pan**. If you use a cooking oil spray, hold the pan over the sink and then spray the bottom and sides lightly. Or, put about 1 T. of shortening on a paper towel and thoroughly rub the bottom and sides of the pan. Discard any excess.



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**Review measuring dry ingredients.** In Lesson Two, the girls learned to measure Bisquick® baking mix. We'll measure flour the same way.

It will be easier for the girls to **measure the flour** if it is in a canister. Show the girls how to fluff the flour with a spoon. Although it is already pre-sifted, it does pack down in shipment. Gently spoon the flour into a 1 Cup measure. Run the straight edge of a knife across the rim to level the flour. Repeat for the second cup of flour, then add the other dry ingredients (Step 4).

**Measure baking powder, baking soda and salt** with measuring spoons. Scoop the teaspoon into the baking powder, then level it with the straight edge of a knife. Be sure the girls can identify the ½ teaspoon, 1 teaspoon, and tablespoon. It's best to measure the dry ingredients first, and then the same set of spoons can be used later to measure the liquids.

Set out the **butter** or margarine ahead of time so that it will soften. Do not melt it! **Creaming the butter or margarine** (Step 5) incorporates air into it, creating little spaces for the leavening to expand the batter as it bakes. Creaming can be done by hand with a large spoon, but an

electric mixer makes the job easier. Medium-high speed works well for creaming butter.

Show the girls how to place the beaters down into the bowl and safely **operate the mixer**, keeping fingers and utensils out of the bowl while the mixer is running. Each pair of girls needs a mixer to use. Ask several girls to bring a portable hand mixer from home. Note: a battery-operated whisk is not strong enough to cream butter.

When the butter is light and fluffy, slowly **add the sugar**, (Step 6) beating thoroughly after each addition. Do not worry about over-beating at this stage; the fluffier the better!

**Before adding the eggs** to the batter, I suggest the girls crack one egg at a time into a custard cup or small bowl, check it for eggshells, and then add it to the batter. It's much easier to fish out a piece of eggshell from a small bowl, than trying to remove it from the batter! Turn the mixer off and scrape the sides of the bowl with a rubber spatula to be sure the ingredients are well blended.

After adding the eggs, **add the bananas, milk and lemon juice** to the creamed mixture. Encourage the girls to read the recipe carefully and note that the milk is measured in tablespoons, the lemon juice in teaspoons.

Next, the **dry ingredients are added** (Step 10). Once the flour is added, it is very important not to over-mix the batter. Often the girls have had so much fun using the mixer that they don't want to stop beating! But now it's time to set the mixer aside and stir in the dry ingredients with a large spoon - just until everything is completely moistened. Over-mixing at this point will cause tough bread.

**Baking times** in most recipes are given as a span, (55-60 minutes), because ovens vary. The type of pan you use, and how many pans are in the oven, will affect the baking time. If the oven is full of pans, the bread will take longer to bake. Start checking the bread a few minutes before the lowest baking time given.

Show the girls how to **test for doneness**. Insert a toothpick into the center of the bread. If it comes out clean, the bread is done. If not, bake another 5 minutes and recheck with a clean toothpick. Repeat until the toothpick comes out clean. **This should be done by an adult**. Oven mitts will protect your hands better than hot pads.

**Cool** the bread in the pan for 10 minutes before removing it. It's nice for the girls to take home their loaf of bread to share with their families. The bread can remain in the pan to make it easier to transport. Use your demonstration loaf for snack, or make some ahead of time so the class can enjoy some bread together.

If you have any leftover, Quick Breads **freeze** very well. When the bread is thoroughly cool, wrap it tightly in heavy-duty aluminum foil. Label and date it. Freeze for up to 3 months.

After the kitchen has been cleaned up, give each girl a copy of the **Recipe Abbreviations** worksheet (see Appendix). This will reinforce what they have learned in the kitchen. You may want to complete the page together or ask the girls to write in their answers and then go over it with them. This is not a test, but a worksheet designed to teach them common measurement abbreviations .

**What you'll need for this lesson:**

**Ingredients** (per recipe):

2 Cups All-Purpose Flour  
Baking Powder  
Baking Soda  
½ Cup butter or stick margarine  
1 Cup sugar  
2 eggs  
2-3 bananas  
2 Tablespoons milk  
1 teaspoon lemon juice  
Cooking Spray or Shortening to grease pan

**Supplies:**

Loaf pan(s)  
Large Mixing Bowl  
Medium Mixing Bowl  
Portable Electric Mixer  
Measuring Cup for dry ingredients  
Measuring Cup for liquids  
Measuring Spoons  
Large Mixing Spoon  
Rubber Spatula  
Fork  
Table knife  
Small bowl or custard cup  
Small plate



**Bring from home**

**To serve Banana Bread for snack:**

Napkins  
Small plates  
Knife to slice the bread (on a cutting board or plate)  
Cups or glasses  
Milk or juice to drink

Name:

## Learning to Bake Quick Breads

Your Notes

There are two main types of bread: Yeast breads, which we will explore in another lesson, and quick breads. Both types contain the same basic ingredients: Flour, liquids, and leaven (rhymes with heaven). There can be any variety of other ingredients, but these three are the building blocks of bread.

**Yeast** is one type of **leavening**. For centuries, people used yeast to make their bread rise. Bread dough made with yeast requires a long rising time, usually several hours, before it is baked.

**Quick breads** use **baking soda** and/or **baking powder** instead of yeast. Like yeast, these produce carbon dioxide bubbles in the dough, causing it to rise. But, unlike yeast, baking soda and baking powder work quickly, so we call these “quick” breads. The bread must be baked as soon as the dough is mixed; there is no rising time (as there is with yeast breads).

Some examples of quick breads include: muffins, biscuits, pancakes, doughnuts, fruit and nut breads, savory breads and coffeecakes.

What’s the **difference between baking soda and baking powder**?

**Baking soda** is pure sodium bicarbonate. When mixed with something acidic and wet, it starts producing carbon dioxide immediately. When your dough contains baking soda, it’s important to get it into a preheated oven right away, before all the carbon dioxide bubbles have dissipated.

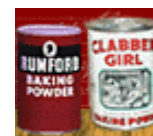
**Baking powder** is comprised of baking soda plus two acids, with some cornstarch to keep the acids from reacting with each other. Most of the baking powder we use today is “double acting”. One of the acids produces carbon dioxide bubbles as soon as it gets wet; the other acid does not react until it is heated. Most baking powder has this “double action” and you may see that on the label.

**Flour** forms the structure of breads. Our banana bread recipe calls for All-Purpose flour. This is plain, white flour and works well for most of our baking needs. Do not confuse it with Self-Rising flour, which has baking powder and salt already added to it. You would have too much leavening if you used Self-Rising flour in our recipe. When you buy flour, read the label carefully.



**Baking  
Soda**

Used by courtesy of  
Church & Dwight Company



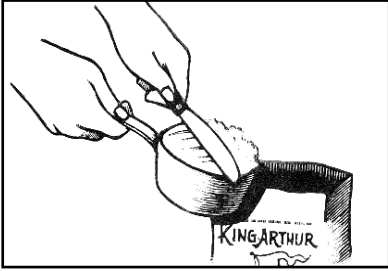
**Baking  
Powder**

Used with permission of  
Hulman & Co.



**Whole-wheat flour** is light brown because it includes the wheat germ and wheat bran. It has more fiber and vitamins than All-Purpose flour. You can substitute equal amounts of whole-wheat flour for All-Purpose flour in this recipe. That will result in a denser loaf of bread. You may want to substitute half (or less) of the All-Purpose flour with whole-wheat flour at first. Experiment with different amounts to see what flavor and texture you prefer.

**Measuring flour** correctly is very important! Be sure to use a set of measuring cups designed for dry ingredients. A set will have cups in graduated sizes from ¼ Cup to 1 Cup. The lip of each cup is flat, making it easier to level the flour.



Careful measuring is essential.

Used with permission,  
King Arthur Flour Co.

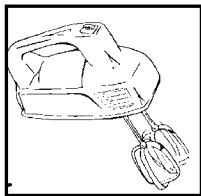
Flour packs down in the bag or canister. Fluff it with a spoon. Gently spoon the flour into the one-cup measuring cup. Run the straight edge of a knife across the rim of the cup to level the flour.

If you simply scoop the flour out and shake off the excess, you will end up with an extra ounce of flour – or more! The extra flour will make your bread dense and dry.

The **liquids** in our recipe are milk and lemon juice. Use measuring spoons to accurately measure them. Why do we need 1 teaspoon of lemon juice? It's such a small amount, some cooks might be tempted to leave it out. Remember, baking soda reacts with an acid (lemon juice) to make carbon dioxide bubbles that cause the bread to rise.

**Eggs** make baked goods tender and rich. Large eggs are used in most recipes, unless otherwise noted. You can use an egg substitute if you prefer. Read the carton to find the amount that equals two eggs.

**Butter** helps make our bread moist and gives it flavor. You may substitute **stick margarine**. Do not use tub or diet margarines as they contain a lot of water and will not work well in most baked goods.



An electric hand mixer  
makes creaming the butter  
easier.

The butter should be at room temperature so it can be easily beaten. We call this very important step “**creaming the butter**”. As you beat the butter, whether by hand or with a mixer, you work air into it. This will help the bread to rise better and have a lighter texture.

You will need 2-3 **bananas** to equal one cup of mashed bananas for our recipe. The best flavor comes from very ripe bananas that are turning brown. Even if the entire banana is brown, it should be perfect for baking!

Read your recipe carefully and make sure you have everything set out before you start cooking.

Name:

## Best Banana Bread

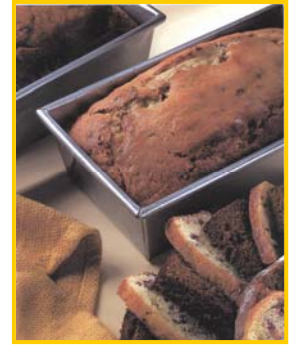
### Ingredients:

2 Cups All-Purpose flour  
2 teaspoons baking powder  
1 1/2 teaspoons baking soda  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/2 Cup butter or margarine, room temperature  
3/4 Cup sugar  
2 eggs  
1 Cup mashed ripe bananas (2-3 bananas)  
3 Tablespoons milk  
1 teaspoon lemon juice

### Method:

Yield: One large 9"x5" loaf,  
2 medium, or 3 mini-loaves

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.
2. Grease one 9" x 5" loaf pan, or 2-3 smaller pans loaf pans.
3. Carefully measure the **flour** into a medium sized bowl.
4. Add the **baking powder**, **baking soda** and **salt** to the flour and stir well. Set aside.
5. In a large bowl, cream the **butter** or margarine. Beat with a mixer (or by hand) till fluffy.
6. Turn off the mixer. Add about half of the **sugar**. Beat until well blended. Turn off the mixer and add the rest of the **sugar**. Beat till light and fluffy.
7. Add **eggs**, one at a time. Beat well after each addition. Turn off the mixer; scrape the sides of the bowl with a rubber spatula to be sure all ingredients are well mixed.
8. Mash the **bananas** with a fork on a small plate until you have 1 Cup.
9. Add **bananas**, **milk** and **lemon juice** to the butter mixture. Stir thoroughly. There will be some lumps from the bananas.
10. Slowly add the dry ingredients to the banana mixture. Stir with a spoon just until all ingredients are moistened. Do not over mix!



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**11.** Pour the batter into greased pan(s). Bake 55 – 60 minutes for 9” x 5” pan, 40 - 45 minutes for 8” x 4” pans. Check mini loaf pans after 30 minutes. When done, a toothpick inserted in the center should come out clean. Ask an adult for help; the pan will be very hot!

**12.** Cool in pan 10 minutes, then carefully remove from the pan. Cool. Eat and enjoy!

**Variations:** Add ½ Cup of chopped nuts, raisins, or mini chocolate chips.

## Extending The Lesson... Quick Breads

There are so many different types of Quick Breads. Just about anything leavened with baking soda or baking powder can be considered a Quick Bread: Biscuits, muffins, donuts, pancakes, many types of cakes and breads. Here are some recipes for donuts and pancakes for your group to try. Ask them to check cookbooks for other quick bread recipes that they could share.

According to King Arthur Flour, **donuts** originated in New England where they were shaped like nuts, hence the name. The Pennsylvania Dutch added holes to them. The hole in the center allows the oil to penetrate the dough quicker and the donuts cook more evenly.

### Quick & Easy Donuts

Refrigerated biscuits (buttermilk or country biscuits)

Oil

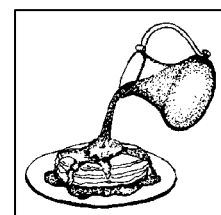
Powdered Sugar or Cinnamon Sugar

Open the can of refrigerated biscuits. Separate the biscuits. Remove the top from a bottle of dish detergent; rinse it thoroughly and dry. Make a hole in the center of each biscuit by pressing down into the dough with the bottle top. Twist it and lift out the donut hole. Save them for cooking.

Pour enough oil into a skillet or electric frying pan to a depth of at least one inch. Heat the oil to medium-high, about 375 degrees (this part needs to be done by an adult!). Fry the donuts and holes for about one minute, then turn with tongs and fry the other side until the donuts are golden brown. Drain on paper towels. When cool enough to handle, press the donuts into powdered sugar or cinnamon sugar on a plate.



You can make **pancakes** from a mix, but it's easy to make your own, and less expensive. In class, have the girls make the pancakes from scratch. To save time at home, tell them the dry ingredients can be mixed ahead of time. Store in a zippered bag or tightly closed container for up to 6 months. When you're ready for pancakes, just add the liquid ingredients and cook.



For added convenience, the batter can be mixed ahead of time. Store, covered, in the refrigerator up to 3 days. If the batter thickens, add a little more milk before cooking.

Try the Pancake Master Recipe first (next page) and some of the variations another time.

## **Pancakes – Master Recipe**

2 Cups All-Purpose flour  
2 teaspoons baking powder  
1 Tablespoon sugar  
½ teaspoon salt, optional  
2 eggs or ½ Cup egg substitute  
1 ¼ Cups milk  
2 teaspoons vanilla  
2 Tablespoons oil

Thoroughly stir together the dry ingredients. In another bowl, stir together the wet ingredients. Pour the wet ingredients into the dry and stir only until just blended; there will be lumps. Do not over mix or the pancakes will be tough.

Allow the batter to rest a few minutes. This lets the gluten relax and gives a more tender pancake.

Pour a thin layer of cooking oil in a frying pan or griddle. Heat until a few drops of water sprinkled on the surface “dance”. Pour ¼ Cup of batter into the frying pan. The first side is done when the bubbles burst and don’t fill in. Turn pancakes only once. The second side should take only half as much time to cook as the first. To keep the first batch warm, put the pancakes on an oven-safe plate in a 250-degree oven.

## **Variations**

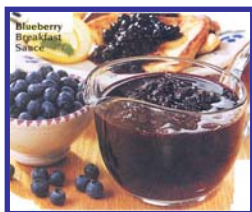
**Buckwheat Pancakes:** Substitute 1 Cup of buckwheat flour for 1 Cup of the white flour.

**Fruit or Berry Pancakes:** Gently fold into the pancake batter 1 Cup of blueberries or 1 Cup of finely chopped fruit.

**Nutty Pancakes:** Add ¼ Cup of chopped pecans or other nuts to the batter.

**Light & Fluffy Pancakes:** Separate the eggs and add only the yolks to the liquid ingredients. Beat the whites until they form stiff peaks. Fold them into the batter just before cooking.

**Whole Wheat Pancakes:** Substitute 1 Cup of whole wheat flour for 1 Cup of the white flour.



Make this yummy **Blueberry Breakfast Sauce** to top your pancakes. You’ll find the recipe in the fruit chapter (chapter 10).

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## Lesson Four - Yeast Breads

Homemade bread baking in the oven brings back memories of my grandma's kitchen. The aroma was wonderful, surpassed only by the delicious taste of bread fresh from the oven! It is not difficult to make yeast bread and, with today's quick rising yeast, you can turn out loaves in half the time it took grandma.

### In this lesson, the girls will learn to:

- Work with yeast
- Knead bread dough
- Shape bread dough
- Test yeast bread for doneness



The girls take turns kneading bread dough.

### Review:

- Measuring dry & liquid ingredients (Lessons 1-3)
- What is leavening? (Lesson 3)

### Give each girl a copy of:

- Learning to Bake Yeast Breads
- Fast Rising White Bread recipe
- Kneading Bread Dough Skill Page

Read the student page together, "Learning to Bake Yeast Breads".

**Demonstrate the leavening action of yeast.** In a glass measuring cup, stir together 2 T. flour, 1 packet of yeast and 1 t. sugar. Add  $\frac{1}{2}$  C. of very warm water, (120-130 degrees). Cover with plastic wrap. In 5-10 minutes, the mixture should be foaming and expanding.

In Lesson Three, we learned that baking soda and baking powder create carbon dioxide bubbles when mixed with liquid. **Yeast also produces carbon dioxide bubbles.** It grows when fed sugar and starch, providing the leavening for our bread.

Don't be afraid of yeast! It needs warm liquid and food to grow. Since RapidRise yeast is added first to the other dry ingredients, it tolerates warmer water; 120-130 degrees is ideal. Most home hot water heaters are set in this range, so hot tap water will probably be just right. A kitchen thermometer is a valuable tool to check water temperature.

For our Fast Rising White Bread recipe, **be sure to purchase RapidRise yeast.** Other companies may call it "quick rise". It takes only half the rising time of regular yeast, which is simply called "Active Dry Yeast".



Purchase yeast in a jar, or a strip containing 3 packets.

1 packet of dry yeast =  
2  $\frac{1}{4}$  t.

Photos provided by  
Fleischmann's Yeast

Besides yeast, the most important ingredient in bread is **flour**. We're starting with a simple recipe for white bread. I recommend using King Arthur All-Purpose flour for making bread by hand. Not all flour is the same. Take a look in the grocery store and you'll find many different types and brands of flour. What's the difference?



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King Arthur Flour Co.

**Gluten is a protein** found in flour that produces the structure in bread. This network of gluten is developed as you knead the dough. It traps the carbon dioxide produced by the yeast. The yeast grows; the dough expands and rises.

**King Arthur All-Purpose flour** has a higher protein content than other brands. Also, it is not chemically bleached or bromated as most other flours are. I find it yields consistently excellent results! King Arthur also produces bread flour, but that is best used with bread machines (the protein content is very high and requires a great deal of kneading).

Other brands of All-Purpose flour have a lower protein content than King Arthur flour. If you're using any other brands, purchase **bread flour**.

This **basic white bread recipe** is a good starting point. It has only four ingredients plus water. There are many other delicious recipes that add butter, eggs, milk, and other ingredients, but they are not necessary to turn out a tasty loaf of white bread.

Our recipe for **Fast Rising White Bread yields two loaves**. Plan to make one batch for a demonstration. Then you may want to have the girls work together to make just one more batch. Several girls can measure ingredients and everyone can take turns kneading the dough. Set a timer and ask each girl to knead for one minute. This is the way I introduced yeast breads to my group.

Of course, you can work in pairs or groups of 3 or 4, but be sure your oven can accommodate all the loaves to be baked, and that you have space for everyone kneading the dough at the same time. An adult should be available to help each group.

Once you have a little experience, I encourage you to try other recipes. Go to the Fleischmann's website, [www.breadworld.com](http://www.breadworld.com) or the King Arthur flour website, [www.kingarthurfLOUR.com](http://www.kingarthurfLOUR.com) for lots of great recipes and tips.

While the bread is rising, why not **make homemade butter** to spread on the warm bread? It's easy, and oh, so yummy! Pour a carton of heavy whipping cream into a jar and screw the lid on tightly. Shake vigorously. Pass the jar around so everyone takes a turn shaking the cream. It will take a few minutes, but soon the cream will thicken. Keep shaking! A large lump of butter will form. Drain the buttermilk; enjoy the butter on your bread. One pint of whipping cream should be enough for 6 – 8 people.

## **What you'll need for this lesson:**

### **Ingredients** (for 2 batches):

5 lb. bag King Arthur All-Purpose Flour – in a canister for easier access  
Rapid Rise or Quick Rise Yeast – 1 strip (or a jar of yeast)  
6 Tablespoons of Sugar  
2 – 4 teaspoons of Salt  
Water  
Cooking Oil Spray

**Note:** A 5 pound bag of flour contains approximately 19 Cups of flour, enough for 3 batches of the Fast Rising White Bread recipe.

### **Supplies:**

Plastic Wrap  
Loaf Pans 9" x 5" or 8" x 4" (metal or disposable foil)  
Large Mixing bowl  
One Cup Measure for flour  
Measuring Cup for liquids  
Measuring Spoons  
Large Sturdy Spoon for mixing dough  
Rolling Pin  
Clean Scissors  
Cooling Rack  
Kitchen Thermometer

### **To serve the bread:**

Cutting Board  
Bread Knife  
Butter, margarine  
Spreading knives  
Small plates  
Napkins

### **To make butter:**

1 pint heavy whipping cream (enough for 6-8 people)  
Jar with tight-fitting lid

**Optional:** For crisper crust:  
1 egg or egg white  
Small bowl  
Fork  
Pastry Brush  
Sesame or Poppy Seeds

For softer crust, brush with milk.



## *Kneading Bread Dough*

If you've ever played with modeling dough or clay, you probably rolled it, pushed it and shaped it. Kneading bread dough is very similar! It's fun to do, and it's an essential step in bread making.

**Let's get started.** Work on a clean, dry table or countertop. It should be low enough so that you can extend your arms comfortably as you knead the dough.

Rub some flour on your hands and sprinkle a little on the table. Put the dough on top. It will be sticky at first, but will become easier to work with as you knead.

Pat the dough into a ball. Turn it over several times. Add a little flour to the table if the dough sticks.

**Remember these three steps: Fold-Push-Turn.**

### **1. Fold**

Flatten the dough a little, then fold it toward you.



### **2. Push**

Put the heels of both hands in the middle of the dough and push it away from you, pressing down as you push.



**3. Turn** the dough a quarter turn and repeat.

You'll soon **develop a rhythm** as you fold, push and turn. Say to yourself: "Fold, Push, Turn. Fold, Push, Turn." Be energetic! Kneading strengthens the gluten that forms the structure of bread. Gentle love pats won't do!

When the dough gets sticky, **add a little flour** (about 1 T. at a time) and work it into the dough.

It will take 6-10 minutes of kneading, depending on how fast you work. When the dough is smooth and elastic and springs back when you poke it, you're done kneading.

Time to **rest!** Spray plastic wrap with cooking oil spray. Cover the dough with it so the oiled side touches the dough. Let it rest for the time indicated in your recipe.



Name:

## Learning to Bake Yeast Breads

Most of the bread we eat every day is leavened with yeast. Leaven makes dough rise. It's great fun to watch yeast at work! Just a little yeast makes an entire batch of bread dough rise, and gives bread a wonderful flavor.

**Yeast is actually a tiny, living plant.** It's been used in bread making for centuries and is mentioned in the Bible.

Several **types of yeast** are available. **Fresh yeast** comes in little refrigerated blocks and is often called compressed, or cake yeast.

**Dry yeast** is more common. Although it is dry, it has only been deactivated, not killed. When you add water and flour, you activate the yeast and it starts to grow.

There are **several types of dry yeast**. **Active Dry Yeast** requires long rising times and works best if it's dissolved in warm water first, and then added to the other ingredients.

**RapidRise** yeast only needs half as much time for rising. You can add it directly to the other dry ingredients without dissolving it first in water. This is the type we will use.

Both types of dry yeast are available in the baking section of the supermarket. Both can be purchased in strips of three packets each, or in a jar. Read the label carefully so you get the type needed for your recipe.

**What activates the yeast to make it grow?** Warm liquid will activate the yeast, and sugar or flour feeds it. Some cooks worry that they will kill the yeast, but that is not likely if you remember this: if the liquid is warm and feels comfortable to you, it will probably be fine for the yeast.

**When using RapidRise yeast**, the ideal water temperature is 120-130 degrees. That will feel quite warm to you. RapidRise Yeast is the easiest to use because it's added directly to the dry ingredients. You do not need to dissolve it in water first.

**The other main ingredient in bread is flour.** There are many different types of wheat flour, so it is important to read the label carefully when purchasing it.

**Wheat flour contains a protein called gluten** (gloo ten). As you knead the dough, you develop strands of gluten that give structure to the bread.

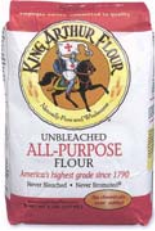


Fresh Yeast



RapidRise Yeast

Photos provided by  
Fleischmann's Yeast.



Used with permission,  
King Arthur Flour Co.

**King Arthur All-Purpose flour** is the best choice for making bread by hand because it has a high protein content and is not treated with chemicals. If you use any other brand, you will need to buy **bread flour**.

There are only a few **other ingredients** in our bread recipe. **Sugar** helps the yeast to grow. **Salt** gives flavor and prevents the yeast from rising too fast.

Yeast dough can be made into rolls, coffeecake, cinnamon bread or rolls, pretzels, pizza dough and more! Look in a cookbook for more recipes to try another time. With your parents' permission, you can also find recipes and tips at the following website: [www.breadworld.com](http://www.breadworld.com).

Name:

## Fast Rising White Bread

### Ingredients:

5 – 6 Cups King Arthur All-Purpose flour  
1 pkg. Rapid Rise Yeast (2 ¼ t.)  
3 Tablespoons sugar  
1 – 2 teaspoons salt  
2 Cups very warm water (120 – 130 degrees)  
Cooking oil or oil spray



### Method:

Yield: 2 loaves

1. Put 5 C. of **flour** into a large bowl.
2. Add the **yeast, sugar** and **salt** to the flour. Stir well.
3. Add the **water**. Stir with a large spoon until the ingredients are well blended. The dough will be very stiff.
4. On a clean, dry table or countertop, sprinkle ½ C. **flour**. Rub some flour all over your hands. Brush the excess flour to one side.
5. Place the dough on the floured surface. Pat it into a ball. It will be sticky at first.
6. Knead the dough 8-10 minutes. Add just enough flour to keep the dough from sticking as you knead, about 1 T. of flour at a time.
7. When you've finished kneading, the dough should be smooth and elastic. Cover with plastic wrap, sprayed with cooking oil. Let the dough rest 10 minutes away from drafts.
8. Grease 2 loaf pans.
9. Flour your hands. Punch down the dough with your fist. Cut the dough in half with a clean scissors.
10. Shape each half into a smooth ball. Roll each into a rectangle with a rolling pin, or stretch and pat the dough with your hands.
11. Starting from a short end, roll the dough tightly into a log shape.
12. Pinch the seam and the ends closed.





13. Place seam-side down into the greased pans.
14. Cover each pan with plastic wrap sprayed with cooking oil. Let the dough rise in a warm place until it doubles in bulk, about 45 minutes.
15. **Preheat the oven to 400 degrees** at least 20 minutes before baking.
16. **Optional:** For a crisp, brown crust, brush the top of each loaf with an egg mixture (see below). Sprinkle with sesame or poppy seeds, if desired.
17. Bake loaves 30-35 minutes or until done. Bake rolls or small shaped bread about 20 minutes. If the bread gets too brown during baking, turn the oven down to 375 degrees.
18. Ask an adult to remove the bread from the pans and test for doneness. Turn bread out of pan. Tap the side or bottom. If it sounds hollow, the bread is done. A thermometer inserted into the bread should read 190-205 degrees.
19. Cool on wire racks.

**Optional:**

With a fork, beat 1 egg white (or whole egg) with 2 T. water. Brush on top of bread dough just before baking.

Or,

For a softer, tender crust, brush unbaked loaves with milk.



Photos provided by Fleishchmann's Yeast.

[www.breadworld.com](http://www.breadworld.com)

## Extending The Lesson... Fun with Bread Dough

Bread sculpture is great fun! Once the girls have learned to bake the basic white bread, you can use the same recipe to shape the dough into animals, letters and numbers, flowers, you name it! Be creative; see how many different edible masterpieces you and the girls can create.

Follow the Fast Rising White Bread recipe through step 7. After the dough has rested 10 minutes, cut it in half, or quarters, with scissors. The amount of bread dough you give each girl will depend on how large you want the finished sculpture, and how much oven space you have to bake everyone's bread.

Since our recipe is enough for two loaves of bread, you can cut the dough into fourths and each girl will have plenty to make a medium-sized bear or other creation. For a larger group, the dough can be cut into eight pieces for everyone to make a small sculpture.

With a large group, it helps to give each girl a piece of foil to set her finished sculpture on. First, have the girls write their initials on the back of the foil with a marker. Then spray the other side of the foil with cooking oil spray. Place the sculptures on the foil, then on a cookie sheet to bake. They will be easier to identify when they come out of the oven.

Take a look at some of our creations:



The girls shape the dough into teddy bears on a lightly greased cookie sheet.

**Tip:** To make claws on the bear, or textured shell for a turtle, make little snips in the dough with clean scissors.



Whole cloves are stuck into the dough for eyes & buttons. Be sure to remove them before eating. After a 20 minute rise, the bears are ready to bake.



We're so proud of the finished bears!



Photo provided by  
Fleischmann's Yeast



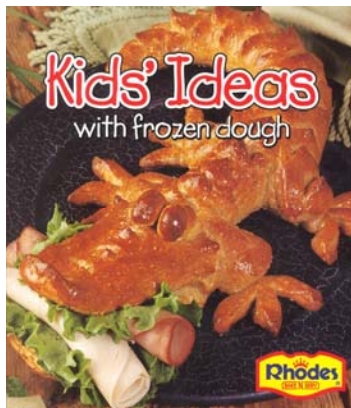
The bear and kitty were brushed with a beaten egg wash to give the brown, shiny crust. Uncooked spaghetti was added, after baking, for whiskers.

Punch a hole in the baked bread with a skewer or toothpick and then insert uncooked spaghetti for whiskers.

Chocolate chips or raisins can be stuck on with a little honey, after the bread has cooled, to create eyes or other features.

## Quick, Cute Et Easy Fun with Rhodes Frozen Bread Dough!

No time to mix bread dough? No problem! Use Rhodes frozen bread dough. Thaw according to package directions and you're ready to sculpt, create and bake. For many more projects like the like the ones below, order their book "Kids' Ideas with frozen dough".



\$9.95 + S & H

Soft cover, 112 pages

Call 1-800-876-7333, Mon.-Fri.

8 AM – 5 PM, Mountain Time

or

Order on the website

[www.rhodesbread.com](http://www.rhodesbread.com)

You'll find lots of great ideas on  
Rhodes' website!

Used with permission, Rhodes Bake-N-Serv

## Lesson Five Cake Baking & Decorating

Of all the FCH lessons I teach, cake decorating is the by far the girls' favorite! With a few basic techniques, you can turn a plain cake into a really special one – at a fraction of the cost of a bakery decorated cake.

Before they learn to decorate, the girls need to learn how to bake a cake. While cake mixes are convenient, important skills are learned making one “from scratch.” Many people think these taste better. Two recipes are given; each illustrates a different method of cake making.

Cakes are really a type of Quick Bread, leavened the same way with baking powder and perhaps some baking soda. Review Lesson Three; you will use many of the same skills to make a cake. If your group has not done this lesson, go over the skills in “Learning to Bake Quick Breads”.

### In this lesson, the girls will learn to:

- Grease and flour a cake pan
- Make a cake from scratch
- Test a cake for doneness
- Frost a cake

### Review:

- Creaming butter or shortening with an electric mixer (Lesson 3)
- Recognizing baking powder and baking soda (Lesson 3)

### Give each girl a copy of:

- Learning to Bake Cakes
- Basic Butter Cake Recipe
- Quick Yellow cake Recipe
- Frosting a Cake Skill Page

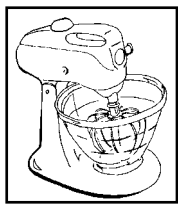
There are **several different methods of cake making**. This lesson includes two recipes for the most common methods. In the **traditional method**, butter or shortening is creamed, and then sugar and eggs are added. The dry and liquid ingredients are alternately added to this creamed mixture.

**Creaming the fat** is a vital step in this method. It's important when you make quick breads and cookies, too. But, in cake making, the texture of the cake, and how well it rises, depends on this step. As you beat the butter or shortening, you whip many air bubbles into the fat. This gives the baking powder many spaces in which to expand, making the cake rise and giving it a fine texture.



I demonstrate creaming the shortening with a portable mixer.





Stand mixer

**Stand mixers** are more powerful than **portable, hand-held mixers**. For creaming ingredients, you will need to use high speed on most hand-held mixers, and medium-high on a stand mixer. Either one does a great job, and certainly is far easier than beating with a spoon like our grandmothers used to do!

The **one-bowl method** uses oil rather than a solid fat. Many of these recipes were developed during WW II when butter was rationed. They are sometimes referred to as “dump” cakes because the ingredients are usually dumped into one bowl and then mixed. The oil produces a moist cake and it’s quick to mix. The leavening expands in the air bubbles you beat into the batter when you mix everything together. One-bowl cakes are very moist, but cakes made with the traditional recipe usually have a finer texture and many people prefer the butter flavor.

Decide **which recipe** you prefer to use. Copy both recipes for the girls. You may want to bake one recipe now and save the other for another lesson to give the girls experience with each method. If not, encourage them to try the other recipe at home. Talk about the advantages (above) of each method of cake making.

**Read the student page together** “Learning to Bake Cakes”.

**Review using an electric mixer safely.** Remind the girls to turn off the mixer when adding ingredients and before scraping the sides of the bowl with a spatula. Start the mixer on slow speed and, as the ingredients are blended, increase the speed. With a hand-held mixer, use high speed for creaming the butter, medium-low speed to blend other ingredients. Stand mixers are more powerful; follow the owner’s guide. Remind everyone to keep the beaters down in the bowl to avoid splatters.

Show the girls a **stick of butter**. Most wrappers are marked off in tablespoons to make **measuring** easier. Have the girls count the tablespoons in one stick of butter. One stick = 8 T. or ½ C.

**Demonstrate the recipe.** If the girls have completed Lesson Three, they should be familiar with the concepts in the first 5 steps of the Basic Butter Cake recipe. However, it’s always helpful to review. Stress the importance of the **creaming the butter** to incorporate lots of air bubbles into it. They should beat the butter at least 2-3 minutes and 5 minutes is better! This also gives everyone a turn using the mixer.

The **dry and wet ingredients are added alternately** to make mixing easier and to help avoid over-mixing, which causes a tough texture.

Pour the batter into prepared pans and put them in the oven. Have an adult put the pans in the oven and rotate them if they are baking unevenly.

There are many different types of **cake pans**. Most bakers prefer aluminum, straight sided pans. Pans with a dark coating absorb heat faster and the cake bakes faster. Cakes bake even faster in glass pans as heat goes through the clear

sides quickly. That's why a lower temperature is recommended for baking cake in glass pans (usually 325 degrees rather than 350).

If you do not have enough **cake pans** for your group, ask the girls to bring an 8" or 9" round pan from home. Use a magic marker to write the girls' initials on the outside of their pan. If necessary, you can use **foil pans**, but they must be greased and floured well to get into all the creases. Decrease oven temperature by 25 degrees. Because foil pans are thinner, the cake will bake quicker. Check for doneness 5 minutes earlier than the recipe states.

The **baking times** in both recipes are given for plain, aluminum pans. Remember that ovens vary greatly, so always check your cake a few minutes before the lowest time stated in the recipe.

I serve my demonstration cake for the girls' snack and have them **take their cake home** to share with their family. Each girl puts her cake on a large, disposable plastic plate, then frosts and decorates it.

**If you have a large group**, each round cake can be cut in half. I had to do that one year and the girls decorated their semi-circle to make rainbows, umbrellas (cutting one strip off the bottom for the handle), and a hill! They thoroughly enjoyed the creative challenge! You can also use pot-pie pans; there is enough batter for 5-6 pans of that size. Decrease the temperature and baking time (see above). Cupcakes are another possibility; the recipe yields about 2 dozen. Baking time: 18-22 minutes.

### **What You'll Need for this lesson:**

#### **Ingredients for Basic Butter Cake** (2 layers per recipe)

½ C shortening  
1 C sugar  
2 eggs (large)  
2 C All-Purpose flour  
2 teaspoons baking powder  
salt  
2/3 C milk  
1 teaspoon vanilla

#### **Ingredients for Quick Yellow Cake** (2 layers per recipe)

1 ½ C All-Purpose flour  
1 ½ C sugar  
3 t. baking powder  
½ t. salt  
1 Cup milk  
2/3 C vegetable oil  
3 eggs  
2 t. vanilla

#### **For both recipes:**

Extra shortening and flour  
to grease & flour the pans

**Supplies for Basic Butter Cake (Traditional Method)**

Cake pans, 8" or 9"

Paper towels or waxed paper to grease the pans

Electric Mixer

Large bowl (to cream butter & then add other ingredients)

Medium bowl (to measure and mix dry ingredients)

Small bowl or custard cup to crack eggs into

1 C. measuring cup for dry ingredients

Measuring cup for liquids

Measuring Spoons

Table knife (to level flour)

Large Spoon

Rubber Spatula

Whisk, optional, but very helpful for mixing dry ingredients thoroughly

Cooling Rack(s)

Toothpicks to test cake

Styrofoam or sturdy plastic plate for cooled cakes

**Supplies for Quick Yellow Cake (One-bowl Method)**

Cake pans, 8" or 9"

Paper towels or waxed paper to grease the pans

Electric Mixer

Large bowl

Small bowl to crack eggs into

1C and 1/2 C. measuring cups for dry ingredients

Measuring cups for liquids

Measuring Spoons

Table knife (to level flour)

Whisk

Large Spoon

Rubber Spatula

Cooling Rack(s)

Toothpicks to test cake

Sturdy plastic or Styrofoam plate for cooled cakes

**For Frosting and Decorating:**

Canned or homemade frosting (1 can should cover 2 layers, but buy an extra can or two. Kids love icing!)

Waxed paper strips (to put under cake edges while icing the cake)

Knife or cake decorator's spatula to spread icing

Decorator's Icing – purchased in tubes, or recipe in Extending the Lesson

Decorator's bag, coupler and tip(s)

Candies, cookies or anything else to decorate the cake

Name:

## Learning to Bake Cakes

We often celebrate special occasions with a cake, and they're always a favorite dessert. There are **many types of cakes**: rich, dense pound cake, light high-rising angel food cake, devil's food cake, carrot cake, pineapple upside-down cake, and butter cake, to name a few.

Whatever type you choose, you want a delicious, tender, moist cake that tastes as good as it looks. We'll make a basic yellow cake "from scratch". There are many delicious cake mixes, but it's not difficult to make a cake with ingredients you probably have on hand.

There are different ways to make a cake. In the **traditional method**, you cream butter or shortening with sugar and eggs and then add the other ingredients. This method yields a fine textured, tender cake.

The **one-bowl method** is quicker and uses oil rather than butter so the creaming step is eliminated. All of the liquid ingredients are added at once to the dry ingredients, and then you beat everything together - but only for one minute. If you beat the batter too long, the cake will be tough. This type of cake is delicious, too, but will have a somewhat coarser texture.

Here are some important **cake baking tips** to remember:

**Grease the cake pan** with solid vegetable shortening (not margarine, butter or oil). Use a paper towel or piece of waxed paper to spread the shortening evenly over the sides and bottom of the pan. Look at the pan carefully to be sure you haven't missed any spots. Then **flour the pan**. Put 1-2 T. flour in the pan and gently shake and tap it all around to cover the bottom and sides of the pan. Tip out the excess flour and discard. Your cake will come out of the pan easier if you do this step correctly.

**Baking powder** is the leavening in our recipe that makes the cake rise. If you keep it dry and store it tightly covered, it should work well for at least 6 months. After that, it's a good idea to buy a fresh supply. If you want to test it, put 1 teaspoon of baking powder into a half cup of warm water. It should fizz. If it doesn't fizz, throw it out; it will not leaven your cake.

We will use **All-Purpose flour**. In cake baking, it is especially important to measure accurately. Too much flour makes a dry cake. Some recipes call for **cake flour**. This type of flour is lower in protein; so it makes more tender cakes and pastries. These cakes may crumble easily, so frost it very carefully. If you have a recipe that uses cake flour, you can substitute all-purpose flour as follows:

1 Cup cake flour = 1 Cup **minus** 2 T. all purpose flour



The girls take turns mixing cake batter with a portable mixer.

Be sure to read labels carefully and use **baking powder**, not baking soda.

When you use the **traditional method** to make a cake, you will cream the butter by beating it with an electric mixer until it is light and fluffy. Real **butter** gives the best flavor. Shortening, especially butter-flavored, also gives good results. Stick margarine may be substituted, but not tub margarine. Set butter out ahead of time to soften; do not melt it!

When the butter is fluffy, gradually add the **sugar**. Continue beating; 4 or 5 minutes is not too long! Beating creates many tiny air bubbles that make your cake rise well.

Crack **one egg** at a time into a small bowl or custard cup and check to be sure there are no bits of eggshell in it before adding it to the batter.

**Preheat the oven**, allowing at least 20 minutes for the oven to reach the correct temperature. When the pans are ready to go into the oven, be sure to leave an inch or two of space between them so the hot air can circulate and the cakes bake evenly. The hottest part of the oven is the back. Keep a close watch on any pans in the back and rotate them to the front if they are getting too brown. The top rack is hotter than the lower one. Use the lower rack if possible.

Try not to open the oven door during the first 20 minutes of baking time. This is a critical time while the cake rises. Opening the door reduces oven temperature and may affect the rising of your cake.

**Check the baking time** in your recipe. Usually a time range is given, such as 30-35 minutes. **Set a timer** for the lower time (30 minutes). In fact, you can check your cake a few minutes before that. Ovens vary; some bake faster than others. If you have several pans in the oven, it may take a little longer to bake than baking just one.

**The cake is done** when a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. If dough or crumbs stick to the toothpick, return the pan to the oven for a few more minutes and re-check with a clean toothpick. Watch the cake carefully; over-baked cakes turn out dry.

When the cake is done, **set the pan on a cooling rack** so air can circulate around the bottom of the pan, too. Allow cake to cool 15 minutes. Then remove it from the pan and allow the cake to cool thoroughly before frosting. Or you may leave the cake in the pan and frost and serve it from the pan. Just be sure it has cooled thoroughly before frosting or decorating. Enjoy!

Always ask adult permission before using the oven!  
Use sturdy hot pads or oven mitts to protect your hands.

Name:

## Basic Butter Cake Traditional Method

### Ingredients:

1 Cup shortening or butter, softened  
1 Cup sugar  
2 eggs  
3 Cups All-purpose flour  
3 teaspoons baking powder  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1 1/3 Cups milk  
2 teaspoons vanilla



Frosting our Basic Butter Cakes

### Method:

Yield: two 8" or 9" layers, or one 9" x 13" layer

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour the bottom and sides of pan(s).
2. Cream the **butter or shortening** until it is fluffy, (high speed on a hand-held mixer). Use a spatula to scrape the sides of the bowl, turning the mixer off first.
3. Slowly add the **sugar**, turning the mixer off as you add it. Beat the mixture 4-5 minutes.
4. Add **eggs**, one at a time. Beat till light and fluffy.
5. In a separate bowl, mix together the **flour, baking powder** and **salt**. Set aside.
6. Measure the **milk**. Leave it in the measuring cup. Add the **vanilla** to the milk.
7. Add about a third of the dry ingredients to the butter mixture. Stir just enough to blend.
8. Add about a third of the liquid ingredients and stir.
9. Continue adding the dry and wet ingredients alternately, stirring only enough to mix everything together.
10. Pour batter into two prepared 8" pans. Spread evenly with spatula.
11. **Bake 28-32 minutes** or until toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
12. Set the pans on a wire rack to cool for 15 minutes. Remove cakes from pans and cool thoroughly before frosting.



**Tip:** After Step 6, re-read the ingredient list to be sure you haven't forgotten anything!

Name:

## Quick Yellow Cake One-Bowl Method

**Ingredients:**

2 1/2 Cups All-Purpose flour  
1 1/2 Cups sugar  
3 teaspoons baking powder  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1 Cup milk  
2/3 Cup vegetable oil  
3 eggs  
2 teaspoons vanilla

**Method:**

**Yield:** two 8" or 9" layers, or one 9" x 13" layer

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour two 8" or 9" cake pans.
2. In a large bowl, combine the **flour, sugar, baking powder** and **salt**. Whisk thoroughly.
3. Measure the **milk**; add the **vanilla** to it. Set aside.
4. Crack the **eggs** into a small bowl. Check for eggshells.
5. Measure the **oil**.
6. Add **milk, vanilla, eggs**, and **oil** to the dry ingredients.
7. Beat for 1 minute on medium speed with a hand-held mixer.  
Do not over mix!
8. Pour batter into prepared pans. **Bake 27 – 32 minutes** or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
9. Cool cake in pans on wire rack for 15 minutes. Remove cake from pans and cool thoroughly before frosting.

Name:

## *Frosting a Cake*

## *Your Notes*

Most of the time, we like frosting on our cakes. However, some cakes, like pound cake, may be served plain because the cake itself is very rich. Others, like angel food cake, are light and airy and could be weighted down with too much icing. A bundt cake, baked in a ring-shaped pan, is often served plain, or drizzled with a glaze (a type of thinned frosting).

For a quick finish on a cake, simply sprinkle it with powdered sugar. Put the powdered sugar (also called confectioner's sugar) in a sieve and lightly sift it onto the cake. To create a design, place a paper doilie on top of the cake first, then sift powdered sugar over the cake surface, and carefully lift the doilie straight up, off the cake. This shows up best on a dark cake.

Cool your cake thoroughly before frosting it. You may want to leave it in the pan and just frost the top, or remove it from the pan(s) so you can decorate the sides, too. Cool cake in the pan for 15 minutes before removing from the pan. Then invert the cake onto a cooling rack. When the cake has cooled, place it onto a plate or cake board.

Place strips of waxed paper under the edges of your cake to keep the plate clean while you frost the cake. Gently brush off any loose crumbs. Use a thin, easily spreadable icing. Canned icing works fine or use the recipe on this page.

If you are making a layer cake, place the bottoms of the layers together, with a layer of icing in between. Then use a metal spatula to ice the sides. With a large amount of icing on the spatula, spread the icing on the sides of the cake. Be sure the spatula does not touch the cake; it should touch only the icing. Otherwise, you will get crumbs in your icing. If that happens, wipe your spatula on a paper towel and start again with fresh icing. Then ice the top of your cake. Remove the waxed paper strips.

Want a smooth look? After frosting the cake, dip the spatula in a glass of water and gently smooth the icing with the wet spatula. If you do this, be sure to allow time for the frosting to dry before adding any decorations.

For other effects, swirl the icing with the spatula. Press lightly so you don't get crumbs into the frosting. Or, take a fork or cake comb and gently create lines across the cake. You can quickly decorate the cake by sprinkling crushed cookies, candy, or nuts on your cake. This also helps hide any crumbs that may have gotten into your icing.

### **Basic Butter Icing**

½ Cup butter or margarine  
4 Cups powdered sugar  
1 teaspoon vanilla  
2+ Tablespoons water or milk

Beat softened butter or margarine. Slowly add some of the powdered sugar. Add vanilla and water or milk. Gradually add remaining powdered sugar. Beat till fluffy and smooth. Add just enough additional water or milk to make a spreadable consistency.

Chocolate variation: Add ½ Cup unsweetened cocoa and 1-2T. more water.

Makes enough to frost 2 layers or a 9" x 13" cake.

Hint: Keep an extra box of powdered sugar on hand. You may need to adjust the icing consistency if you add too much liquid, or you may want to make more icing.



## Decorating Shortcuts

After you've frosted the cake, you may want to decorate it. The next four pages, show you how to decorate like a pro! If you don't have decorator's tips, or if time is short, you can try some simple shortcuts to create a special cake.

Candies and cookies make wonderful decorations. Use life-savers around the base of candles, or press the candles into gumdrops and set them on the cake. Flatten gumdrops with your fingers and shape into flowers. Sprinkle flattened gumdrops with sugar to make them less sticky and cut with scissors to create petals.

Many colors of decorating gel and tubes of decorator's icing can be purchased in the baking aisle of most supermarkets. The gels can be squeezed directly from the tube without special tips. They come in especially vivid colors. Tubes, and aerosol cans of decorator's icing, can be purchased with tips to fit that create effects similar to those found in the next section on cake decorating.

Some of my students used these decorating shortcuts to create the beautiful cakes below. Their efforts were awarded with ribbons at the county fair!



After the cake was frosted, candy corn & fudge-striped cookies were pressed on top to create a beautiful turkey.



A small circle cake for the head was attached to the body with icing and then the entire cake was frosted with red icing. Peanut butter cups for the ladybug's spots & black gel for the lines & eyes added the finishing touches.



The smiley face was made with black gel on yellow icing. The plate was then edged with yellow rick-rack for a sunny happy face cake!

## *Extending the Lesson ... Cake Decorating*

Birthdays, anniversaries, weddings, and holidays – we celebrate many of life's events with a special cake. Purchasing a decorated cake can be quite expensive. With a few basic techniques, you can turn a plain cake into your own creative masterpiece fit for any celebration!

Every year, the favorite activity of all the girls I teach is cake decorating. We've used the same techniques to decorate cookies, and I've even used larger tips to pipe mashed potatoes into decorative shapes. Learn the basics, and let the creativity flow!

Cake decorating supplies are available at many craft stores, and I've purchased much of what I need at Wal-Mart. Check your yellow pages for cake decorators; they may also sell supplies.

**Wilton Enterprises** is the leader in cake and candy supplies. Be sure to visit their website, [www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com). You'll find loads of wonderful ideas, pages of illustrated directions, and online videos to show you exactly how to decorate. The Wilton Yearbook is another great source of decorating ideas and products. You can call Wilton at 1-800-794-5866.

**To get started**, you'll need at least one cake decorator's bag, a coupler, and some tips. **Bags** come in different sizes and types. I prefer a **12" Featherweight bag** and find this also works well for the girls. It's strong yet easy to squeeze, and washable. Clear plastic, **disposable bags** are available from Wilton in packages of 12 and 24. They are very convenient, especially if you want to decorate with many different colors. Fill each bag with a different color of icing and discard when you're done.

There are many **tips** to choose from to achieve all kinds of special effects. I recommend starting with a **star tip, a writing tip, and a leaf tip**. You can do all of your decorating with just a star tip, but adding the other two gives you many more creative options. Each tip is numbered, and each comes in different sizes. You can select the sizes you prefer; I like the #21 star tip, #4 writing tip, and a #69 leaf tip.

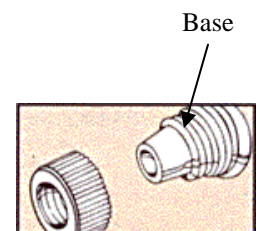
A **coupler** fits inside the bag and has a ring that screws on the outside, holding your tip in place. By simply unscrewing the coupler, you can change tips.



A beautiful sunflower cake won a ribbon at the county fair.



A Wilton Yearbook



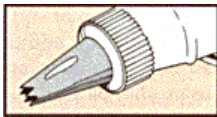
A coupler



**Let's get started!** Unscrew the ring from the coupler. Insert the base of the coupler all the way down into the narrow end of the bag. Push it in as far as you can. New bags must be trimmed to fit the coupler. Mark the bag where you can feel the bottom ring of the coupler. Push the coupler base back up into the bag. Cut across the mark you made on the end of the bag.

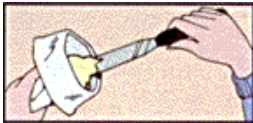


Push the coupler base back down through the bag opening so it fits snugly.

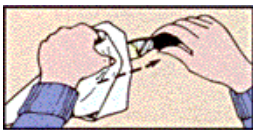


Place your tip over the coupler base and screw the ring onto the base, securing the tip in place.

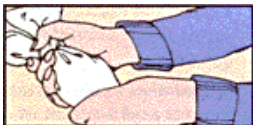
When you want to change tips, simply unscrew the coupler ring and remove the tip. Put the new tip on and screw it in place



You're ready to **put the icing into the bag**. Fold the top half of the bag down. Use a metal spatula to put several tablespoons of icing into the bottom of the bag.

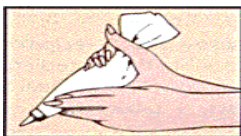


Hold the bag on the outside between your thumb and fingers and pull the spatula out of the bag. Squeeze the bag as you pull the spatula out so the icing remains in the bag. Repeat this step until you have about half a cup of icing in the bag. A word of caution: Everyone tends to overfill the bag! It is much easier to work with a small amount of icing, and it's less likely to ooze out the top if the bag is not so full.



Twist the bag closed, forcing the icing down into the bag. Squeeze a little icing out of the tip, back into the bowl to squeeze out any air in the bag.

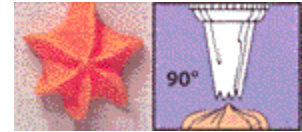
**You're ready to decorate!** Practice first on waxed paper, or an inverted cake pan. Refill the bag as needed. I encourage the girls to spend a lot of time practicing before they start decorating their cake. Have them unscrew the coupler and change tips. They will enjoy discovering the different effects they can achieve with each tip and you'll be surprised how quickly they learn the technique.



Be sure to tightly twist the bag closed. Hold the twist in the V between your thumb and fingers. Steady the tip of the bag with two fingers of your other hand.

To achieve different effects, you will hold the bag either straight up and down at a 90-degree angle, or slightly sideways at a 45-degree angle.

Let's experiment with a **star tip**. This tip is so versatile! To make stars or shells, use a medium consistency icing (see next page). Hold the bag straight up with the tip about ¼" above the surface, as shown. Squeeze the bag to form a star. Stop squeezing, then pull the tip straight up and away. Stars will be neatly formed only if you stop squeezing before you pull the tip away.



A **star border** is an attractive edge to any cake. Try to pipe a row of stars all the same size.



The same **star tip** can be used to make **shells** (above). Hold the bag at a 45-degree angle slightly above the surface. Squeeze hard, letting the icing fan out as it lifts the tip, but do not lift the bag. Gradually relax your pressure as you lower the tip and pull it to one side. Stop the pressure and pull the tip away. It will take a little practice. Shells in a row make another type of attractive border.

Change to a **leaf tip** such as #67 or #69. Use a thin icing for leaves. Hold the bag at a 45-degree angle, touching the surface. The wide opening should be parallel to the surface. Squeeze to build up the base of the leaf; lift the tip slightly and pull the bag to one side, relaxing the pressure as you go. Stop squeezing and pull the bag away.



Use the same tip to make ruffles. Start as you would for a leaf. Then move the bag back-and-forth, overlapping slightly. Ruffles make pretty borders!

The right consistency of icing is important when decorating. Flower petals will need a stiff consistency to stand up. For writing or outlining, you'll need a thin consistency so the icing flows smoothly. For stars and shells, use a medium consistency.

### **Basic Decorator's Icing – Stiff Consistency**

1 Cup solid white vegetable shortening  
1 pound (about 4 Cups) sifted powdered sugar  
2 Tablespoons water  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Beat shortening till light and fluffy. Add remaining ingredients and beat on medium speed until well mixed. Makes 3 cups.

This icing may be stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator up to two weeks or frozen up to four months. Bring to room temperature before decorating.

**Medium Consistency** – Into 1 Cup of stiff icing, mix 1 teaspoon of water. Use for stars, shells, rosettes, zigzags, and dots.

**Thin Consistency** – Into 1 Cup of stiff icing, mix 2 teaspoons of water. Use for writing and outlining.



Black decorating gel created the lines for the free-hand shapes in this beautiful stained glass cake. Each shape was then filled in with blue, green, yellow or red gel & the gel was spread with a knife. This cake won a first place ribbon at the county fair!

Add more water if the icing seems too stiff. As you work, the icing tends to get a little thinner as the warmth of your hands affects the shortening.

Use white shortening, rather than butter, for your decorator's icing. You'll get truer colors. To **frost the cake**, use your favorite icing recipe or use the one above and replace half the shortening with butter. Add enough water or milk to achieve a spreadable consistency.

**To color the icing:** Do not use liquid food coloring for icing intended for decorating. It thins the icing too much and tends to yield pale colors. Most supermarkets also carry gel food coloring, with the 4 basic colors in a box. This gives more vibrant colors and should not thin the icing significantly.

Wherever cake decorating supplies are sold, you can purchase **paste food color** in tiny jars. A little of this goes a very long way! Swirl a clean toothpick into the paste, then into your icing and mix. Repeat until the desired color is achieved. Paste comes in every color imaginable and can be ordered from Wilton Enterprises.

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## Lesson Six - Ground Beef Meals

Ground beef recipes are a mainstay of many family meals. So many different meals can be made with ground beef. The recipe in this lesson can be used for meatballs, meatloaf and some variations.

### In this lesson, the girls will learn to:

- Practice safe handling and storage of raw meat
- Make meatballs or meatloaf
- Use a master recipe with variations
- Use a meat thermometer

### Review:

- Oven Safety (Lesson 2)
- Abbreviations: C, T, t. (Lesson 3)

### Give each girl a copy of:

- Before I Cook Ground Beef
- Meatball-Meatloaf Master Recipe
- Menu Magic with Meatballs Skill Page

Read **“Before I Cook Ground Beef”** and the recipe page. Decide if you want to make meatballs or a meatloaf with your group. The same recipe works very well for either one, but meatballs bake much more quickly and every girl will have ample opportunity to shape them.

As you look at the recipe together, tell the girls the same **master recipe** can be used to make four different meals. To save time, efficient homemakers could double or triple the recipe, make meatballs, meatloaf and one of the variations, and then freeze some for later use.

This lesson provides a great opportunity for a field trip to the **meat department** at your local grocery store. Introduce yourself to the meat manager. They are usually glad to help consumers and often have helpful handouts and recipes. Familiarize yourself with the various types of ground beef in your store.

Have you ever tasted meatballs with the consistency of hockey pucks? I must admit; I've made a few like that myself in the past! I prefer melt-in-your-mouth, tender meatballs and meatloaf. The **fat content of the ground meat** you use is one of the main factors determining whether your meatball will be dry and hard, or juicy and tender.



The girls cook ground beef in an electric frying pan while others work at the stove.

For meatballs, meatloaf and hamburgers, I like to use ground chuck because it has the best flavor. However, because it has a high fat content, I sometimes select a leaner ground beef, or mix a pound of lean with the ground chuck. Some people like to mix ground pork or ground turkey with ground beef. Experiment first to see what your family prefers. For this lesson, **I recommend ground beef with 10%-20% fat content.** Check the label for fat content.

When **handling raw meat**, I like to wear latex gloves. You can purchase a box of 50 at Wal-Mart or most pharmacies. I prefer the powder-free type to avoid getting powder on clothes. I find that many girls have never touched raw meat and they may not want to! A little encouragement and wearing gloves has overcome squeamish objections. As soon as the girls finish handling the raw meat, have them peel off the gloves, discard immediately, and **wash their hands.** All surfaces that may have come in contact with raw meat (including faucet handles, countertop, sink, etc.) must be washed with hot, soapy water. I find it easiest to use an anti-bacterial kitchen spray with paper towels that can be discarded after use.

There is more information on **food safety** in the Student Page, “Before I Cook Ground Beef”. Safe food handling is so important and can’t be emphasized enough! Food-borne illnesses are common. We often assume we have a mild case of flu when, in fact, we may have gotten sick from bacteria in our own kitchen. I tell my classes to handle all raw meat as though it contains harmful bacteria. Then we are sure to practice safe food handling.

Our **Master Mix recipe** makes tender, juicy meatballs or meatloaf. In fact, it’s so tender, I don’t recommend it for hamburgers because they tend to fall apart when you flip them.

Many ingredients, like dry bread crumbs, oatmeal, and cracker crumbs, have been added to meatball and meatloaf recipes as **meat extenders.** While this may be helpful if meat is expensive, these ingredients tend to produce a dry meatball because they absorb too much moisture from the meat.

The **soft white bread** soaked with **milk** in our recipe, gives the cooked meat a creamy, moist texture. Do not use dry bread or crumbs. The soft bread (crusts removed) should be torn or cut into small cubes. Pour the milk onto the bread to soak all of it.

Let’s look at some of the **other ingredients** in our recipe. **Ketchup** and **mustard** add flavor. Use any type of prepared mustard (in a jar) that you like. I use plain yellow mustard, as many girls do not like the spicier varieties.

**Worcestershire sauce** (pronounced “worster shire”) is a mixture of soy sauce, molasses, vinegar, lime, onion, garlic and other seasonings. The British developed it in India and it was first bottled in Worcestershire, England; hence it’s name. It adds great flavor to meat, stews and other dishes. You should find it in the condiment aisle.

**Italian seasoning** is a mixture of herbs often used in Italian cooking. Brands vary, but it usually contains oregano, basil, and perhaps thyme, onion and garlic. It’s best to purchase a blend of herbs without salt. Salt is cheap, but when added to herb blends, you are paying much more for salt than you would if you purchase it separately. You also have more control over how much salt you add to a recipe when you measure herbs and salt separately.

For more  
information on herbs  
& seasonings,  
see Lesson Seven.

**Cooking meatballs:** People often fry meatballs because that creates a crisp crust. You can fry them if you wish in a small amount of oil in a frying pan. However, baking them is easy and quick, and clean-up is a breeze! Be sure to use a **pan with sides** all the way around to catch the juices. I use a cookie sheet, more properly called a “jelly roll pan” because it has 1” sides. A true cookie sheet is flat on three sides to aid in removing the cookies and is not suitable for baking meatballs.

In my class, we make one batch of meatballs. I ask each girl to measure a different ingredient and all take turns mixing the meat and then shaping several meatballs. You could divide the recipe in half – a good math exercise for the girls – and have the girls work in two small groups to make the meatballs, rather than one large group activity.

While the meatballs are baking, have the girls **clean up** the kitchen. Set out plates and utensils for everyone to taste the meatballs (or meatloaf).

You can **serve** just the meatballs with ketchup and other condiments on the side. Or, serve them in sub rolls or with pasta. Angel hair pasta, or thin spaghetti cooks quickly. For my group, I cooked pasta ahead of time, put it in the refrigerator, then warmed it in the microwave just before the meatballs came out of the oven. I warmed canned spaghetti sauce and let the girls help themselves.

To save time, when I make this recipe for my own use, I double it and make 50-60 meatballs at once and freeze them. See the **Skill Page “Menu Magic with Meatballs”** for lots of **serving ideas**.

After eating and cleaning up, ask the girls what they would serve with spaghetti and meatballs to round out the dinner menu. Help them make nutritious choices that vary in color, temperature and texture.

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In Lesson Nine, the girls will plan and write dinner menus. But, in this lesson, introduce the concept of menu planning and “brainstorm” some menu ideas. This is another way homemakers use their creativity to plan attractive, tasty meals!

In **Extending the Lesson**, you’ll find tips to streamline meal preparation and a **Saucy Ground Beef Master Recipe** that can be used to make six different meals. Use these for future lessons. Ground beef is economical and the girls need to know a variety of ways to prepare it so they can make dinner for their family.

**What you’ll need for this lesson:**

**Ingredients:** (per recipe/batch)

2 ½ pounds ground beef  
4-6 slices soft white bread  
½ Cup ketchup  
2 Tablespoons mustard  
3 Tablespoons Worcestershire sauce  
1 ½ teaspoons Italian seasoning  
¾ Cup milk  
Salt & pepper

**Supplies:**

Latex or plastic disposable gloves  
Foil  
Baking pan or sheet with edges to catch meat juices  
Large Mixing Bowl  
Measuring Cup  
Measuring Spoons  
Cutting Board  
Paring knife or steak knife (to cut off bread crusts)  
Small pitcher for milk (so girls don’t measure from a heavy gallon jug)  
Hot Pads  
Meat Thermometer  
Kitchen Timer

**To serve:**

Plates  
Knives, forks, spoons  
Napkins  
Salt, Pepper  
Condiments  
Paper cups or glasses  
Milk or juice to drink  
Optional: Pasta or sub rolls, spaghetti sauce, butter, Parmesan cheese

Name:

## *Before I Cook Ground Beef*

We enjoy ground beef in so many ways: hamburgers, meatballs, meatloaf, sloppy joes, in casseroles, tacos, chili or on pizza. It's an economical meat, easy to prepare, and versatile. So, let's learn more about it.

Ground beef is usually made from the less tender, popular cuts of beef cattle. After cutting steaks, roasts and other cuts of beef, the butcher uses up leftover pieces by grinding them and packaging them in what we call "hamburger" or ground beef.

The next time you are in the grocery store, look at all the types of meat and you will notice that there are even **different types of ground beef**. You may see some labeled ground chuck, round, sirloin, extra lean, and perhaps some other names.

Look closer at the labels and you'll notice the **fat content varies greatly**. Regular ground beef may contain close to 30% fat, while ground sirloin is closer to 10% fat content. Why is this important? Consider the price, taste, and your nutritional needs. Leaner meat is more expensive; look at the price per pound. Meat with a higher fat content tastes better and is juicier. But it also shrinks more when it is cooked. Many people try to limit the amount of fat in their diet because fats contribute to heart disease.

The leanest ground beef will work well if you plan to fry it loose and use it in casseroles, tacos, as a pizza topping or for sloppy joes. But, if you are cooking hamburgers, meatballs or meatloaf and want them to turn out juicy, then choose ground beef with a little more fat in it. When in doubt, talk to the butcher in your store.

When **grocery shopping**, buy meat last and get it home and into the refrigerator or freezer as soon as possible. Be sure the package is not torn or leaking. Place meat in a plastic bag if possible and keep meat juices from coming in contact with anything else.

The USDA suggests that **ground beef be either cooked or frozen within 2 days after purchase**. Keep meat in the coldest part of the refrigerator, at 40 degrees or below. If you freeze the meat, store it in freezer bags or tightly wrapped in heavy-duty foil or freezer paper. Label it with the date. Raw frozen ground beef should be used within 4 months.



Aimee mixes the ground beef with other ingredients for meatballs.

It is always important to practice **safe food handling**, but this is especially true when cooking ground meat. Bacteria is everywhere in our environment. When meat is ground, it is exposed to more bacteria than a single cut of meat. Illness-causing bacteria such as E. coli and salmonella, are just two that may be present in raw meat. You cannot see or smell these bacteria, and freezing the meat does not kill them.

Bacteria in raw meat can contaminate your hands, cutting boards and other surfaces in the kitchen, as well as other foods. **To avoid this “cross-contamination”** wash your hands with soap and hot water before and after handling ground beef. Don’t reuse any packaging materials that contained raw meat. Use soap and hot water to wash all utensils, dishes and surfaces that have come in contact with raw meat. Use paper towels and throw them away after wiping up meat juices.

You may like to use **latex or plastic gloves** while handling meat and throw them away as soon as you are done. You still need to wash your hands, but raw meat will not get under your nails.

**Thorough cooking destroys harmful bacteria.** To be sure all bacteria are destroyed, cook meatloaf, meatballs, hamburgers and casseroles to **160 degrees**. **Check with a meat thermometer.** The USDA recommends not tasting or eating any undercooked ground beef.



There are different types of meat thermometers. Every kitchen needs one! It is not reliable to judge doneness by the color of the meat. To be certain food is cooked enough to kill all harmful bacteria, you must use a meat thermometer.

Practicing safe food handling will soon become second nature, and will help keep you and your family healthy.

Name:

## Meatball-Meatloaf Master Recipe

### Ingredients:

4 – 6 slices of soft white bread  
2 ½ pounds ground beef  
½ Cup ketchup  
2 Tablespoons mustard  
3 Tablespoons Worcestershire sauce  
1 ½ teaspoons Italian seasoning  
½ teaspoon salt  
Dash of pepper  
¾ Cup milk



Shaping a meatball

### Method:

**Yield:** About 20 small meatballs

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Line with foil: 9” x 13” pan, or a cookie sheet that has edges around it to catch meat juices.
2. Cut the crusts off the **bread**, then cut bread into cubes. Set bread cubes aside.
3. Put the **ground beef** in a large bowl.
4. Put the **ketchup, mustard, Worcestershire sauce, Italian seasoning, salt** and **pepper** into the bowl with the meat.
5. Place the **bread cubes** on top of everything. Pour the **milk** onto the **bread**.
6. Mix thoroughly with you hands to evenly distribute all of the ingredients.
7. Take a small handful of meat (about 1/3 Cup) and shape into a ball. Place the meatballs on the pan close together (but not touching) in rows so they fit in the pan.
8. Bake for about 20 minutes or until done. **Ask an adult to help** remove meatballs from the oven.
9. Remove meatballs from the pan with a slotted spoon. Caution: The meat juices are hot!



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*Over . . .*

**To make meatloaf:** Pat the meat mixture into a foil-lined loaf pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 1 ¼ hours or until meat is done (160 degrees internal temperature).

**Variations:**

**Stuffed Tomatoes:** Cut the top off a tomato; scoop out the insides. Fill with meat mixture. Set in a baking pan and bake till done (about 20-30 minutes depending on size). Top with cheese if desired.

**Stuffed Green Peppers:** Slice green peppers in half; scoop out seeds and ribs. Fill with meat mixture. Set in a baking pan and bake till done (about 20-30 minutes depending on size).

Name:

## *Menu Magic with Meatballs*

Meatballs... We automatically think of spaghetti. That's yummy, but let's avoid menu monotony and get creative with our meal planning. Meatballs mix well with many different flavors. They can easily be made in quantity - especially if you bake them - and they freeze well. Simply thaw as many cooked meatballs as you need for a meal, then try some of the following serving ideas to add variety to your dinner menus.

**Meatball Subs:** Place several hot meatballs in a sub roll. Add warm spaghetti sauce or pizza sauce. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.

**Sweet & Sour Meatballs:** Heat meatballs with a jar of sweet and sour sauce. Serve over rice. Sprinkle Chinese noodles on top.

**Meatballs Alfredo:** Heat meatballs with bottled Alfredo sauce. Serve over cooked noodles. Add sliced mushrooms if desired.

**Barbecue Meatballs:** Heat meatballs with canned pork and beans. Add any of the following: ketchup, onions, brown sugar, bottled barbecue sauce, cooked corn.

**Mexican Meatballs:** Heat meatballs with a jar of your favorite salsa. Serve with rice, cornbread or refried beans.

**Meatball Stew:** Place meatballs in a large saucepan. Add one package of frozen vegetables for stew (carrots, potatoes, celery, onion). Add beef stock or consommé to cover (or use instant beef bouillon diluted in water according to package directions). Cover and simmer gently just until veggies are cooked. Dissolve 2 T. cornstarch in  $\frac{1}{4}$  C. water and stir into stew to thicken. Add more cornstarch (dissolved in a little water) if needed to achieve desired consistency.

**Make-A-Face:** This is a favorite! On an empty plate, let your child create a face using meatball eyes, plain, cooked spaghetti for hair, a radish or grape nose, and strips of cheese to form the mouth. Set out a variety of sliced veggies to make earrings, a necklace, and other embellishments. Have butter, Parmesan cheese or spaghetti sauce to add to your creations.

**Meatball Wild Rice Casserole:** Prepare one 6 oz. package of long grain and wild rice mix according to package directions. Stir in one can cream of mushroom soup, ½ Cup sour cream and ½ Cup milk (adjust amount of milk to reach desired consistency). Stir in cooked rice and add cooked meatballs. Bake, covered, at 350 degrees until heated through.

**Porcupines:** Before baking, roll the raw meatballs in crushed corn flakes, then bake. For extra crunch and bacon flavor, sprinkle several tablespoons of bacon bits into the cornflakes.

**Hidden Crunch Meatballs:** Press half of a water chestnut into the center of raw meatballs. Close the meat around it and bake.

**Fruity Meatballs:** Press a chunk of pineapple or a small piece of apple into the center of the raw meatballs. Close the meat around it and bake.

**Mini-Meatballs:** When making meatballs, shape some the size of cherry tomatoes (these will bake in 10-15 minutes). Place warm, cooked mini-meatballs in a serving dish. Put several dipping sauces nearby: Ranch dressing, Italian dressing, soy sauce, pizza sauce, whatever are your favorites. Use toothpicks to skewer meatballs and dip into sauce. This makes a delicious appetizer.

**Meatball Mac & Cheese:** Add mini-meatballs to macaroni and cheese.

**Meatball Soup:** Add mini-meatballs to vegetable soup. Or, add them to beef broth and simmer with alphabet macaroni and some finely chopped vegetables.

**Meatball BLT Salad:** Mix cold, cooked mini-meatballs with lettuce, sliced tomatoes and cooked, crumbled bacon. Serve with your favorite dressing.

*Can you think of other ways to serve meatballs?  
Write them here ...*

## Extending The Lesson ... Making Meals Efficiently

### Future Christian Homemakers Teacher's Notes

When we think of efficiency experts, we probably think of business people. What about efficient homemakers? Many skills are needed to be a homemaker. Because we must eat several times a day, meal planning and preparation take a good deal of our time, energy, and finances. Learning to make meals efficiently will reap big savings in all three areas – and enhance the health of our families.



Meal planning need not be a dreaded chore! In fact, it can be a fun way to use your creativity. The Skill Page, “Menu Magic with Meatballs” lists over a dozen ways to serve the same basic meal item. By baking a large batch of meatballs at one time and freezing them, you’ll have the main ingredient for many meals at your fingertips. It will only take a short time to complete one of the meals in that list, and your family will enjoy the variety.

One of the most efficient ways to work is to batch similar tasks and do them at one time. This is true when you cook. Whether you’re cooking chicken, round steak, or ground beef, look for a basic recipe that works well for a variety of different meals. Make a double or triple batch, then freeze in meal-size portions for your family. In doing so, you’ll create your own “fast food”.

Consider the many savings. When you bake one meatloaf, it hardly fills your oven. Why not mix a bigger batch of the same recipe and cook two or three meatloaves and a pan full of meatballs all at the same time, and then freeze them? You’ll run the oven one time, and clean up only once. But you can have half a dozen meals, or more, from one cooking session.

The secret to cooking efficiently is to use a master recipe and work with one type of meat at a time. I take a few hours one day to make all my ground beef meals, and, on another day I make some favorite chicken recipes. I freeze enough for one meal in a zippered freezer bag, then squeeze out all the air so it takes only a little room in the freezer. You’ll be surprised how much you can stack in the freezer when you store food this way.

It’s so important to encourage the girls you teach to enjoy planning and preparing meals. They will assimilate your attitudes about this and other homemaking tasks. Help them discover joy and creativity in serving their families.

The Meatball-Meatloaf Master Recipe gives you several ways to cook ground beef, but there are many more. In future lessons, try some of the recipes on the next page.

For best results, *cooked* ground beef may be kept frozen 2-3 months. Keep your freezer at 0 degrees or below. For more information, go to [www.beef.org](http://www.beef.org).



# Saucy Ground Beef Master Recipe

## **Ingredients:**

1½ pounds ground beef  
½ Cup diced onion  
1/3 Cup diced green pepper or thinly sliced celery, optional  
1 (15 ounce) can tomato sauce  
1 teaspoon Italian herb seasoning  
¼ teaspoon garlic powder  
Salt & Pepper to taste  
Dash of chili powder, optional

## **Method:**

In a large non-stick skillet, fry the ground beef, onion and green pepper or celery, until thoroughly cooked. Drain meat mixture in a sieve or colander and discard meat juices. Return meat to skillet. Add seasonings and just enough tomato sauce for the intended recipe. Stir over low heat until heated through. This recipe can easily be multiplied and freezes well.

## **Use this to make:**

**Sloppy Joes:** Adjust the amount of tomato sauce to achieve the consistency you prefer. Serve on buns.

**Spanish Rice:** Add Saucy Ground Beef to 2 – 4 Cups of cooked rice. Stir in 2 Cups cooked corn. Add more tomato sauce if needed to moisten all ingredients. Put in a greased casserole dish. Top with shredded cheese if desired. Bake, covered, at 350 degrees for 20 minutes or until heated through.

**Taco or Burrito Filling:** In the master recipe, decrease the tomato sauce by half, so there's enough to coat the meat without making it too "soupy". Add a package of Taco Seasoning (or half the package depending on how spicy you like it). Stir thoroughly. Serve in taco shells or burrito wraps with lettuce, chopped tomatoes, salsa, sour cream, shredded cheese, and any other favorites.

**Mexican Cornbread:** Spread the cooked Saucy Ground Beef in the bottom of a greased 9" baking pan. Mix one box of Jiffy cornbread mix according to package directions and pour over the top of the meat. Bake at 350 degrees for 25-30 minutes or until cornbread is done.

**Chili:** Add to the cooked Saucy Ground Beef, one can (any size, depending on how many beans you like in chili) of kidney beans, drained, a large can (28 ozs.) of tomatoes, 1 teaspoon chili powder (adjust amount to suit your taste). Add tomato sauce, or bottled chili sauce, and water to reach desired consistency.

## *Lesson Seven - Poultry*

Poultry means chicken and turkey, right? Those are the birds we eat most often, but ducks, geese, Cornish hens, and other birds are delicious as well. We'll start with chicken, a perennial favorite.

**In this lesson, the girls will learn to:**

- Safely handle raw poultry
- Identify the parts of a chicken
- Dredge raw chicken pieces in a flour mixture
- Prepare "oven-fried" chicken
- Use herbs to season food

**Review:**

- Oven Safety (Lesson 2)

**Give each girl a copy of:**

- Poultry Perfect Skill Page
- Crispy Oven-Baked Chicken Recipe Page
- Herbs & Spices Student Page

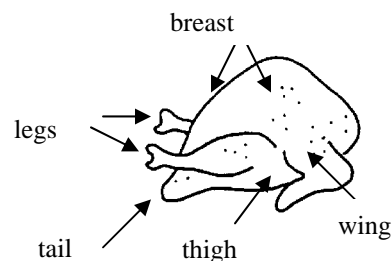
Fried chicken is one of the most popular foods in America, but it's also high in fat and calories. A healthier alternative – and much easier to prepare – is chicken coated with a flour mixture, then baked in the oven. The Colonel has his secret recipe of herbs and spices, but I think you'll find our Crispy Oven-Baked Chicken just as delicious!

Ask the girls to **name ways chicken can be prepared**. They're probably most familiar with chicken fingers or nuggets, but don't forget BBQ chicken, chicken casserole, salad or soup. Chicken is nutritious and inexpensive; learn to prepare it in a variety of ways.

It's important to remember that all raw poultry may contain salmonella and other bacteria that cause food poisoning. **Read "Poultry Perfect"** with the girls and stress the importance of safe food handling.

**Using latex or plastic gloves while handling raw meat** will help keep hands clean, and overcome some of the squeamish attitudes the girls may have about touching raw chicken. Even if gloves are worn, hands must be thoroughly washed with soap and water before and after handling raw meat. Throw used gloves away immediately after use.

Most girls are not familiar with all of the **parts of a chicken**. All poultry has the same basic parts. Buy one whole chicken (not cut up) so the girls can see where each part is located on the bird.



Set the **whole chicken**, in the package, in a flat pan to catch the juices. Ask the girls to read the label. What does this chicken weigh? How much is it per pound? What is the total cost?

Remove the bird from the wrapper. **Identify the parts of the chicken:** wings, legs, thighs, breast and back. Look inside the cavity. Pull out the contents. These are the “giblets” or internal organs of the chicken. Most often they are inside a bag with the neck. Many people cook these and use them in gravy.

Have the girls put on latex or plastic gloves and pass the chicken around so everyone has an opportunity to look at it closely.

Get out the package(s) of **legs and thighs** you will cook today. Give each girl a piece and have her locate that part on the whole chicken.

When you’re done, place the whole chicken in a zippered freezer bag and return it to the refrigerator or freezer to use another time. Freeze the giblets for later use, or discard them.

**Tip:** Be sure measuring spoons are dry before dipping them into the spice container.

**Mix the flour, herbs and spices** (we’ll discuss them more fully while the chicken is in the oven). Have the girls look closely at a set of measuring spoons and identify ¼ t. and ½ t. **Measure** the paprika and show the girls how to **level off the spice** by running the straight edge of a knife across the rim of the measuring spoon (or by gently shaking the spoon to remove the excess paprika).

Measure the remaining dry ingredients into a bowl and stir well.

**Rinse a chicken piece**, put it into the flour mixture, and turn it to coat it well on all sides. This is **dredging** the chicken. Set it in the prepared pan as directed in the recipe.

**Our recipe calls for 4 legs or thighs.** You can use other pieces, but thighs and legs cook at about the same rate. It will be easier if everything is ready at the same time. Girls can work in groups of 2 – 4, depending on how much chicken you wish to prepare.

There’s plenty of flour mixture to coat 4 – 6 pieces of chicken. **Any flour mixture leftover must be discarded** as it may contain harmful bacteria from the raw chicken.

**Melt the butter or margarine** over low heat. Cover it to avoid splattering.

**Baking time** will vary depending on the size of your chicken pieces. It’s best to check for doneness with a **meat thermometer**. They are an inexpensive investment, especially compared to the cost of suffering from food poisoning! Yes, you can cut the chicken and see if the juices run clear, but a thermometer is more accurate. Temperature for **chicken pieces (bone-in) should be 170 degrees**. See the “Poultry Perfect” page for more information from the National Chicken Council.



There are various types of meat thermometers.

Photos courtesy of USDA

The chicken does not need to be turned during baking. You can do so, if you wish to make it crispier. Show the girls how to safely turn the pieces with a pair of tongs (or have an adult do this step).

After clean-up, allow time for the girls to smell each of the herbs and spices they used, as well as any others you may have on hand. Potted herbs are often now available in supermarkets, as well as fresh-cut herbs in bags. If possible, buy some potted parsley and some fresh herbs to show the girls. Read **“Herbs & Spices” Student Page** and discuss.

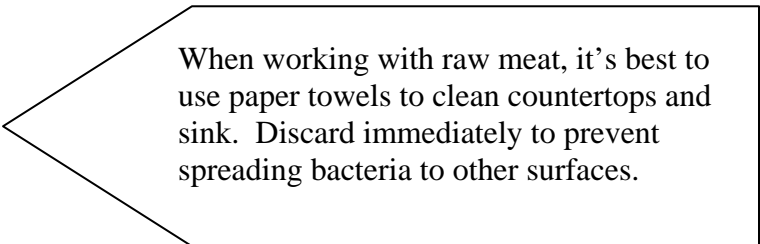
### **What you’ll need for this lesson:**

#### **Ingredients** (per recipe):

4 chicken pieces, legs or thighs  
3/4 Cup All-Purpose flour  
4 T. (half a stick) of butter or margarine  
Cooking oil spray  
Salt, pepper  
Paprika  
Onion Powder  
Thyme  
Poultry Seasoning

#### **Supplies:**

9” x 13” pan (or similar sized pan)  
An extra pan for the raw whole chicken  
Foil  
Latex or plastic gloves  
Medium bowl for flour mixture  
Medium or large bowls for raw chicken pieces  
Tongs  
Measuring cup for flour  
Measuring spoons  
Table Knife for leveling dry ingredients  
Large Spoon for mixing dry ingredients  
Paper Towels  
Antibacterial Spray



When working with raw meat, it’s best to use paper towels to clean countertops and sink. Discard immediately to prevent spreading bacteria to other surfaces.

#### **To serve:**

Plates  
Forks & Knives  
Napkins  
Salt & Pepper  
Glasses or paper cups  
Beverage



Name:

## *Cooking with Herbs & Spices*

Herbs and spices enhance the flavor of food. We'll mix several with flour to make a delicious coating for our oven baked chicken.

**What's the difference between herbs and spices?** **Herbs** are the leafy parts of a plant; they may be used fresh or dried. **Spices** are the aromatic parts of the plant: buds, fruit, berries, roots or bark. Most of the time, spices we use are dried, though some, like gingerroot, may also be used fresh.



Our chicken recipe uses common, dried herbs and spices. You probably already have most of them. If not, they are readily available in the spice section of the grocery store. You can also buy herbs at many health food stores where they are sold by the ounce. You can purchase only as much as you need. The herbs are cheaper, fresher and more flavorful than most found in the grocery store.

We'll use two spices: **pepper and paprika**, and several herbs: **thyme** (pronounced "time") **and poultry seasoning**. Poultry seasoning is a mixture of herbs that varies by brand. It generally contains sage, marjoram, rosemary and thyme. Purchase one that does not add salt.

**Salt** is often added to herb and spice mixtures. It's easy to inadvertently add too much salt to a recipe. If you add onion salt, garlic salt, and poultry seasoning that contains salt, you'll end up with mostly salt for flavoring, and very little herbs or spices! It's best to use pure herbs and spices, then add just the amount of salt you need. Remember, it's easy to add salt at the table, after tasting the food. But, while cooking, use a light hand when adding salt.

**Onion powder**, (not onion salt) is the other seasoning in our recipe. Onion powder is pulverized dry onion. Since it's not diluted with salt, the onion taste is strong and a little goes a long way.

Many grocery stores now sell **fresh-cut herbs** in the produce section. They may also have potted herbs you can take home to grow. In recipes, be sure to note if the herbs are dried or fresh. Dried herbs have a stronger flavor than fresh because they are more concentrated. If you need to **substitute dried herbs for fresh**, use about half as much of the dried herb. It's best to start with less, then taste the food and add more if needed.

Check your cupboards to see what other herbs and spices you have on hand. Keep them tightly sealed, in one place so you can find them easily when cooking. Properly stored, spices will keep about 3 years, herbs 1-3 years.

## *Herbs and Spices Guide*

Here are some seasonings that work well with certain foods. These are just a few suggestions. The more you use herbs and spices, the more familiar you'll become with them and with your taste preferences. When trying a new recipe, always start with a little less seasoning than called for. Taste a little of the food and then add more seasoning if desired.

<b><u>For:</u></b>	<b><u>Try these herbs and spices:</u></b>
<b>Beef</b>	Black pepper, thyme, bay leaf, garlic powder, onion powder, oregano, basil, marjoram, parsley, dry mustard, chili powder, red pepper, curry powder
<b>Poultry</b>	Paprika, poultry seasoning, sage, parsley, rosemary, marjoram, thyme, celery seed, lemon pepper, garlic powder, onion powder, chives, ginger, dill, curry powder
<b>Fish</b>	Dill, lemon pepper, coriander, marjoram, tarragon, curry powder, parsley, white or black pepper, chives
<b>Vegetables</b>	Garlic powder, onion powder, nutmeg, basil, oregano, marjoram, lemon pepper, black pepper, parsley, chives

You will also find **seasoning mixes** in the grocery store. Cajun mixes and Jamaican Jerk seasoning are hot and spicy. Italian or pizza seasonings mix oregano, basil, garlic, onion and other spices. Mexican seasoning and Southwest blends will usually include cumin, chili pepper, garlic, onion and other types of pepper.

Many mixes include **salt**. Be a smart shopper and read the label to find the sodium content. Or, read the list of ingredients; the main ingredient is listed first. If someone in your family limits salt intake, use seasoning mixes that are not high in salt. Or, let each person add the seasoning at the table.

Want to learn more about herbs and spices? Here are two sources to contact with your parent's permission.

McCormick & Co. 1-800-632-5847 or [www.mccormick.com](http://www.mccormick.com)  
Penzey's Spices 1-800-741-7787 or [www.penzeys.com](http://www.penzeys.com)

Name:

## Crispy Oven-Baked Chicken

### Ingredients:

4 chicken pieces: legs or thighs  
3/4 Cup All-Purpose flour  
1/2 teaspoon salt, optional  
Dash of pepper  
1/2 teaspoon paprika  
1/4 teaspoon onion powder  
1/2 teaspoon thyme  
1/2 teaspoon poultry seasoning  
2 Tablespoons butter or margarine, melted  
Cooking Oil Spray

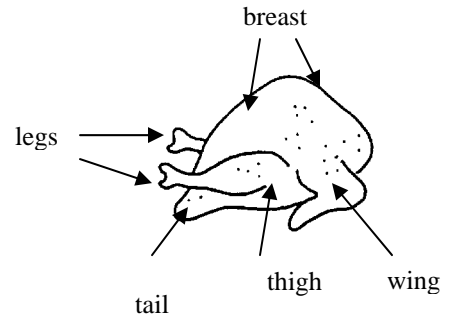
### Method:

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Line a 9" x 13" pan with foil, then spray with **cooking oil spray**.
2. Mix the **flour** with all the **herbs and seasonings** in a medium sized bowl. Blend well. Set aside.
3. Rinse the **chicken pieces**. Place them in a separate bowl or pan.
4. Dredge the **chicken** in the **seasoned flour**, thoroughly coating each piece. Discard any leftover flour mixture.
5. Place the **chicken pieces** in the prepared 9" x 13" pan so that they do not touch each other.
6. Bake at 375 degrees for 20 minutes. Take the pan out of the oven and brush the chicken with **melted butter or margarine**. You may turn the pieces over with tongs if you wish, but it is not essential.
7. Return the pan to the oven and bake 15 minutes more, or until done. Insert a meat thermometer into the thickest part of a piece of chicken. It must reach **170 degrees** to be thoroughly cooked.

### Variations:

- Replace half of the flour with cornmeal for an extra crunchy crust.
- Try other combinations of herbs. Rosemary, tarragon, garlic or lemon pepper can be used alone or in combination with the herbs above.
- For a spicy twist, add 1/4 teaspoon of cayenne pepper to the dry ingredients.

### Poultry Parts



The back is the underside.

**Dredge** means to coat with flour or other dry ingredients.

Ask for adult help for Step 6.



## *Poultry Perfect!*



An inspector examines raw chickens.

Poultry may contain salmonella or other bacteria that can cause illness. Proper handling and cooking eliminates the risk of infection. Follow these tips from the National Chicken Council.

### **Before you cook:**

1. Refrigerate raw chicken promptly. Don't leave it on the countertop at room temperature. Never leave chicken in a hot car. After grocery shopping, refrigerate poultry and other cold foods as soon as you get home.
2. Packaged fresh chicken may be stored in its original wrappings in the coldest part of the refrigerator up to 2 days.
3. If it's not to be used within 2 days, freeze uncooked chicken in freezer bags or heavy-duty aluminum foil for up to 1 year.
4. Thaw chicken in the refrigerator, or in cold water – never on the countertop. It takes about 24 hours to thaw a 4-pound chicken in the refrigerator and 3 – 9 hours to thaw cut-up parts.
5. To thaw in cold water, place chicken in its original wrap or a water-tight plastic bag in cold water. Change water often. It takes about 2 hours to thaw a whole chicken.
6. Use the microwave to quickly thaw raw or cooked chicken. Check your microwave manual for directions.
7. Always wash hands, countertops, cutting boards, knives and other utensils used in preparing raw poultry with soapy water before they come in contact with other foods.



Photos courtesy of  
USDA

### **While you're cooking:**

1. Always cook chicken well done. It's best to check with a meat thermometer. Internal temperature for a whole chicken should reach 180 degrees, 170 degrees for bone-in parts, and 160 for boneless pieces.
2. If you do not have a thermometer, pierce chicken with a fork in the thickest part. Juices should run clear, not pink.
3. When barbecuing, keep chicken refrigerated until ready to cook. Do not place cooked chicken on the same plate used to transport raw chicken to the grill.
4. Marinade in which raw chicken has been soaking should be discarded, never used on cooked chicken.

### **After you cook:**

1. Cooked chicken pieces may be kept in the refrigerator up to 2 days. Whole chicken, 3 days.
2. If you're transporting cooked chicken, put it in an insulated container or ice chest until ready to eat. Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold to avoid food poisoning - either below 40 degrees or above 140 degrees.
3. When reheating leftovers, cover to retain moisture and to ensure chicken is heated all the way through. Bring gravy to a rolling boil before serving.

Used with permission  
National Chicken Council

## *Extending The Lesson... Grocery Shopping*

Our chicken recipe is a very economical main dish. Because groceries consume a large part of the family budget, it's important to teach girls how to cook and shop, economically and wisely.



Many family expenses are fixed: rent or mortgage payments, car expenses, insurance and utility costs are a few that can be adjusted somewhat, but then the cost is not likely to change very much.

Groceries, on the other hand, are not a fixed expense. Did you know that you can buy food at sale prices? Families spend one quarter or more of their income on food. That adds up to thousands of dollars every year. It's well worth investing a little time to save money at the grocery store.

Many researchers have studied marketing techniques to get people to spend more in the grocery store. Everything is carefully planned - from attractive displays, food samples, eye-catching colors, even the music playing - to entice shoppers to spend more. If you enter the store unprepared, you will spend more money than intended.

Teach the girls to shop wisely:

- Make a grocery list
- Read and use grocery ads
- Organize and use coupons

Plan a typical family menu for one day. Have the girls write a list for breakfast, lunch and dinner. They need to include snacks and everything their family might eat in a day. Then have them **write a list of all the groceries** they would need. Go over the list together. Did they include butter or margarine for the sandwiches? What about salad dressing, sugar or sweetener for coffee and tea?

They may have many things on hand already. But it's important to list everything that's needed for meals to avoid unnecessary trips to the grocery store for an overlooked item. A mental checklist may be enough for experienced adults, but have the girls write down everything they will need. Then they can check their pantry and cross off the items they have on hand.

**Grocery ads** usually are published weekly in the newspaper. They are also available in most grocery stores. Get grocery ads for each girl; your own supermarket should be happy to provide them. If you have several supermarkets nearby, get different store's ads for comparison.

### *Sample Meals for One Day*

**Breakfast:**  
Cereal with bananas & milk  
Orange Juice  
Coffee - Dad, Tea - Mom

**Lunch:**  
Grilled Cheese Sandwiches  
Tomato Soup  
Carrot Sticks  
Cookies  
Milk

**Snack:**  
Apple Juice  
Granola Bar

**Dinner:**  
Crispy Oven-Baked Chicken  
Mashed Potatoes  
Tossed Salad  
Green Beans  
Brownies  
Milk

**Evening Snack:**  
Cocoa  
Cookie

Every week, supermarkets feature sales. They want your business! Several items will be deeply discounted. These are called “**loss leaders**” and are usually prominently displayed on the front of the ad. Companies know they will lose money on these items, but they make up for it by the other purchases consumers make once in their store.

Look through the entire ad with the girls. Have them circle the items their family would use. Be sure they understand that they will not save money purchasing items their family will not use – even if they’re on sale!

Family menus can be planned around sale items. Or purchase food when it’s deeply discounted and store it for later use. This works well for canned goods, but meat and other fresh foods will need to be used promptly, or perhaps frozen if you have the space.

Here’s how I would **compare the food ads with the sample menu above**. I might discover that this week our favorite brand cereal is on sale. Generic store brands are usually cheaper, but the sale price is cheaper this week so I’ll plan to buy several extra boxes, especially if I have coupons.

Chicken leg quarters are often on sale for about 29 cents a pound. If I buy the legs and thighs in separate packages, they cost 99 cents/pound, so I’ll buy the leg quarters and cut the leg from the thigh at home (many stores will even do this for you). Because we like chicken, I’ll buy 10 pounds. That’s only \$2.90 for ten pounds of meat! We’ll eat about 3 pounds this week when I fix Crispy Oven-Baked Chicken and I’ll use several pounds in a chicken casserole. I have room for the rest in the freezer.

Fresh orange juice is also on sale, but I have room for just 2 cartons in the refrigerator so that’s all I’ll buy. Canned tuna fish is another loss leader at 3 cans for \$1. We enjoy tuna casserole and the cans of tuna take little space in the pantry so I’ll stock up and buy six cans.

By now you can see how buying groceries on sale works to your advantage. I’ve purchased chicken at one-quarter the usual cost, tuna at half the cost, and earned big savings on the other sale items. Go through the process with the girls; “think aloud” with them so they understand how to plan, shop and save money.

In addition to the grocery ads, most newspapers carry weekly coupon inserts. **Coupons** come in the mail, from dispensers on the grocery shelf, and at coupon sites online. Use a coupon organizer, file box, or envelopes to organize coupons. Take out any coupons for the items on your grocery list so they’re handy when you pay for your groceries.



Meal planning, preparing a grocery list, and using food ads and coupons will become second nature with a little practice and will reap huge savings for your family. Well done, good and faithful steward!

## *Lesson Eight - Microwave Cooking*

The microwave oven is probably the most frequently used appliance in the kitchen today, and yet, it is the most under-utilized. We use it to “zap” a bag of popcorn or a frozen entrée, or just to heat a cup of coffee, but that is often the extent of our microwave expertise.

Rarely do we use the microwave to actually prepare a recipe from scratch. That's unfortunate because the microwave's greatest potential is not realized in most home kitchens. This lesson is designed to teach the girls how to cook with the microwave.

Children often underestimate the power, and potential dangers, of the microwave oven. Because they do not see a hot burner or flame, children don't realize they need to exercise the same care using the microwave oven as they would using a conventional oven.

In their lifetime, it's always been there. According to Amana Appliances, over 90% of American households have a microwave oven. They cook foods quickly, use less energy, and don't heat up the kitchen. Nutrients are preserved, especially when cooking vegetables, because they cook quickly and with little liquid. With all the advantages of microwave cooking, let's be sure the girls know how to use it.

### **In this lesson, the girls will learn to:**

- Use a microwave oven safely
- Prepare a recipe in the microwave oven
- Use microwave cooking techniques

### **Review:**

- Safe handling of raw poultry (Lesson 7)

### **Give each girl a copy of:**

- Before I Cook with the Microwave
- Microwave Safety & Techniques Skill Page
- Hot Chicken Salad in Toast Cups Recipe Page

Study the information in **Microwave Safety and Techniques**, and in **Before I Cook with the Microwave** then read through it with the girls. Review the owner's manual for your microwave oven.

The **Hot Chicken Salad in Toast Cups** recipe uses the microwave to cook the chicken salad, and the conventional oven to bake the toast cups. Help the girls to compare both appliances. The conventional



The girls enjoy eating their Hot Chicken Salad, and “hamming it up” for the camera!

oven is used to make the toast cups because the microwave does not brown and crisp bread very well (some newer models may be an exception). But, the conventional oven would take much longer to cook the chicken breast and it would be more likely to dry out during cooking. The quick cooking time in the microwave makes this recipe a snap! The conventional oven emits a great deal of heat when the door is opened; the microwave does not. See what other differences the girls might notice.

**Demonstrate** the recipe. The first step is to make the toast cups. These are fun to make and can be used with any filling (try sloppy joes, tuna salad, or fruit filling). **Set a timer** when you put them into the oven; they brown quickly!

The apple in the recipe is not peeled so that it adds color and nutrients to the salad. I use a Red Delicious apple, but any sweet variety would work fine. Remind the girls to **wash the apple** and **celery** before cutting them.

The **chicken** is prepared last so that it does not remain at room temperature while other ingredients are being prepared. Before class, place each raw chicken breast in a sandwich bag and seal. Keep refrigerated until ready to cook.

Remind the girls to wash their hands after handling raw meat (and anything else that comes in contact with the raw chicken). This is a good opportunity to **review safe handling of raw meat**. See “Poultry Perfect” in Chapter Seven.

Many recipes call for cooked chicken. If you have some chicken leftover from another meal, that’s great. But, if not, this recipe demonstrates just how easy it is to **cook a chicken breast** in the microwave. Our recipe was tested in an 850-watt microwave oven. Generally, one half of a chicken breast (about 6-8 ounces) cooks in 2 minutes in the microwave. It’s always best to test with a meat thermometer; **boneless chicken pieces are done when the internal temperature reaches 160 degrees**.

**When removing the chicken from the microwave**, use a hot pad or oven mitt. Remind the girls that even in the microwave, dishes do become hot. Show them how to open the dish from the back so that steam escapes away from them.

**The recipe makes four chicken-filled toast cups**. I had my class work in pairs and each girl ate two toast cups. These were a big hit; everyone loved them! They make a tasty light meal your students will enjoy.

## **What you'll need for this lesson:**

### **Ingredients** (per recipe):

4 slices soft bread  
2-3 Tablespoons butter or margarine (to spread on one side of bread)  
Boneless, skinless chicken breast, 6-8 ounces  
1/2 Cup chopped apple  
2 Tablespoons sliced celery  
1/4 Cup shredded Swiss cheese  
1/3 Cup mayonnaise  
1/2 teaspoon lemon juice  
1 Tablespoon sunflower nuts, optional

### **Supplies:**

Muffin tin, regular size with 12 holes  
Rolling Pin, optional, to flatten the bread  
Steak knife or paring knife  
Table knife to spread butter or margarine  
Cutting board  
Medium sized microwave-safe bowl  
Cover for the bowl or plastic wrap (cut to vent)  
Measuring Cup  
Measuring Spoons  
Mixing Spoon  
Small microwave-safe dish with cover for chicken breast  
Fork or Tongs  
Hot Pad or oven mitt  
Meat Thermometer

### **To serve:**

Small plates or paper plates  
Napkins  
Forks  
Glasses or paper cups  
Beverage



Name:

## *Before I Cook with the Microwave*

You've probably used a microwave oven. We see them everywhere, from home kitchens to convenience stores. They heat food very quickly, making them seem essential in our fast-paced world. It's hard to imagine that only a generation ago, microwave ovens were virtually unheard of.

Generations ago, women cooked over an open fire, often in the fireplace that also warmed the house. The invention of wood-burning and coal-burning stoves brought a big improvement over the open hearth, and they were much safer. Then gas and electric stoves came along, making it easier for the cook to regulate the cooking temperature. It wasn't until the 1970's that microwave ovens became widely available and affordable.

**How were microwaves invented?** During the 1940's, scientists developed the magnetron vacuum tube. It was used for powerful and accurate radar during World War II. Raytheon Company manufactured over 1,000 of these magnetrons a day! The workers often warmed their hands in front of them. One day, an engineer noticed that a candy bar in his pocket had melted while he stood near the magnetron. He was curious. He placed some popcorn in front of the magnetron and it popped. He became convinced that the magnetron could be used to cook food.

**The first microwave, built in 1947**, was so cumbersome – it weighed 750 pounds – that it was impractical. It would be twenty years before Raytheon and Amana developed the first microwave oven for the home. Since then, many improvements have been made and the cost has become more affordable.

**Learning how microwaves work** will help us understand how to use them safely and efficiently. Microwave ovens are just that; they are a type of oven. Even though you do not see a heating element like you would see in a conventional electric oven, the microwave oven heats and cooks food, too.

Sometimes you hear people say they are going to “nuke” food in the microwave, but there is nothing nuclear about microwave cooking! **“Micro-waves” are high frequency electromagnetic waves**, like radio waves only much shorter.



The first Radarange microwave oven, on the right, was 5 times the size of today's models, stacked up on the left.

Radarange ® is the registered trademark of Maytag Appliances, Used with permission.



The microwaves enter the oven through a small opening inside. Then a stirrer fan blows to distribute the microwaves more evenly. The oven interior is metal-lined, keeping the microwaves inside. Microwaves cannot penetrate metal. Even the glass door has a metal screen in it. The microwaves bounce off the metal and stay inside the oven.

Microwaves will go through glass, plastic and paper – and into food, but only a little way. **They only penetrate food to a depth of less than 2 inches.** The microwaves cause the food molecules to vibrate over 2 billion times per second! That rapid vibration causes heat that cooks the food.

If the microwaves only reach the first inch or two of the food, how does the rest of the food cook? **Microwaves penetrate the food from all sides** at once. The heat then spreads to the interior portions of the food by conduction. That's why we stir food, and turn the dish a quarter turn, to help the food cook more evenly and cook all the way through.

**Different types of food cook at different rates in the microwave.** Foods high in sugar or fat cook faster because fat and sugar absorb microwaves more quickly. If you heat a jam-filled donut in the microwave, for example, you need to be careful not to burn your mouth because the jam will be much hotter than the donut around it.

Dense foods, like meatloaf or lasagna, take longer to cook than loose or less dense foods. It takes less time to heat a sloppy joe than it would to heat a piece of lasagna.

The more food you have in the microwave, the longer it will take to cook because the same amount of microwave energy has to be absorbed by more food.

Be sure to read the manual that came with your microwave oven. Higher wattage ovens cook faster. A 900-watt oven will cook much faster than a 500-watt oven. Most recipes for the microwave tell you the wattage of the oven used to determine the cooking time for that recipe. The **Hot Chicken Salad** recipe was tested in an 850-watt microwave. If you have a 600-700 watt oven, you will need to add a little more cooking time. Add just 15-30 seconds of cooking time at once.

The microwave oven is an efficient appliance that cooks foods quickly. Use it safely and learn to prepare recipes designed for the microwave so you will realize all of its time-saving benefits.

Name:

## Hot Chicken Salad in Toast Cups

### Ingredients

#### **Toast Cups:**

4 slices soft bread, crusts removed  
2-3 Tablespoons butter or margarine

#### **Chicken Salad:**

One half chicken breast, boneless & skinless (about 6-8 ounces)  
1/2 Cup finely chopped apple  
2 Tablespoons finely sliced celery  
1 Tablespoon sunflower nuts, optional  
1/4 Cup shredded Swiss cheese  
1/3 Cup mayonnaise  
1/2 teaspoon lemon juice

### Method:

**Yield:** 4 Toast Cups, 2 servings

1. Make the **Toast Cups** first: Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Press each slice of **bread** (crusts removed) to flatten slightly. Use clean hands or roll bread with a rolling pin.
2. Spread one side of each piece of bread with **butter or margarine**.
3. Press each slice of bread, buttered side down, into the hole of a muffin pan.
4. Bake at 375 degrees about 8 minutes or until lightly browned. Set aside.
5. Chop the **apple** and slice the **celery**. Put it in a medium-sized microwave-safe bowl.
6. Add the **nuts** (optional), **cheese**, **mayonnaise** and **lemon juice**. Mix well.
7. Cover and microwave 30 seconds on High. Stir. Microwave 15 seconds longer or until cheese is melted and mixture is hot. Leave mixture covered.
8. Cook the **chicken breast** in the microwave. Place the chicken breast in a small microwave-safe dish and cover (do not add water). Microwave on High 1 minute.



Preparing Toast Cups

**9.** Turn the chicken over with a fork or tongs. Cover and cook 1 more minute on High. Leave covered and let stand 5 minutes.

**10.** Open the lid carefully so steam escapes away from you. Check the chicken breast with a meat thermometer. It should read 160 degrees. Allow the chicken to cool a few minutes.

**11.** Cut the chicken into bite-sized pieces. The meat juices should be clear. If there is any pink in the juice or in the chicken, return it to the microwave and cook on High an additional 30 seconds, or until done.

**12.** Combine the chicken pieces with the cheese and apple mixture. Mix well. Spoon into toast cups. Serve hot.

Name:

**Future Christian Homemakers  
Skill Page**

## *Microwave Safety and Techniques*

Microwave ovens are easy to use; just push a button and the food comes out ready-to-eat, right? Well, not quite. Yes, microwave cooking is an easy, efficient and quick way to cook. But, like any appliance, there are potential hazards and you must learn to operate the microwave oven safely. The first thing you need to do is read the manual that came with your microwave, then follow these general precautions.



The girls serve the Hot Chicken Salad they made in the microwave.

Like a conventional oven, **fires** can start in the microwave, too. Only use appliances with your parent's permission. Heat food for the recommended time and keep an eye on the food through the door. Most foods cook in a very short time. Overcooking can cause a fire. If food ignites, leave the oven door closed, turn off the microwave, and call for help. Never use the microwave to dry clothes or paper; they may ignite.

Do not turn the oven on when it is **empty**. The microwaves will bounce around the inside of the oven and may damage the oven walls. Some people keep a glass of water in the microwave when it's not in use, just in case the oven is turned on inadvertently. That's a good idea, especially in homes where there are young children.

**Steam** builds up in covered foods as they cook. When you open the lid after cooking, carefully open it from the back, so the steam escapes away from you. Steam burns! Use an oven mitt to protect your hand.

Steam also builds up in foods that have membranes or a tight skin such as eggs, hot dogs, and potatoes. Pierce these types of foods in several places with the tip of a sharp knife before cooking. That allows the steam to escape during cooking. Otherwise, they could explode! Steam builds up in foods in plastic bags such as frozen vegetables and entrees. Pierce the top of the bag or lift a corner of the cover to vent.

Do not use **metal** in a microwave oven; it will cause sparks. Microwaves cannot penetrate metal. In some ovens, you can use a small amount of foil to shield a part of the food. Check your owner's manual to see if this is safe for your oven and ask an adult for help. Glass dishes that have metal designs in them, and metal wire twist-ties also may cause sparking.

Use a **cover** with a vent when heating open containers of food. This prevents food from splattering all over the oven as it heats. Plastic covers, designed for the microwave, fit over a dinner plate and are handy to cover other sized plates as well.

Many types of paper towels are microwave-safe and can be used as a cover, but they may fall off during cooking.

**Plastic** containers, plastic utensils and plastic wrap are used in microwave cooking: but be careful, **plastic can melt!** Many plastic containers cannot be reused. If you use plastic wrap to cover a dish, be sure it is recommended for microwave use and leave an opening to safely vent steam.

Keep your microwave **clean**. If food splatters during cooking, wipe it up before it has a chance to dry. The job is much easier if you take care of it promptly. If the food is still hot, allow it to cool briefly before wiping it up to avoid burning your hand.

What if the inside of your microwave has become encrusted with food? Put a cup of water in a microwave-safe dish into the microwave. Turn it on for 2 minutes or until the water begins to boil. Turn the oven off; leave it closed 5 minutes to allow the steam to soften the splatters. Wipe clean.

Your owner's manual will tell you what to use to clean the inside and outside of your oven. Follow those directions. Generally, a little soap and warm water is all that is needed.

Now that you know some of the safety rules, what **special techniques** do you need to know to make microwave cooking a success?

**Foods cook quickly** in the microwave and it easy to overcook, and ruin, them. **Cooking time varies** depending on the:

- wattage of your oven
- type of food you are cooking
- amount of food
- starting temperature of the food

For example, it takes longer to cook four potatoes than to cook one or two. Icy cold foods take longer to heat than room temperature ingredients.

In the microwave, the edges of the food heat first. **Stir** food to bring it from the edges to the center during cooking. **Rotate** the dish a quarter turn to promote even cooking. **Arrange** dense parts of food toward the edge of the dish. Space foods out evenly so energy reaches all sides.

**Standing time** is part of the cooking time and is essential in microwave cooking. Food continues to cook even after the oven is turned off.

**Round pans** cook food more evenly than square and rectangular dishes because corners absorb more energy and tend to overcook.

Use the microwave as carefully as you use a conventional oven. These safety tips and cooking techniques will help you successfully prepare food in the microwave.

*Extending The Lesson ...  
Making the Most out of your Microwave*

Many foods can be cooked quickly and easily in the microwave. However, some foods are not well suited to this method of cooking. Generally, breads, cakes from scratch, cookies and pastries cook unevenly and are better suited to traditional baking methods. Deep-fat frying should never be attempted in the microwave because the fat can reach dangerous temperatures and cause a fire.

Most other foods cook well in the microwave. **Vegetables** are best prepared in the microwave because they can be cooked with very little water and the cooking time is short, preserving nutrients and color. Microwave directions are given on packages of frozen vegetables. Cooking times for fresh veggies will vary depending on the amount and size of the vegetables to be cooked, and the wattage of your microwave. Check a cookbook or your owner's manual for cooking times. As a rule of thumb, I add 2-3 T. water to 2-3 Cups of sliced fresh vegetables in a covered microwave-safe dish. Microwave on High for 2 minutes, stir, then add one more minute on High. Allow 5 minutes of standing time for the vegetables to steam. After checking with a fork, cook veggies another 30-60 seconds as needed.

Green Beans Italiano, a microwave recipe, can be found in the Vegetable chapter, Chapter 11.

Cooking **rice** in the microwave requires much less attention than cooking it on top of the stove. Rice requires the same amount of time to absorb liquid no matter how you cook it, but you don't need to watch it constantly in the microwave. I find this method much easier. Bring 2 Cups of water to a boil in a microwave-safe casserole or saucepan. Add 1 Cup regular white rice (not quick cooking type). Cover and microwave 20 minutes at 30% power. Allow rice to stand 5 minutes. Follow the same procedure for brown rice, but microwave at 30% power for 45-50 minutes.

Here are some easy microwave recipes your group may enjoy.

**A baked potato** cooks in a 700-watt microwave in 3-4 minutes. Scrub the potato, then prick the skin in several places. Microwave on High 2 minutes, turn the potato over and microwave for the remaining time. Wrap the potato in foil and let it stand 5 minutes so it finishes cooking completely through. Two potatoes cooked at once require 6-7 minutes on High; add additional time for more potatoes. Remember that the microwave energy in the oven is absorbed by the food; that's why longer cooking time is needed when more food is being cooked. Add butter, sour cream, shredded cheese, bacon bits or your favorite toppings to the baked potato.



One of the girls demonstrates her Tomato Slice Pizza Snack recipe for the class.

**The Tomato Slice Pizza Snack** was created by one of my students, and enjoyed by all – even those girls who thought they didn't like tomatoes! Put one tomato slice, ¼" thick, on a microwave-safe plate. Sprinkle with 2 Tablespoons of mozzarella cheese and a dash of garlic powder. Top with chopped pepperoni pieces, if desired. Microwave on High 15 seconds or until cheese melts. Cool for one minute before eating.

To prepare a **baked apple**, core the apple but do not cut all the way to the bottom. Fill the opening with brown sugar, raisins and chopped nuts, if desired. Sprinkle with cinnamon. Stand the apple in a microwave-safe dish and cover. Cook on High 2-3 minutes. Halfway through the cooking time, give the dish a quarter turn. Let stand, covered for 5 minutes. Test with a fork and cook additional minute if necessary. Two apples need 5-6 minutes on High; four apples need 7-9 minutes. Allow 10 minutes of standing time.

Kids enjoy **hot dogs** and they're a snap to prepare in the microwave. Remind the girls that any food with a membrane or skin, like hot dogs, needs to be pricked with a fork before cooking to allow steam to escape. Put a hot dog in a bun, wrap it in a paper towel and microwave on High 45 seconds. Allow it to stand one minute then check for doneness and cook another 15-30 seconds if needed. Hot dogs can also be heated without a bun. Place them in a covered microwave-safe dish and cook on High for 30 seconds for one hot dog (add additional time when cooking more hot dogs together).

**S'mores** are always a favorite and though it's fun to toast marshmallows over the campfire, the microwave is usually more convenient! Place a graham cracker square on a paper towel or plate. Top with 1/3 of a plain chocolate bar (the 1.55 oz. size). Top with either 10 miniature marshmallows or one large marshmallow. Microwave on High 10-15 seconds, just until the marshmallow(s) begins to puff. Top with another graham cracker square. Let stand one minute to allow chocolate to melt.

Check the cookbook section in the library or bookstore for more time-saving microwave recipes.

## *Lesson Nine - Casseroles*

Casseroles are usually quick to assemble and easy to transport making them a favorite at the family dinner table and at potluck dinners. They are also a great way for girls to learn to cook the main dish for dinner. While girls love to bake brownies, cookies and other goodies, it's vital that they learn how to make nutritious meals. Remember, what they learn today will equip them to cook for their own families in the future.

There are many great casserole recipes to choose from. No doubt you have some family favorites of your own. Feel free to use them with the girls, or choose from the recipes I've included in this chapter. I selected recipes that use only a few ingredients and are easy to assemble.

### **In this lesson, the girls will learn to:**

- Prepare a casserole
- Plan a well-balanced dinner menu
- Identify dietary guidelines
- Set the table and use good manners

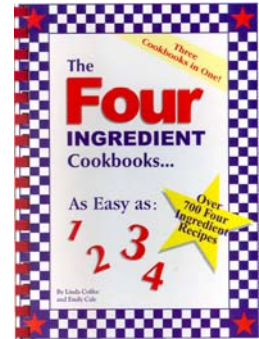
### **Review:**

- Safe handling of raw meat (Lessons 6 & 7)

### **Give each girl a copy of:**

- Before I Cook Casseroles
- Food Guide Pyramid
- Casserole Recipe(s)
- Table Setting Skill Page

For this lesson, you may want to make just one casserole if you have a small group, and give additional recipes to the girls to try later at home. If you have more than 2 or 3 girls, then consider trying several casserole recipes. I divided my class into three groups and each made a different casserole. Then we enjoyed a feast when everyone sampled each casserole!



The Four Ingredient Cookbooks are a great source of simple recipes. Some of the recipes in this section come from these books. Visit [www.FourIngredientCookbook.com](http://www.FourIngredientCookbook.com)



The girls pat raw ground beef into a pan for Tater Tot Casserole.



**Review the “Kitchen Safety”** page. This should be in the girls’ notebooks (from Lesson One). Have extra copies on hand for anyone who needs one.

Consider using latex or plastic disposable **gloves** when handling **raw meat**. You can purchase them inexpensively in the first aid section of Wal-Mart and other stores. Many girls have never worked with raw meat and don’t want to touch it with their bare hands! Gloves help overcome their squeamishness and, at the same time, keep raw meat from getting under their fingernails. Used gloves should be immediately thrown away to prevent spreading bacteria to other kitchen surfaces. Wash hands before, and after, handling raw meat.

Some casseroles, like a potpie, are **complete meals**. But many casseroles do not include vegetables and do not meet all the family’s nutritional needs. In either case, it’s nice to add something to round out the meal. It could be an easy salad or some canned fruit, or it could be something that takes a little planning like a gelatin mold, or fresh coleslaw. Since most casseroles are quick to assemble, they free up time to prepare other additions to the meal.

**Meal planning** is essential to good health and nutrition. It’s a sad fact that in our fast-food world, high cholesterol, Type II diabetes, high blood pressure and the incidence of many other ills is soaring. Most can be prevented or controlled with proper nutrition. While we are often willing to invest money on our health, we don’t invest much time. Time spent planning healthy family meals is time well spent!

### Special Touches

Simple things can turn plain dishes into something special. Mix a few herbs into soft butter or margarine & add that to veggies.

Whip some honey or jam into butter or margarine. It’s good on bread, fresh fruit and many veggies.

Add a light sprinkling of nuts, sunflower seeds or Parmesan cheese to veggies.

The **student page**, “**Before I Cook Casseroles**”, introduces meal planning basics. The **Food Guide Pyramid** gives more details and is used by dieticians to help people plan their meals. Anyone with a special medical condition should consult their doctor. It’s important to know the girls in your group and whether any have diabetes, food allergies or any other condition. If so, consult with their mother and make the necessary adjustments.

An **updated Food Guide Pyramid** (2005) is now available. You will find it in the FCH Lessons Index page. I find the older version included here on page 7 to be easier to read, but the new version is more colorful. Print both and decide which works best for you.

**Get creative;** meal planning can be fun! Go for lots of colors and a variety of textures in the foods you choose for each meal. In the chapters on vegetables and fruit, you’ll find ideas for cute “critters” to make and pretty garnishes. Kids love to play with their food, and here’s a way to channel that creativity.

After reading “Before I Cook Casseroles”, the girls are asked to **write their own menu**. Two sample menus are given to illustrate well-balanced meals. Give the girls some paper. Ask them to list as many of their favorite foods as they can. Besides main dishes, have them include individual foods. They can make one long list, or categorize them – fruit, veggies, dairy products, and so on.

On another sheet of paper, have them write down one favorite main dish and then, from their list, add vegetables, fruit or whatever else they need to make a complete meal. Mix and match. If you want spaghetti this week with salad and bread sticks, write a different menu to go with spaghetti the next time you serve it. Ask each girl to share one of her menus with the group. It’s a great way to get inspiration for new meal ideas!

### **What you’ll need for this lesson:**

**BBQ Cups** (per recipe)  
1 pound lean ground beef  
½ Cup BBQ sauce  
1 can refrigerator biscuits (10-12 count)  
¾ Cup grated cheddar cheese  
Muffin Pan with 12 holes  
Frying Pan  
Large Spoon to cook meat  
Measuring Cup

**For all recipes:**  
Latex or plastic disposable gloves  
Hot Pads  
Trivets or folded towels for hot dishes  
Kitchen Timer

**For Serving:**  
Serving utensils  
Plates  
Knives, forks, spoons  
Napkins  
Salt & pepper

**Busy Day Chicken** (per recipe)  
2-3 pounds of chicken pieces (favorite pieces or one cut-up chicken)  
1 Cup white long-grain rice, uncooked  
1 pkg. Dry onion soup mix (1 envelope from a 2 oz. box)  
1 can cream of celery soup (regular or reduced fat)  
Shortening or cooking spray to grease pan  
9” x 13” pan or large casserole dish  
Foil or lid to cover pan  
Measuring Cup  
Whisk

**Cheeseburger Pie** (per recipe)

1 pound ground beef  
1 onion  
1 Cup shredded Cheddar cheese (4 ozs.)  
½ Cup Bisquick ® Baking Mix  
1 Cup milk  
2 eggs  
Salt  
Shortening or cooking spray to grease pie plate  
9" pie plate  
Frying Pan  
Cutting Board  
Sharp Knife to chop onion  
Large Spoon to cook meat  
Measuring Spoons  
Liquid Measuring Cup  
Dry Measuring Cups  
Mixing Bowl  
Small Bowl to crack eggs

**Tater Tot Casserole** (per recipe)

2 pounds extra lean ground beef  
1 can cream of mushroom soup (regular or reduced fat)  
1 Cup grated cheddar cheese  
1 (2 pound) package frozen tater tots  
Shortening or cooking spray to grease pan  
9" x 13" pan  
Large Spoon or rubber spatula to spread soup  
Measuring Cup  
Foil or cover for pan

Name:

## *Before I Cook Casseroles*

“What’s for dinner?” I’ll bet you’ve asked that question many times! Someday, your family will ask you that question. Casseroles are one-dish meals that can provide a nutritious, tasty main dish. They are usually quick and easy to assemble and they’re a great way to use leftovers.

When you serve a casserole, that’s probably not the only thing you will set before your family. What else do you want to serve with it? How should you decide what to serve?

**Menu planning** is essential to your family’s health. Every day you need to eat a wide variety of foods to furnish your body with all the nutrients it needs to grow and stay healthy. And, everyone enjoys different types of foods in a meal.

Imagine being handed a plate of food with mashed potatoes, macaroni and a piece of white bread on it. You might like each of those foods, but that combination would not create an appealing, nutritious meal.

How do we create a **well-balanced meal**? Consider these factors:

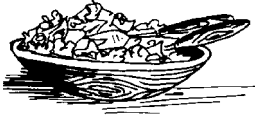
- Study the **Food Guide Pyramid**. Include servings of starches, protein, fruit and vegetables. Go easy on sweets and fats.
- Incorporate **different textures** into your meal. If you serve a main dish, like lasagna, that is soft, serve something crunchy with it - carrot sticks, a salad, or apple slices.
- Foods of **different temperatures** add enjoyment to a meal. Think of a holiday meal that might include turkey, dressing, gravy, potatoes, and vegetables. Cold cranberry relish, a gelatin mold, or cold applesauce would be a welcome addition to such a meal.
- Make your meal **colorful**! Bright colors on a plate add “eye-appeal”. Fruits and vegetables offer an endless array of bright colors, especially when served raw. Raw fruit and veggies can be arranged decoratively on a platter and everyone can help themselves. Or, add some to each plate.

**Menu** is another word for a meal plan. If you plan your meals, you’re likely to eat more nutritiously – and spend less money – than if you resort to grabbing anything that’s handy at the last minute. After you’ve planned a few menus, meal planning will become second nature. Keep your menus in a file. Use the ones your family likes again. Soon you’ll have a file full of great meal ideas, and you’ll know what to say when someone asks, “What’s for dinner?”



**Let's plan a menu** using **Busy Day Chicken** for our main dish. Look at the recipe. Imagine how it will look and taste once you've cooked it. There will be pieces of chicken on top of rice, baked with a creamy soup mixture. You have: rice as a starch, chicken as your protein, and the soup provides fats. Everything is hot, fairly soft in texture, and all light in color.

**What's missing?** There are no vegetables or fruit. The meal needs some variety in texture, temperature and color. Vegetables and fruit can add all three!



A **colorful salad** would be a great accompaniment to this casserole. It can be cold, crispy and loaded with different colors. Plain iceberg lettuce with dressing isn't quite enough here. Try Romaine and other types of lettuce. Think of all the other things you see at a restaurant salad bar. Add sliced carrots, or arrange baby carrots around the edge of the bowl. Add sliced celery, green, red or yellow bell peppers, broccoli or cauliflower florets, raisins or sunflower seeds.

Perhaps you'd prefer a **cooked vegetable**. Green beans, peas, carrots or broccoli would add color to the meal. You can buy frozen mixed vegetables, or create a combination of your own favorites. If you choose cooked vegetables, everything in the meal so far, is hot. You could add some crispy apple slices, or cold canned fruit.

Let's not forget a **beverage**. Milk is a good choice because it provides calcium your bones need to grow strong. Avoid soda and sweetened drinks at meals as these fill you up with sugar without giving you any nutrients. That's why they are called "empty calories". If you can't drink milk, fruit juice could be an alternative.

A yummy **dessert** is a nice ending to your meal, but it is not essential. Keep it simple so you have time, and money, to prepare the main dish.

Here are two possible menus. On another sheet of paper, write your own that you think your family would enjoy.

### Dinner Menu I

Busy Day Chicken

Cooked Green Beans with  
Butter and Sliced Almonds

Orange Jello mold with  
Mandarin Oranges

Milk

Oatmeal Cookies

### Dinner Menu II

Busy Day Chicken

Cooked Mixed Vegetables

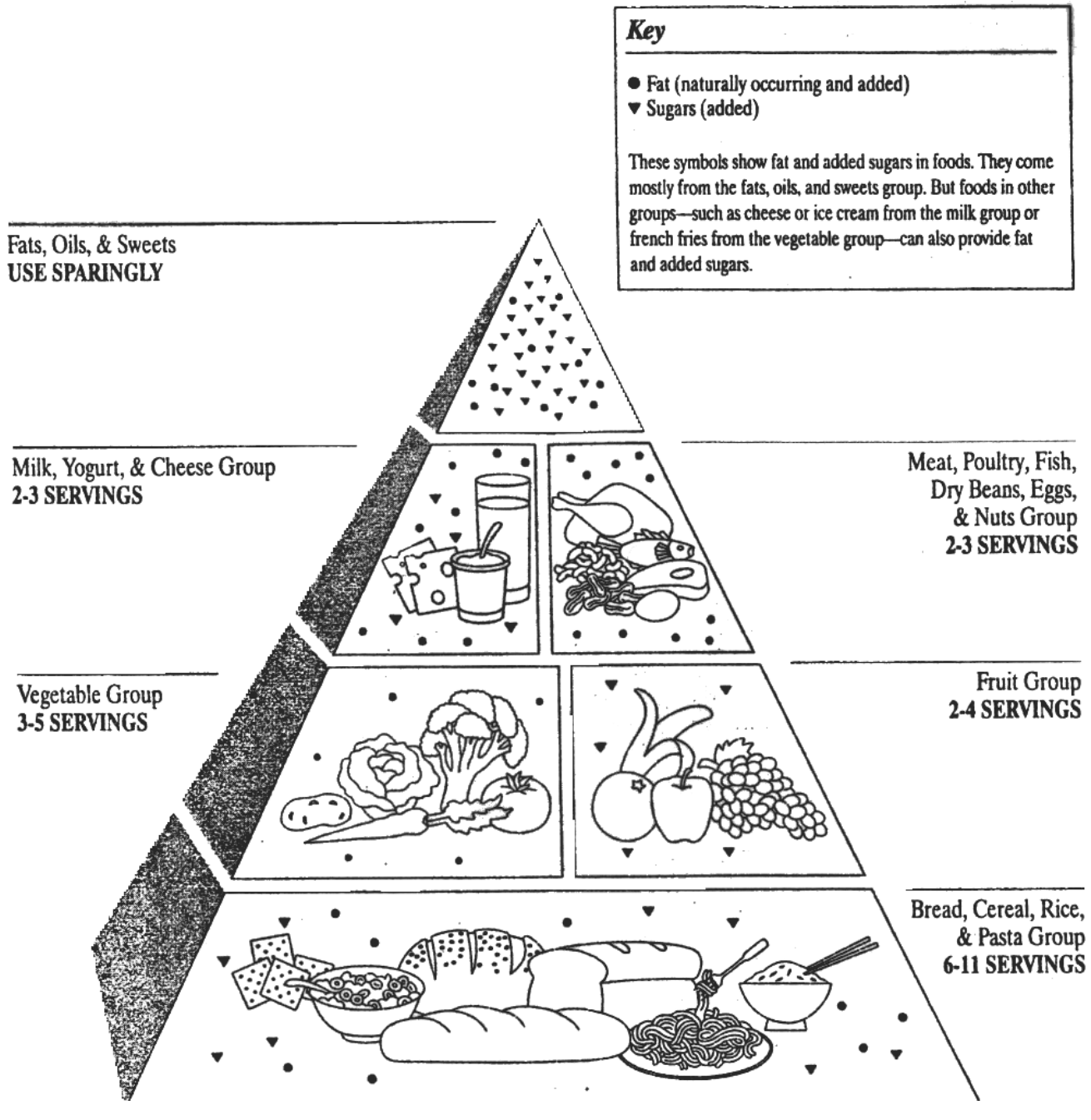
Tossed Salad

Milk

Cinnamon Applesauce

Name:

## The Food Guide Pyramid: A Guide to Daily Food Choices



Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture,  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

The Food Guide Pyramid is an outline of what to eat each day based on dietary guidelines. It's not a rigid prescription, but a general guide that lets you choose a healthful diet that's right for you.

The Pyramid calls for eating a variety of foods to get the nutrients you need each day and, at the same time, the right amount of calories to maintain healthy weight. It shows a range of servings for each major food group. The number of servings that are right for you depends on your age, size, sex and how active you are. Almost everyone should have at least the lowest number of servings in each range. For example, the bread group range is 6 – 11 servings. Many women and older adults would only need 6 servings. Children, teen girls, active women and most men need 9 servings, while teen boys and active men need 11 servings.

### **What equals one serving?**

#### Bread, Cereal,

#### Rice & Pasta

1 slice of bread  
1 ounce ready-to-eat cereal  
1/2 Cup cooked cereal, rice or pasta

#### Vegetables

1 Cup raw leafy vegetables  
1/2 Cup of cooked veggies,  
or raw, chopped veggies  
3/4 Cup of vegetable juice

#### Fruit

1 medium piece of fruit or melon wedge  
1/2 Cup chopped, cooked or canned fruit  
1/4 Cup dried fruit  
3/4 Cup of fruit juice (100% juice)

#### Meat, Poultry, Fish

#### Dry Beans, Eggs, Nuts

1 egg  
2 1/2 -3 ounces of cooked lean meat,  
poultry, or fish  
1/2 Cup cooked dry beans

#### Milk, Yogurt, Cheese

1 Cup of milk or yogurt  
1 1/2 ounces of natural cheese  
2 ounces of processed cheese

#### Fats, Oils & Sweets

Eat sparingly from this group

When you **plan meals** include a variety of foods from all five of the major food groups. For good health, you need them all – every day!

Name:

## BBQ Cups

### Ingredients:

- 1 pound lean ground beef
- 1/2 Cup barbeque sauce
- 1 can refrigerator biscuits (10 – 12 count)
- 3/4 Cup grated cheddar cheese



Sprinkle with cheese and bake.

### Method:

Yield: Serves 4 – 5

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Brown the **ground beef**, stirring to break up the meat. Cook meat thoroughly and then drain it in a colander set in the sink (or in another pan to catch the juices). Discard the juices.
3. Return the drained meat to the pan. Add **barbeque sauce**. Stir and set aside.
4. Place each **biscuit** in an ungreased muffin cup, pressing dough up the sides of the cups.
5. Spoon meat mixture into cups. Sprinkle with **cheese**.
6. Bake 12 minutes or until biscuits are golden brown.

**Variation:** Pizza cups: Substitute 1/2 Cup of pizza sauce for the barbecue sauce.

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[www.FourIngredientCookbook.com](http://www.FourIngredientCookbook.com)





We prepare Busy Day  
Chicken together.

## Busy Day Chicken

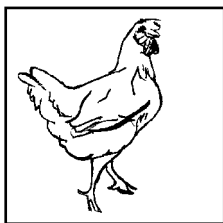
### Ingredients:

- 2 – 3 pounds of chicken pieces
- 1 Cup white long-grain rice, uncooked
- 1 pkg. dry onion soup mix (1 envelope from 2 oz. box)
- 1 can cream of celery soup (regular or reduced fat)

### Method:

Yield: Serves 4

1. Preheat the oven to 325 degrees. Grease a 9” x 13” pan or a large casserole dish.
2. Spread **uncooked rice** in casserole or pan.
3. Place **chicken** on top in a single layer.
4. Sprinkle with **dry onion soup**.
5. Mix **cream of celery soup** with 2 cans of **water**. Whisk to combine. Pour over all.
6. Cover and bake 1 – 1 ½ hours, until rice has absorbed the liquid and chicken is done.



Bone-in chicken pieces are done when the temperature, in the thickest part of the meat, reaches **170 degrees**.

If you do not have a meat thermometer, be sure juices run clear when the thickest chicken piece is cut.

### Notes:

Avoid quick-cooking rice as it is not needed in this type of recipe, and may turn “mushy” when it bakes this long.

Cream of chicken or cream of mushroom soup may be substituted for cream of celery, if desired.

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[www.FourIngredientCookbook.com](http://www.FourIngredientCookbook.com)

Name:

## Impossibly Easy Cheeseburger Pie

### Ingredients:

1 pound ground beef  
1 large onion, chopped (1 Cup)  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1 Cup shredded Cheddar cheese (4 ounces)  
½ Cup Original Bisquick® baking mix  
1 Cup milk  
2 eggs



### Method:

**Yield:** Serves 6

1. Heat oven to 400 degrees. Grease a 9-inch pie plate. Cook **beef** and **onion** until beef is brown; drain. Spread in pie plate; sprinkle with **salt** and **cheese**.
2. Stir **remaining ingredients** until blended. Pour into pie plate.
3. Bake about 25 minutes or until knife inserted in center comes out clean. Cool 5 minutes.

**Note:** Some people do not like onion. The amount can be decreased, or you may omit it.

High Altitude Directions (3500 – 6500 ft.): Bake 30-35 minutes.

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Recipe reprinted from [www.bisquick.com](http://www.bisquick.com). For more great recipes, visit [www.bettycrocker.com](http://www.bettycrocker.com).



The girls spread the soup over the meat as they prepare Tater Tot Casserole.

## **Tater Tot Casserole**

### **Ingredients:**

- 2 pounds extra lean ground beef
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup (regular or reduced-fat)
- 1 Cup grated cheddar cheese
- 1 (2 pound) package frozen tater tots

### **Method:**

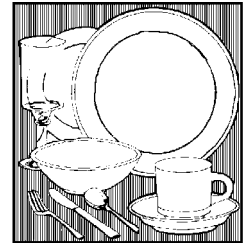
**Yield:** Serves 8

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Grease a 9" x 13" pan.
2. Pat the **ground beef** evenly in the bottom of the pan.
3. Spread **soup** (undiluted) over meat.
4. Sprinkle with **grated cheese**.
5. Top with **tater tots**.
6. Cover and bake 45 minutes. Uncover and bake 15 minutes longer.

**Note:** Any cream soup may be used instead of cream of mushroom. Cream of chicken soup is a delicious alternative.

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## *Extending the Lesson ... Table Setting and Table Manners*



A nicely set table enhances any meal. It need not be fancy, and expensive dishes are not required. Today meals are too often eaten on the run from fast food bags! Is it any wonder that children sometimes lack basic table manners and don't know how to set the table?

Give the girls a copy of "Table Setting Tips" Skill Page (next page) and read it together. Put out silverware and dishes and have the girls practice a basic table setting. If you have cloth napkins, napkin rings, china or fine silver, show it to the girls. It will help them feel more at ease when they encounter these things in a restaurant.

Talk to the girls about good table manners or etiquette. Ask them to describe some manners they already know. It is not necessary to memorize a long list of Do's and Don'ts. The best way to learn good manners is to practice them until they are second nature.

When you get right down to it, the basis for all good manners is love. In I Corinthians 13:4 & 5 we read: "Love is patient, love is kind. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking." (NIV) We show love for others by being polite to them and using good manners.

We all eat every day. Most of the time, we eat with other people. Explain to the girls that our behavior at the table should never draw attention to ourselves. It is difficult to enjoy a meal when someone is smacking their lips as they eat, or chewing food with their mouth open, or stuffing their mouth with food until they resemble a chipmunk! Swinging our leg, kicking the table, rocking back in our chair, or making noises – all of these things are distracting. We should be careful to avoid these annoying habits.

A good way to avoid bad habits is to be aware of how we look to others at the table. Girls need not be self conscious, but it is helpful to pay attention to these basics:

Hands and nails should be clean and washed just prior to eating.  
Speak softly and do not monopolize the conversation.  
Keep mealtime conversation as pleasant as possible; don't argue!  
Be courteous. Say "please" and "thank you".  
Chew with your mouth closed. Talk only after you have swallowed.  
Dress appropriately and wear clean clothes to the table.  
Learn to use utensils and serving pieces correctly.  
Be sure to thank the person who prepared the meal.

Mealtime can be pleasurable with an attractive table and manners to match!

Learn more about good manners in all types of settings from ~

**"A Little Book of  
Manners: Courtesy &  
Kindness for Young  
Ladies"  
by Emilie Barnes.**

Check your bookstore or go to:  
[www.emiliebarnes.com](http://www.emiliebarnes.com)

## Table Setting Tips

When you take the time to prepare a meal, you will want to serve it attractively. For most family meals, a simple, informal table setting is fine: A plate, glass, knife, fork, spoon and a napkin are all that is needed. For special occasions however, or when the various foods to be served cannot all fit on one plate, you may need to set out other dishes and utensils.

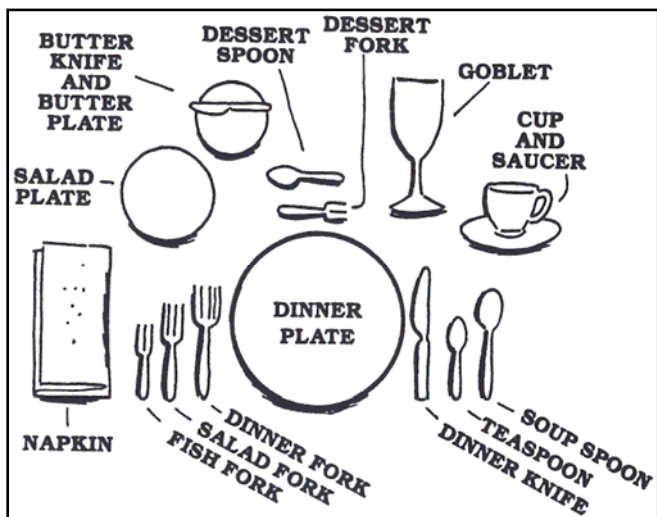
Restaurants often use more extensive table settings, so it's helpful to know how to use the various dishes and utensils. Study the two diagrams below and you will understand table settings whether at home or a restaurant.

### A Basic Table Setting

- |                 |                   |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| A. Salad Plate  | F. Knife          |
| B. Napkin       | G. Teaspoon       |
| C. Salad Fork   | H. Soup Spoon     |
| D. Dinner Fork  | I. Water Glass    |
| E. Dinner Plate | J. Cup and Saucer |



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### A Formal Table Setting

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#### What Do I Use First?

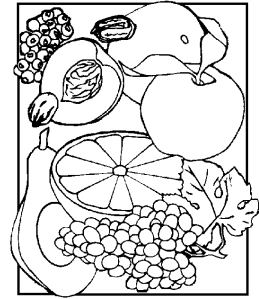
Silverware is used from the outside in. Start with the fork or spoon farthest from the plate. Any time you're not sure what to do, watch the hostess and follow her example. Oops! If you use the wrong utensil, just continue using it for that course.

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## *Lesson Ten - Fruit*

The Lord has blessed us with an incredible variety of tasty fruit. From sweet to tart, crisp to soft, some type of fruit will complement any meal or provide a nutritious snack. Most kids enjoy fruit and even very young children enjoy applesauce or other pureed fruit.

Fruit needs little preparation and can easily be added to a breakfast, lunch or dinner. We often eat fresh fruit raw. **Canned fruit** is a convenient alternative, especially when certain types of fruit are out of season. **Dried fruit** is lightweight and easy to carry and eat anywhere. Unsweetened **frozen fruit** can be added to fruit salad, used in baking, or to make fruit smoothies.



**Juice** is another way to add fruit into the diet, but be sure to buy 100% fruit juice. Much juice on store shelves today is mostly sugar water with little nutritional value.

### **In this lesson, the girls will learn to:**

- Identify and taste different types of fruit
- Cook a fruit dessert
- Thicken liquids with cornstarch
- Create fruit garnishes and centerpieces

### **Review:**

- Food Guide Pyramid – Fruit Group (Lesson 9)
- Safely using sharp utensils (Lesson 1)

### **Give each girl a copy of:**

- Before I Cook Fruit
- Fall Fruit Compote Recipe
- Special Touches with Fruit

Buy pieces of **different types of fruit** for the girls to sample. Choose some they may not have tried before: kiwi, cantaloupe, honeydew melon, nectarines. While most have eaten canned pineapple, they may never have tried a fresh one. Review how to safely use sharp knives and let the girls wash and slice the fruit and arrange it on a plate.

**Read together** the first page of “**Before I Cook Fruit**”. The USDA recommends that we eat 2-4 servings per day, or about 2 Cups. Ask the girls to keep track of the fruit they eat for one week. Unfortunately, few of us eat as much fruit as we should. We miss many important nutrients and fiber. Encourage the girls to choose fruit for a snack in place of candy or other sweets.

On the second page of “Before I Cook Fruit”, the girls are introduced to cooking fruit and thickening it with **cornstarch**. Show them a box of cornstarch and put some in a dish so they can see and touch it.

Read the section on cornstarch together. Show them how easily one teaspoon of cornstarch dissolves in a little cold water.

The **Fall Fruit Compote** is delicious made with pears or apples. Apples are readily available year-round, but pears are in season during the fall and winter. Almost everyone has eaten apples. If pears are available, have the girls try the recipe with pears. Or, make a batch with pears and another with apples. I found that some girls were unfamiliar with pears and enjoyed them once they cooked the dessert.

**Demonstrate the Compote recipe** showing the girls how to:

- safely peel and slice the fruit
- safely use your stove (or hot plate)
- add cornstarch to water and then the hot fruit mixture

Pears are usually shipped unripe to reduce bruising. **Buy the pears several days in advance** so they will ripen before cooking. To hasten ripening, place pears in a paper bag and close the bag. Fruit emits a gas that speeds up the ripening process when it is trapped in a bag. Purchase a couple **extra pears** in case any are bad inside.

This recipe serves two. Have the girls choose a partner and **work in pairs**. They can take turns peeling the fruit and stirring the mixture at the stove. The recipe can be doubled for larger groups if necessary. When I do not have room at the stove for all of the girls, I use an electric hot plate to add an extra cooking surface. Or, have the girls take turns at the stove. The fruit only takes a few minutes to cook.

There are **many different types of pears and apples**. For this recipe, you can use any type you prefer. Bartlett or Bosc pears are especially good for cooking. For apples, I prefer Red Delicious or Gala though there are many other great varieties. Granny Smith apples are very tart and I would not recommend them for this recipe unless you add more sugar.

An additional recipe, **Blueberry Breakfast Sauce**, is included to give the girls more practice using cornstarch. This delicious sauce is easy to prepare and could be used for another class activity combined with the pancake recipe in the Quick Breads chapter.

**Special Touches with Fruit** features fun-to-make fruit centerpieces and garnishes.

In **Extending the Lesson**, you’ll find four easy fruit recipes that are quick to prepare and can be done with young children.

## **What you'll need for this lesson:**

### **Ingredients for Fall Fruit Compote:** (for each pair of girls)

1 large ripe pear or apple  
2 T. sugar  
1/8 t. cinnamon  
2 t. cornstarch  
2 slices cinnamon bread  
Raisins, optional

### **Supplies:**

Stovetop burner or hot plate for each pair of girls  
Medium saucepan with lid  
Cutting Board  
Peeler  
Paring knife (steak knives will work)  
Measuring Cup for liquids  
Measuring Spoons  
Wooden Spoon or other large mixing spoon  
Fork (to test fruit for doneness)  
2 Small plates

### **For serving the dessert:**

Napkins  
Forks or spoons  
Glasses or cups  
Milk or juice to drink

### **For Fruit Centerpieces & Garnishes**

Fruit of your choice  
Toothpicks  
Paring knives  
Cutting Boards  
Plates, platters or cake plates (for centerpieces)  
Small glasses or goblets, optional

### **For frosted fruit:**

Grapes, strawberries, fresh cranberries, fresh blueberries  
Corn syrup  
White Sugar  
Zipper plastic bags – Sandwich size  
Pastry Brushes  
Waxed Paper



## Special Touches with Fruit



You can create beautiful **centerpieces and table décor** with colorful fruit! To make the candleholders in this centerpiece, cut a thin slice off one end of a lemon or lime. Use a paring knife to carve out some of the flesh inside and insert a candle. Insert a toothpick in the bottom of the fruit and press into an apple. Cut a thin slice off the bottom of the apple so it stands straight. Adults should light candles and supervise closely.

The lime on the right was simply set into a small goblet filled with fresh cranberries. The lime in the front of the centerpiece sits alone with a tea light inserted into it. In the back, a small wine glass was filled with cranberries and a curled piece of orange rind added for interest. Everything was arranged on a cake plate covered with parsley and dotted with more fresh cranberries. Experiment with whatever fruits are in season. Vary the height of each for added interest.



These cute **citrus critters** can be made in a minute. Cut a thin slice off one side of each lime so it rests flat on the table. The stem end is the mouth. For eyes, insert half a toothpick a short way into the lime and then press a fresh cranberry on the other end of the toothpick. A meat skewer can be used to more easily make a hole for the toothpick. Lemons or other types of fruit can be used, and whole cloves can become eyes. Critters can be grouped on a plate, or use a small piece of waxed paper under each to keep the fruit juice from leaking onto a table.



Cut a slit in the top to create cute **place card holders**. Cut index cards, write the names on them, and insert into fruit just before needed. The cards will absorb some fruit juice, but they can be laminated or covered with clear contact paper to prevent that, if desired.

**Frosted fruit** is an attractive garnish that is easy to make. Brush grapes, strawberries, or other fruit with light corn syrup, then roll in granulated sugar. Put the sugar in zippered sandwich bags to make clean-up easier. Set the frosted fruit on waxed paper and refrigerate until ready to use. The fruit adds color to dinner plates and looks nice on cakes and pies.



The girls use pastry brushes to brush corn syrup on fruit.

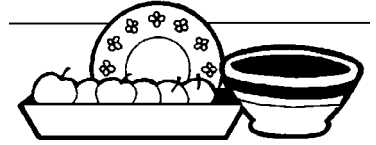


Dipping the fruit in sugar.

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Name:

## *Before I Cook Fruit*

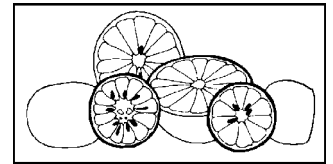


In **Genesis 1:29** God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.” (NIV) The Lord created such a wide variety of fruit for us to enjoy and to nourish our bodies. Like vegetables, fruits contain vitamins, minerals and fiber. The Food Guide Pyramid recommends we eat 2 – 4 servings, or about **2 Cups of fruit every day**.

**One serving** = 1 medium piece of raw fruit -or-  
½ Cup of chopped, canned or cooked fruit -or-  
¾ Cup of fruit juice (i.e. 100% fruit juice)

**Fruit develops** from the flower of a plant. Many fruits grow on trees: bananas, apples, pears and citrus fruit are just a few. Blueberries grow on bushes or small trees. Melons, grapes and tomatoes grow on vines. Yes, tomatoes are considered a fruit.

Like vegetables, fruits are **most nutritious when eaten raw**. Many vitamins are found in the skin, so it’s best, when possible, to eat fruit with the skin. Of course, bananas, melons and citrus fruit must be peeled first. Sometimes, when we cook fruit to make pie or other desserts, we peel it because the skin does not soften as much as the fleshy part of the fruit.



Citrus fruits include oranges, lemons, limes, grapefruit and tangerines.

Whether you eat it raw or plan to cook it, **wash all fruit thoroughly**, rinsing each piece under running water. Rub it with your hands or a soft brush to remove any dirt. Place berries and other small fruit into a colander and then rinse them.

Often fruit is shipped to grocery stores before it is ripe. Many fruits like pears, peaches and plums ship better when they are hard and unripe. **To ripen fruit, store** it at room temperature. To speed up the ripening process, put fruit inside a paper bag and close the bag. Be sure to look inside the bag every day and check the fruit as it will ripen quickly. Once ripe, store the fruit in the refrigerator unless you will eat it right away.

Apples, berries, cherries and citrus fruit should be put in the refrigerator when you bring them home from the store. Most

refrigerators have produce bins that help keep the humidity level just right for fresh fruit and vegetables. Be careful not to store onions or strong-smelling vegetables with the fruit! The fruit may pick up those flavors.

**Fruit can be cooked** in a variety of ways. Apple pie is a favorite American dessert. Peach cobbler, Blueberry Buckle, Banana Bread, Lemon Meringue Pie, Apple Cake, Strawberry Jam – we use fruit in so many different ways. What are some of your favorite fruit recipes?

A **compote** is fruit cooked in a sugar syrup. It may be served by itself, or poured over cake or bread.



Stir cornstarch into cold water before adding it to the hot fruit mixture.

Often, when we make a pie, compote, or fruit crisp, we need to **thicken the fruit**. Many fruits are juicy, and unless we add something to thicken that juice, our dessert would be runny.

**Flour and cornstarch** are two of the most common thickeners. All-purpose flour is ground from wheat. **Cornstarch** is made by extracting starch from the corn kernel. Flour or cornstarch thicken sauces, pudding, gravy, and pies.

There are some **important differences between flour and cornstarch** that you need to remember when cooking. Cornstarch is twice as strong as flour. If a recipe calls for 2 Tablespoons of flour to thicken a sauce, you would only need 1 Tablespoon of cornstarch.

Liquids thickened with cornstarch have a brighter, more translucent appearance than those thickened with flour. That is especially attractive in fruit sauces and desserts.

Always **mix cornstarch in a cool liquid first**; it will dissolve more easily. Then heat it or add it to a hot mixture.

**Constantly stir** cornstarch mixture until it comes to a boil, and then boil one minute. If you heat the mixture in the microwave, you can stir just a few times. Heat on High until the mixture comes to a boil. Then boil gently one minute. Be careful! Thickened mixtures will be very hot.

Recipes usually tell how much cornstarch to use. If not, here is a good **rule of thumb** to remember:

To make a medium thick sauce,  
Use **1 Tablespoon of cornstarch** per cup of liquid to be thickened.

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Name:

## Fall Fruit Compote

### Ingredients:

- 1 large ripe pear or apple, peeled & thinly sliced
- 3/4 Cup water, divided
- 2 Tablespoons sugar
- 1 Tablespoon raisins, optional
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons cornstarch
- 2 slices cinnamon bread

### Method:

Yield: 2 servings

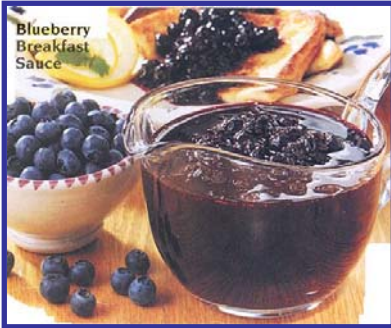
1. In a medium saucepan, combine the **pear or apple slices** with 1/2 Cup of water.
2. Add **sugar** and **cinnamon**. Add **raisins**, if desired. Stir.
3. Cover and cook over medium heat 6-8 minutes, or until fruit is tender. You may need to turn the heat down to maintain a gentle simmer.
4. Carefully remove the lid; open it so the steam escapes away from you. Test fruit with a fork. When the fruit is soft, turn off the heat.
5. Stir the **cornstarch** into the remaining 1/4 Cup water until smooth. Add to the fruit mixture.
6. Over low heat, bring to a gentle boil, stirring constantly. Cook and stir 1 minute or until thickened. Be sure to turn off the burner when you are done.
7. Spoon the cooked fruit over the slices of **cinnamon bread**. The bread may be toasted if you wish.

### Variations:

- This dessert could also be made with peaches.
- Instead of raisins, try craisins (dried cranberries) or golden raisins.
- Chopped pecans or other nuts can be sprinkled on top for added crunch.
- Canned fruit may be used; cut the cooking time down to just 1-2 minutes.



The girls take turns peeling a pear.



## Blueberry Breakfast Sauce

### Ingredients:

- 1/2 Cup sugar
- 1 Tablespoon cornstarch
- 1/3 Cup water
- 2 Cups fresh or frozen blueberries

### Method:

Yield: About 2 Cups

1. In a 2-quart saucepan, combine **sugar** and **cornstarch**.
2. Gradually stir in **water**.
3. Add **blueberries**.
4. Over medium heat, bring to a boil, stirring constantly.
5. Boil for 1 minute. Continue to stir.
6. Serve warm or cold over French toast, pancakes, or waffles. It's good over ice cream, too!

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## *Extending The Lesson ... Easy Fruit Fun*

Here are some easy to prepare fruit recipes that should entice even finicky eaters to eat more fruit!

### **Puppy Dog Salad**

**Ingredients:**

- 1 lettuce leaf
- 1 canned pear half
- 1 prune half
- 2 mandarin orange segments
- 1 red maraschino cherry
- 1 raisin

**Method:**

**Yield:** 1 serving

Place lettuce on a salad plate; place pear cut side down over lettuce. For ear, place the prune on the wide end of the pear. Place orange segments along bottom for collar. Place cherry at the narrow end of pear for nose. Add raisin for the eye.



### **Mallow Fruit Cups**

**Ingredients:**

- 1 can (15 ounces) fruit cocktail, drained
- 1 medium tart apple, diced
- 1/2 Cup miniature marshmallows
- 1/2 Cup whipped topping

**Method:**

**Yield:** 4-6 servings

In a bowl, combine all ingredients. Cover and refrigerate until serving.

All recipes in this section:

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## Banana-Pear Caterpillar

### Ingredients:

1 lettuce leaf  
1 medium banana, peeled  
1/2 red pear, cored and cut into 1/4-inch slices  
2 raisins

### Method:

**Yield:** 1 serving

Place lettuce on a salad plate; top with the banana. Cut 1/4-inch V-shaped slices halfway through the banana, spacing cuts 1 inch apart. Place a pear slice, peel side up, in each cut. For eyes, gently press raisins into one end of banana. Serve immediately.



## Apple-Raisin Ladybug

### Ingredients:

2 lettuce or kale leaves  
1 medium Red Delicious apple, cored and quartered  
2 teaspoons creamy peanut butter  
2 Tablespoons raisins  
5 red grapes

### Method:

**Yield:** 2 servings

Place lettuce leaves on two salad plates. Arrange two apple quarters, peel side up, on the lettuce. Use dabs of peanut butter to place raisins in the space between apple quarters. Place one grape at the stem end of apple for head. For legs, cut the remaining grapes lengthwise into 4 pieces; place 3 on each side of ladybugs. Place small dabs of peanut butter on remaining raisins; gently press onto apples for spots.

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## *Lesson Eleven - Vegetables*

Vegetables are one of God's blessings to man, providing vitamins, minerals and fiber essential to good health. Unfortunately, for many children, vegetables are their least favorite food. But, with the tasty recipes in this section, even the most finicky eater should find something they enjoy.

Children easily adopt the attitudes of the adults around them. If you present this lesson in a positive, fun way, the girls will be more willing to eat vegetables. I find that when they have prepared the recipe themselves, they are willing to taste it, and most are pleasantly surprised at just how much they enjoy vegetables.

### **In this lesson, the girls will learn to:**

- Identify different vegetables & different ways to cut them
- Cook vegetables in a variety of ways
- Create vegetable "critter" centerpieces

### **Review**

- Food Guide Pyramid – Vegetable Group (Lesson 9)
- Kitchen Safety – Using Sharp Utensils (Lesson 1)

### **Give each girl a copy of:**

- Before I Cook Vegetables
- Fun with Veggies!
- Vegetable Recipes

**Read through the entire lesson** and decide which recipes the girls will prepare. The squash casserole needs to bake 30 minutes, but the other two recipes only need about 10 minutes, or less, to cook. I encourage you to try at least two of the recipes, and do all three, if possible. I divided my class into three groups and each made a different recipe, then we tasted them all.

The important **focus of this lesson** is to acquaint girls with different vegetables, how they taste, and various ways to prepare them. I discovered that some girls had never peeled a potato; they were familiar only with instant potatoes. Some had tasted only canned vegetables and they enjoyed the raw veggies we prepared.

If possible, prepare a colorful raw **vegetable platter** with the girls. Let them arrange carrot and celery sticks, cucumber slices, green, red and yellow bell pepper slices, broccoli and cauliflower florets. Ranch dressing makes a popular dip and many girls will try vegetables if they can dip them in something they like.



"How did you make that cute duck?"  
asks one of the fathers!

Veggies can be fun, as well as  
nutritious!



As much as your budget will allow, purchase some other less familiar vegetables and show them to the girls. Eggplant, scallions, beets, kale, artichokes, various types of squash – these are just a few that should be readily available. Consider a field trip to the produce section of a large grocery store, or to a farmer’s market or green grocer. So many children today grow up eating only highly processed foods, and it’s a real education for them to see what the raw product looks like.

Read “**Before I Cook Vegetables**” together. In the kitchen, **demonstrate** how to safely peel and slice vegetables. While a chef can wield a big chef’s knife to slice veggies in a flash, start the girls out with a smaller knife. A paring knife is fine, and I found my steak knives worked well. If time permits, do the “Cut it Up!” activity in the Extending the Lesson section.



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The girls’ favorite activity was “**Fun with Veggies**”. They loved making squash ducks and other critters. Allow plenty of time for this part of the lesson! Radish flowers, carrot tulips, an eggplant vase—you’ll find ideas for these and more in books on garnishing. “Play with Your Food” has a wealth of cute ideas using vegetables and fruit. Check your library, local bookstore or Jessica’s Biscuit – a great place for discount cookbooks, [www.ecookbooks.com](http://www.ecookbooks.com).

**What you’ll need for this lesson:**

**Ingredients:** Follow the ingredient list for each recipe you choose.

**Supplies:**

**For Potato Chip Casserole:**

- 8”-9” pan or casserole dish
- Microwave-safe dish with cover to partially cook squash
- Large Spoon
- Zipper freezer bag (to crush the potato chips)
- Measuring Cup
- Rolling Pin (to crush the chips, or use hands)
- Rubber spatula (for inside of soup can)

**For Peachy Carrots:**

- Microwave-safe dish with cover, 2-3 quart size
- Peeler
- Measuring Cup
- Measuring Spoons
- Large Mixing Spoon

**For Green Beans Italiano:**

- 2-quart microwave-safe casserole with cover
- Measuring Cup
- Measuring Spoons
- Large Mixing Spoon

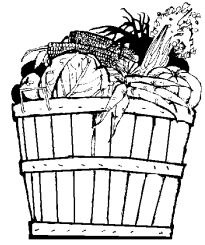
**For all veggie recipes,  
you will need:**

- Cutting boards
- Paring knives or steak knives
- Hot pads
- Fork to test for doneness

Name:

## *Before I Cook Vegetables*

“Vegetables are good for you.” I’m sure you’ve heard that many times. But why are they so good for us? God has created a great variety of vegetables in an array of colors. Veggies are loaded with vitamins, minerals and fiber, which help keep us healthy. Researchers have even found substances in vegetables that they believe help protect us from cancer and other diseases.



Consider the many types of vegetables:

- Leafy: Different kinds of lettuce, spinach, greens, cabbage
- Root: Carrots, beets, onions, potatoes, sweet potatoes, turnips, radishes
- Legumes: Black-eyed peas, lentils, garbanzo beans, black beans, peanuts
- Stalk: Celery, broccoli, bamboo shoots
- Vegetables that develop from flowers: Tomatoes, corn, cucumbers, eggplant, okra, squash
- Others: Mushrooms, artichokes, Brussels sprouts

*Your Notes*

Fresh, **raw vegetables** provide us with the most nutrients. To prepare them, you only need to wash them thoroughly. Place small veggies in a colander and run cold water over them. Larger vegetables should be gently scrubbed under running water with a vegetable brush. Raw veggies, arranged attractively on a plate, make a colorful centerpiece. You can add a dish of your favorite salad dressing for a dip.

Vegetables can also be purchased **frozen** or **canned**. Canned vegetables have already been cooked and only need to be heated. Generally, they are not as crisp or colorful as fresh or frozen veggies. Most contain a lot of salt. Choose low salt varieties or, use fresh or frozen vegetables. **Frozen** vegetables are as colorful as fresh veggies. They will keep 8 – 12 months when stored at 0 degrees F. or lower, but are best if used within a few months to avoid freezer burn.

**The way we cook vegetables** is very important. Valuable nutrients are lost by improper cooking. Also, their color fades and veggies turn mushy when overcooked. Fresh and frozen vegetables retain more nutrients when cooked just to the “**crisp-tender**” stage – just enough to be tender but still a little crispy.

The longer vegetables are cooked, the more nutrients are destroyed. And, the more liquid they are cooked in, the more nutrients are lost into the water. A good **rule of thumb for cooking vegetables** is: Cook them in as little liquid and for as short a time as possible.

**Microwave cooking** is one of the best ways to cook vegetables because little water is needed and they can be cooked quickly. Put veggies in a microwave-safe container with just 2 – 3 Tablespoons of water. Cover and microwave on High 2 - 3 minutes. Stir and microwave 1 - 2 more minutes, if needed. Keep covered for 5 minutes. Vegetables continue cooking from the steam inside the dish. Open carefully – the steam will be hot! Check with a fork.

**Steaming** is also a good way to cook vegetables. You will need a steamer basket set inside a pan with a cover. Water is added in the bottom of the pan, where it doesn't touch the vegetables. As the water simmers, the steam cooks the vegetables. This method takes longer than the microwave and the cooking time will vary depending on the type and size of the veggies.

**Boiling** is probably the most common method of cooking vegetables. It requires the most liquid and it's easy to overcook the veggies. Use only enough water to barely cover the veggies, and simmer just until they are crisp-tender.

**Oven roasting** works especially well with root vegetables like potatoes and carrots. Often, when cooking a roast, we put vegetables in the roasting pan, but they can be roasted separately. Cut the vegetables into wedges or slices, coat with a little oil and bake at 400 degrees till crisp-tender. For great flavor, sprinkle an herb seasoning mixture on the veggies before baking. This is especially tasty on zucchini and yellow squash.

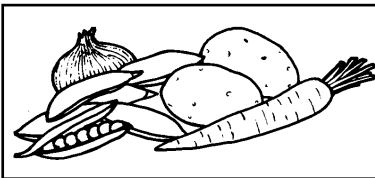
Vegetables can be **grilled** on the barbecue, with oil and seasoning as used in oven roasting. Wrap veggies in foil, place on kabob skewers, or cook on a special barbecue rack or basket.

Unused cooked vegetables can be refrigerated up to 3 days. Store them in a covered plastic or glass container.

Whether you cook them or eat them raw, the **Food Guide Pyramid recommends we eat 3 – 5 servings of vegetables** every day.

**One serving equals:**

- 1 Cup raw leafy, vegetables
- 1/2 Cup of cooked or chopped raw veggies
- 3/4 Cup vegetable juice



Look for a variety of vegetable recipes in cookbooks. Don't forget, many casseroles contain veggies. You may find new recipes that will soon become your favorite way of eating your vegetables every day!

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Name:

## Peachy Carrots

### Ingredients:

1 pound fresh carrots, peeled and sliced  
1/3 Cup peach preserves  
1 Tablespoon margarine, melted  
Pinch of salt, optional



The girls slice carrots as they prepare Peachy Carrots.

### Method:

Yield: Serves 6

1. Cook the **carrots**. The easiest way is to microwave them on High in a covered, microwave-safe dish for 4-5 minutes or until fork tender. **Watch out for steam** when you uncover the dish!
2. Combine **cooked carrots** with **peach preserves** and **margarine**. Stir well to thoroughly coat the carrots. Add **salt**, if desired and stir.
3. Cook on the stovetop over low heat until carrots are heated thoroughly. Or, heat one minute in the microwave on High.

**Note:** Garnish with a few sprigs of parsley to add color.

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## Green Beans Italiano

### Ingredients:

- 1 (16 oz.) bag frozen green beans
- 1/4 Cup water
- 1 (2 oz.) jar chopped pimiento, drained
- 1/4 Cup chopped pepperoni
- 1 Tablespoon olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder, optional

### Method:

Yield: Serves 4 – 6

1. In a 2 qt. microwave-safe casserole, combine **green beans** and **water**. Cover.
2. Microwave on High 7-8 minutes or till crisp-tender. Halfway through the cooking time, stir once.
3. Drain water carefully; it will be hot and steamy! Open the dish so the steam escapes away from you.
4. Add **all remaining ingredients**. Stir well.
5. Microwave on High 1-2 minutes or until heated through. Test with a fork for doneness.

### Notes:

- **Pimiento** is a sweet-flavored type of a pepper; it is not spicy. It is used in many recipes to add color.
- Any mild oil may be used if you do not have **olive oil** on hand. However, olive oil lends a traditional Italian flavor.

Name:

## Potato Chip Squash Casserole

### Ingredients:

- 4 – 6 medium yellow squash, washed
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup (regular or reduced fat)
- 1 Cup crushed potato chips, Ranch flavor \*\*
- 1 Cup grated American cheese (regular or reduced fat)



With crunchy potato chips and a cheesy topping, this casserole was a hit!

### Method:

Yield: 4 - 5 servings

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Grease a 2-3 qt. casserole or 9" pan.
2. On a cutting board, slice the **squash** into slices about 1/4 – 1/2" thick.
3. Partially cook the **squash** until it's slightly soft. The easiest way is to microwave the squash with 2T. water, covered in a microwave-safe dish for about 4-5 minutes. Let sit, covered, for 3-4 minutes.
4. In the greased casserole, use a big spoon to layer half of the **squash, soup (undiluted)**, and **crushed potato chips**. Be careful; the squash will be hot!
5. Repeat the layer and top with **grated cheese**.
6. Bake 30 minutes, uncovered, or until bubbly.

\*\*You can use plain **potato chips**, or any other flavor you prefer. To crush, put potato chips into a zipper freezer bag. Seal and crush with hands or a rolling pin.

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## **Fun with Veggies!**



Make a cute duck or pelican with yellow squash and carrots!

Be **very** careful when working with knives and other sharp tools!

Not only are vegetables good for you, but they're also fun to use for centerpieces and garnishes. A garnish is a decorative touch and can be as simple as a sprig of parsley to add color to a plate, or as elaborate as carved vegetables or fruit.

To make a squash duck or pelican, you will need:  
Yellow crookneck squash, a large carrot, whole cloves  
Paring knife, cutting board, toothpicks

Choose firm yellow squash that are as free from blemishes as possible. Look for squash with a bend in the neck. You can use different sizes and make a duck family if you wish.

Peel the carrot. Cut off 3" of the largest end of the carrot, then cut this piece into thick rectangular slices. With the point of a small knife, cut wedges out of one piece of carrot to make it look like the duck's feet.

Wash and dry the squash. Slice off about 1/4" slice from the large end of the squash so it will have a flat end to stand on.

On each side of the squash, slice off a thin oval piece about 2" long for the wings. Cut a few notches out of the ends for the "feathers".

Stick a toothpick into the carrot "foot"; then stick the other end of the toothpick into the bottom of the duck so it will stand. You may have to carve the carrot a little more to make it flat enough to stand.

Cut off 1-2" of the small end of a carrot and carve it to a point to look like a duckbill. Notch the middle to create the mouth. For the pelican, cut a flat piece of carrot to fit the curve of the squash and round off the bottom end to form the "bill". Stick a toothpick into the carrot first, then into the squash. You may break the toothpick in half if it's too long.

With half a toothpick, insert the wings. Press cloves in for eyes.



Radish mouse used with permission  
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### *Radish Mice*

You will need radishes that still have the root attached (this is the tail). Wash the radishes gently. Cut off a thin slice on one side so the radish can rest on this end. Keep the piece you cut off. Cut it in half and make 2 little ears. On each side of the top of the radish, cut 2 small slits.

Put the ears into the slits. With the point of a small knife, make 2 tiny indentations for the eyes. This may be enough, or you can press a peppercorn or whole clove into each hole.

## Extending The Lesson ... Cut It Up!

**Dice, chop, mince, cube...** There are many ways to cut up food. These terms, and others, are often encountered when preparing fresh vegetables, and it is important for the girls to know what they mean.

Use a potato or other easy-to-cut vegetable to demonstrate some common cooking terms the girls need to learn. Peel the potato, then cut it in half. Use a cutting board. We'll work from largest to smallest size pieces.

### With one half of the potato do the following:

**Slice** two pieces about ¼" **thick**. Sliced potatoes are used in au gratin and scalloped potato recipes. Set slices aside.

**Cube** the rest of the piece of the potato. Cubed pieces are usually about ½" on all sides.

**Dice** the cubed pieces. Diced pieces are about ¼" on each side.

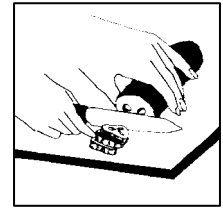
**Mince** the diced pieces by chopping them until they are tiny. They will be irregular in shape. Most often, we use minced garlic or onion, but the potato will be more pleasant to cut! A garlic press can be used to mince garlic.

### With the other half of the potato, slice two slices, then:

**Julienne** the slices. With one slice on top of the other, cut the potato into thin matchsticks, about 2-3" **long** and ¼" **thick**. Fine restaurants often serve julienne cut vegetables.

**Chop** the remaining piece of potato. When a recipe calls for chopped ingredients, it refers to medium-sized pieces of irregular shape.

**Give each girl a potato to peel and cut.** Be sure to stress the safe way to use a knife: cut away from yourself on a clean cutting board. Many girls have never used a potato peeler. Show them how to peel away from themselves and watch the fingers holding the potato! A large knife is difficult for the girls to control and use safely. Start them out with a steak knife or paring knife. You may need to cut the potato in half, or into manageable pieces for them, then let them cube, dice, and mince.



Slice vegetables on a cutting board.





## *Lesson Twelve - Cookies and Congratulations!*

Congratulations! You and the girls you teach have learned a lot about cooking and baking. This cookie lesson may be used at any time, but I've left it for the end because it's a great way to celebrate all of the skills your group has learned.



The girls enjoy baking different types of cookies.

Everyone loves fresh-baked cookies. No doubt you have some favorite cookie recipes. I hope you'll use them and encourage the girls to bring their favorite cookie recipes to share with everyone. Make copies of the recipes and put them together in a little booklet. This would make a nice keepsake for the girls, and family and friends would enjoy a copy too!

### **In this lesson, the girls will learn:**

- Different ways cookies can be made
- How to make one or more types of cookies

### **Review:**

- Creaming butter (Lesson 3)
- Correctly measuring flour (Lessons 2 & 3)

### **Give each girl a copy of:**

- Before I Bake Cookies
- FCH Celebration Cookies Recipe
- Certificate of Achievement (See Appendix C)

Read **“Before I Bake Cookies”** with the girls. Talk about the many different ways of making cookies. Look through cookbooks with the girls. Encourage them to bring one from home. Many cookbooks categorize cookies by the preparation method - drop cookies, bar cookies, rolled cookies, and others.

In a hurry? Bar cookies are the quickest to make. Brownies are a popular type of bar cookie and you'll find recipes for others in most cookbooks.

I encourage you to try some of the other types of cookies. In the **“Extending the Lesson”** section, you'll find a versatile butter cookie recipe that can be used for rolled cookies (with cookie cutters), spritz cookies (with a cookie gun), or refrigerator cookies. Each of these could be taught in separate lessons. Since this dough requires varying times to chill, you may need to make a batch of dough ahead of time for the girls to bake in class.

### **Let's Celebrate!**

Cookies are always fun to make! This is a good end-of-the-year lesson to celebrate the girls' accomplishments. At the end of our school year in May, I like to plan a special activity such as this one, and present each girl with a **certificate**. Sample certificates are included (see Appendix) for you to copy for each girl. Just add their name and date. Print it on a pretty paper or certificate form and make a special presentation to each girl. Take pictures and celebrate!

**Freezer bags** are heavier than food storage bags. They are “vapor proof” – odors do not seep through the plastic. Squeeze the air out as you seal the bag. To remove more air, open one corner, insert a straw and suck out the air. Air coming in contact with food causes **freezer burn**. Proper packaging can prevent this.

Christmas time is the busiest cookie baking season of the year. Cookies make a nice gift and one the girls can make themselves. **Streamline** your cookie making by mixing many batches on one day and **freezing or refrigerating dough**. Raw dough may be frozen up to 6 months or kept in the refrigerator 1-2 weeks. Tightly wrap dough in waxed paper, plastic wrap or foil, then place in a **freezer bag**, squeeze out the air and seal. It’s better to wrap dough in several smaller batches that will thaw faster than in one large batch.

Thaw the dough and you’re ready for a baking day. Using 4-6 cookie sheets will speed up the process. While one batch is baking, you can place dough on the other cookie sheets. Be sure the cookie sheets are cool; putting dough on warm pans will cause the dough to spread before baking and may ruin your cookies.

Here’s a **tip to cool your cookie sheets quickly**. Put several bath towels in the freezer an hour or so before baking. When the first batch of cookies comes out of the oven, remove them from the cookie sheet. Lay a folded cold towel on the counter and place the cookie sheet on top. The cold towel will cool the pan in a hurry, and protect your countertop at the same time!

**Cookies cool best** on a wire rack. These are inexpensive and a worthwhile investment. When baking many batches, rotate cool cookies off the racks and onto paper towels or into the cookie jar!

**Store** crisp cookies in containers with loose fitting lids, such as glass cookie jars. My grandma used to bake thousands of cookies every Christmas and stored crisp cookies in covered roasting pans and stock pots! That works well, too. Store moist, chewy cookies in plastic containers with tight fitting lids. A slice of apple can be added to help keep the cookies moist.

Baked cookies may be kept frozen up to one year. Wrap tightly in heavy-duty foil or store in freezer bags.

The recipe for **FCH Celebration Cookies** is an easy-to-make drop cookie that can be made with any combination of chips, candies and nuts. The dough may be divided and one batch baked with chips, another with candy bits, or your favorite combination.

Enjoy this recipe – and your accomplishments in Future Christian Homemakers – with this “Celebration Cookie”!

**What you'll need for this lesson:**

**Ingredients for FCH Celebration Cookies:**

2 1/2 Cups All-Purpose flour  
Baking soda  
Salt  
1 Cup butter (2 sticks)  
1/2 Cup sugar  
1 Cup brown sugar (light or dark)  
2 eggs  
vanilla  
Chocolate chips, M & M's, or other stir-ins (2 Cups)  
1 Cup chopped nuts, optional

**Supplies:**

Medium sized bowl for dry ingredients  
Large Mixing bowl  
Set of graduated measuring cups for dry ingredients  
Measuring Spoons  
Spatula  
Mixing Spoon  
Small bowl (crack the egg into it before adding to dough)  
Electric Mixer (Portable or stand mixer)  
Cookie sheets (at least 2)  
Cooling racks  
Hot Pads  
Timer

Certificates (See Appendix C or create your own)

**To serve:**

Napkins  
Small plates (optional)  
Milk or juice to drink  
Glasses or paper cups



Name:

## *Before I Bake Cookies*

Smelling the aroma of fresh-baked cookies as I walked into my grandma's house is one of my fondest childhood memories. Each October my grandmother began baking thousands of cookies for Christmas. She baked every conceivable type of cookie, and plenty of each.

From the time I was a toddler, my grandma put dough into my hands and taught me how to roll it out and use cookie cutters to create reindeer and snowmen, Santas and stars. For me, the best part was decorating and then eating them!

Whether you make cut-out cookies or chocolate chip, spritz or bar cookies, nothing beats a glass of milk and fresh-baked cookies warm from the oven.

The word "cookie" comes from the Dutch word "**koekje**" or "**little cake**". Many of the same ingredients are used in both cookies and cakes, but cookies have few liquid ingredients and bake much more quickly. Mixing techniques are very similar also. Usually you will cream butter or shortening first, add sugar and eggs, then add the dry ingredients.

Let's look at the different types of cookies and how each is made. **Drop cookies**, such as chocolate chip and oatmeal cookies, are the most common type of cookie. A small amount of dough is dropped from a spoon onto a cookie sheet and then baked. The cookies spread out and flatten somewhat as they bake.

**Bar cookies**, such as brownies, have fairly thick dough that is spread into a pan, baked and then cut into squares. This is a great way to make many cookies quickly.

Peanut Butter cookies and Pecan Crescents are examples of **molded cookies**. Each cookie is shaped, or molded, by hand. They may be simply rolled into balls and then flattened with a fork or a cookie stamp, or they may be shaped into logs, crescents or other shapes.

**Pressed or Spritz cookies** are made using a cookie gun or a pastry bag. Soft cookie dough is put into the gun (or pastry bag), and then pressed through a specially shaped plate in the end of the cookie gun. The plates can be changed to create different shapes. You must use a recipe designed for a cookie press or cookie gun so that the dough is the right consistency. This is a great way to make hundreds of small cookies quickly.



The girls use a decorator's bag to ice their cookies.



Three types of cookie guns: an electric, a manual trigger type, and an old-fashioned screw type. Each pushes the dough down the tube through the opening in the end & onto the cookie sheet.

**Refrigerator cookies** are sometimes still called **icebox cookies** because dough is rolled into a long roll, then chilled in the refrigerator (once called the icebox). The chilled dough is then sliced and baked. This is a great way to make lots of cookies quickly. Slice-and-bake cookie dough can be purchased in the grocery store, ready for baking. It's very convenient, but it is cheaper to mix your own dough and roll it up in waxed paper to make your own tubes or logs of cookie dough.

**Rolled cookies** are more time-consuming to prepare but they are especially popular at holidays. A basic butter dough is chilled, and then rolled out with a rolling pin on a floured surface. Shapes are cut out with cookies cutters. They can be sprinkled with colored sugar before baking, or frosted and decorated after baking.

Whatever type of cookies you make, it is important to use **the right ingredients**. **Flour for cookie making** is usually All-Purpose flour. Do not use self-rising flour unless the recipe calls for it. Self-rising flour already has baking soda or other leaveners added to it. Be sure to read the label carefully when purchasing flour. You can use bleached or unbleached All-Purpose flour. Most people cannot tell the difference but some prefer flour, such as King Arthur flour, that has not been chemically treated. Cake flour is not well-suited for cookie making as it is made from soft wheat that makes tender cakes, but crumbly cookies.

**Butter**, either salted or unsalted, is always an excellent choice for cookies. It can be expensive and some people need to avoid butter for dietary reasons. **Margarine** may be substituted if it is regular stick margarine. Do not use diet, "lite", or tub margarine. These contain too much water and can ruin your cookies by spreading the dough too thin. **Shortening** is another butter substitute that gives good results. A butter-flavored variety adds the taste of butter to your cookies without the saturated fat.

**Vanilla** is an important flavoring. Even though the amount in the recipe may be small, don't omit it. Use pure vanilla extract, not imitation flavoring. While pure extract is more expensive, it is far superior in taste.

**Eggs** are large size unless otherwise stated in the recipe. Egg substitute may be used if special dietary needs make that necessary. Measure the exact amount carefully, following the guidelines on the carton.

**Sugar** in cookie dough is usually white, granulated sugar and/or **brown sugar**. If you run out of one or the other, they can be substituted in equal amounts, but the flavor will differ. Brown sugar gets its flavor from molasses and is available in light or dark. Unless a recipe specifies one or the other, you can choose either type. Dark brown sugar has a stronger molasses flavor and yields a darker cookie.

**Always use fresh ingredients** and be sure you have enough of everything before you begin mixing. Cookies are fun to make and delicious to eat. They're a great snack, dessert, or a gift you can make.

Name:

## FCH Celebration Cookies

### Ingredients:

- 2 1/2 Cups All-Purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 Cup butter, room temperature
- 1/2 Cup sugar
- 1 Cup brown sugar, firmly packed
- 2 eggs
- 1 Tablespoon vanilla
- 2 Cups chocolate chips or other stir-in\* (12 oz. bag)
- 1 Cup chopped nuts, optional

### Method:

1. **Preheat the oven** to 375 degrees. Measure the **flour, baking soda,** and **salt** into a medium sized bowl. Stir well and set aside.
2. Cream the **butter** in a large mixing bowl.
3. Gradually add the **sugar** and **brown sugar**. Beat well. Turn off the mixer. Scrape the sides with a rubber spatula.
4. Add the **eggs**, one at a time. Beat after each addition. Add the **vanilla**.
5. Add the dry ingredients, half at one time, to the creamed ingredients. Mix till blended. Scrape the sides and bottom of the bowl with the spatula (mixer turned off).
6. With a big spoon, stir in the **chocolate chips** (or other stir-in ingredients) and the **nuts**.
7. Drop by the spoonful onto ungreased cookie sheet, 3 inches apart.
8. Bake at 375 degrees for 10-12 minutes.
9. Cool & enjoy!

\*Instead of chocolate chips, try any of the following: Peanut butter chips, butterscotch chips, toffee bits, M & M's. Combine your favorite stir-ins! You'll find many other flavored chips available at Christmas time. King Arthur flour sells cherry, lemon, cinnamon and other flavored mini-chips year round. Call 1-800-827-6836 or go to [www.BakersCatalogue.com](http://www.BakersCatalogue.com).



*Extending the Lesson...*  
*Granny Laurie's 3-in-1 Cookies*



A cookie gun presses the dough through templates to create small shaped cookies quickly.

**Ingredients:**

- 3 1/2 Cups All-Purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 Cup butter, softened
- 1 Cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla or almond extract

**Method:**

**Yield:** 3-4 dozen

1. Measure **flour**, **baking powder** and **salt** into a medium sized bowl. Stir well and set aside.
2. Cream **butter** until fluffy.
3. Gradually add **sugar** and continue beating until light and fluffy.
4. Add **eggs**, beating well after each addition. Add **vanilla** and stir well.
5. Stir flour mixture into the butter mixture, adding about 1 Cup of dry ingredients at a time. Blend well after each addition.
6. Wrap dough in waxed paper or plastic wrap and chill.

**This dough may be used for three different types of cookies:**

**1. Rolled Cookies:** Chill dough several hours or overnight. On a floured surface, roll out about one quarter of the dough. Keep the rest refrigerated. Roll to 1/4" thickness. Cut out shapes with cookie cutters dipped in flour. Place on an ungreased cookie sheet. Bake at 350 degrees 10-12 minutes or until pale golden in color. Cool on wire racks. Frost and decorate with colored sugars as desired. Or, cookies may be sprinkled with colored sugar before baking.

**Yield:** About 3 dozen cookies (depending on size of cookie cutters)

**2. Spritz Cookies:** Chill dough 1 hour. Insert a decorating disk into the end of a cookie gun. Pack dough firmly into the tube and screw on the



trigger end. With the decorating end held straight down on an ungreased cookie sheet, squeeze the trigger to release dough. Lift the gun straight up. If the cookie is not well formed, chill the dough another hour to firm it up. Try different decorating disks; some release dough more easily than others. Bake at 375 degrees 8-10 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool on wire racks.

**Yield:** About 10 dozen small cookies

**3. Refrigerator Cookies:** Spoon a third of the dough in a straight line onto a piece of waxed paper. Shape it into a log and wrap tightly. The diameter of the log will determine the size of the cookies. Repeat with remaining dough. Refrigerate dough at least 4 hours, then slice with a knife into 1/4 inch thick pieces. Bake on an ungreased cookie sheet at 350 degrees for 8-10 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool. Cookies may be iced if desired.

**Yield:** 3-4 dozen cookies



Create your own “slice-and-bake” cookies. Shape the dough and then wrap it. Waxed paper is easier to work with than plastic wrap.

### **Variations:**

**Refrigerator cookies:** Roll the log of raw dough into sprinkles (“jimmies”) or finely chopped nuts pressing them gently into the dough, then slice and bake as above. This gives a decorated edge to the cookies.

**Spritz Cookies:** Color the dough with food coloring. Gel colors, available in tubes in most grocery stores, work better than liquid food coloring. The gel gives more vivid colors and does not thin the dough as liquid coloring may.

Don't have a cookie gun? Use a pastry bag or large cake decorating bag fitted with a large tip. Room temperature dough works best. Here half the dough was colored then placed in the bag with some plain dough giving a swirl effect (use a 1M or other large star tip).



# The Joy of Homemaking

What does it take to “make a home”? Cooking, cleaning, picking up and putting things away, these are probably some of the things that come to mind.

Joy may not be your first thought! But turning a house into a home can be a wonderfully creative family experience. The results can give us a sense of deep satisfaction and joy.

For years our culture has tried to convince us that anything related to “housework” is demeaning drudgery not worthy of our time. In fact, the message of our day seems to be to avoid or ignore housework as much as possible.

We live in an age with more conveniences than ever: dishwashers, microwave ovens, washers and dryers, cleaning products for every task, frozen meals and convenience foods, closet organizers, and the list goes on! And yet that clean, well-organized home we yearn for seems more elusive than ever. Why? Let me suggest a few possible reasons:

- No one taught us homemaking skills
- We don't know how to manage all that needs to be done
- We never seem to have enough time
- We don't like cleaning, cooking, keeping house

**No one taught us homemaking skills.** Fortunately they are not difficult to learn and teach to others. The lessons in this section will help you teach some of the homemaking skills girls need to learn to become successful homemakers. Certainly there are other skills to learn, but these are a starting place that will build a solid foundation for those who master them. Other resources are listed in the Resources section to help you. There are many excellent books, videos and web sites with loads of household tips and techniques covering every aspect of homemaking.

**We don't know how to manage all that needs to be done.** Once the skills are learned, we have to figure out a way to tackle them on a regular basis. My husband has a favorite phrase: “Manage the process” - excellent advice for any endeavor. I put it this way: Figure out what, who, and when. What needs to be done? Who can do it? When can it be done?



Rather than managing the work, it often tends to manage us. We run in all directions attempting to get everything done at once. An old proverb says, “If you chase two rabbits, both will escape.” Our homemaking tasks seem to multiply like rabbits and we’re continuously chasing herds of them! Nothing seems to get done and we feel defeated.

There is a better way. Apply the “what-who-when” principle. Make a list of what needs to be done. It may be easier to make a separate list for each room. Next to each task write the names of people who can do each one. Children can, and should, help! They learn important life skills as they assume household responsibilities. Most husbands will help if we calmly and clearly present the needs.



Plan the Work  
Work the Plan

Then plan how to accomplish the household tasks on a regular basis. I once saw a poster on a factory wall that read: **Plan the Work, Work the Plan.** This is a good motto for the factory, the office, and the home. Planning time is an investment that reaps big savings. After we write down what needs to be done, priorities can be established and decisions made so we reach our goals. The work will be done much more efficiently with a plan. And here’s the real time-saver: A good plan can be used many times so that eventually it becomes a smooth routine.

**We never seem to have enough time.** I have a set of dishtowels my grandmother embroidered decades ago. Each towel portrays a task assigned to that day of the week: Monday Wash Day, Tuesday Ironing, Wednesday Mending, Thursday Marketing, Friday Cleaning, Saturday Baking, and... Sunday Rest.

This seems quaint to us today, but the principle is still sound: There was a time for everything. Today most of us can throw a load of laundry in the washer and dryer any time we want to and few clothes need ironing. We buy our bread and baked goods rather than make them “from scratch”. Many grocery stores are open 24/7. Because we can do household tasks fairly quickly, *any* time we want, we tend to be doing them *all* the time and there never seems to be time to rest.

Ecclesiastes 3:1 declares: “There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven.” This applies to homemaking, too! The Lord gives each of us 24 hours in a day. That’s God’s part; our part is to prayerfully set priorities on how we will use that daily gift of time. A wise woman limits outside activities so she has time and energy to serve her family.

**We don't like to cook, clean, keep house.** Our attitude is critically important. For decades it's been fashionable to disparage homemaking and ignore the home. As a result, many homes are not a peaceful haven from the busy world. Why are many people so stressed today? Could it be there is no place for them to really relax? A messy, disorganized home with an over-committed calendar does not allow a time and place for family members to rest, relax, and regroup.

In today's frantically busy world, homemakers must be an anchor in the home creating a place where the family is nurtured.

We know our Lord has called us to be like Him. By God's grace, we grow into His likeness day by day. Jesus was a servant. He told us that by doing even small things – such as giving a cup of water to someone – we were doing it unto Him. (Matthew 25:40).

**Here's the secret to joy in homemaking:** Whatever you do, do it unto the Lord. Your hands become His as you serve your family. Your voice is His when you speak words of comfort and love to your husband and children. Viewed from heaven's perspective, everything you do in your home, every task - big or small - is a *sacred service* for the King of Kings Himself! If we adopt God's perspective, our homemaking becomes a loving, joyful way to serve our family, and our Lord.

The girls we teach will learn much more than just how to accomplish certain tasks; they will learn the attitudes that they observe in us. If we dread cleaning house, or ignore it, they are likely to pick up that same attitude. But, if we demonstrate diligence and joy as we care for our home and family, the girls will follow our example and adopt these Godly attitudes.

Our goal as a "home maker" is to create a comfortable home that meets the needs of our family. To be a "keeper at home" (Titus 2:5 KJV) is a noble calling and a vitally important role essential to our family and our nation.

## *Teaching Homemaking Skills*



The girls wash and dry dishes after a cooking class.

Girls need training and practice to become successful homemakers. Most class time in Future Christian Homemakers is taken up with a cooking or sewing activity. Plan some time in each class session to teach a homemaking skill, too. Sometimes you might give a short demonstration, while other lessons are better suited to hands-on practice and will require more time.

The lessons in the Homemaking Section provide a starting place to teach the basics to keep our homes clean. Please add additional skills that you feel are important for your group. Be sure to give specific directions so the girls know exactly what to do and how to do it.

I learned that my directions were often too vague. “Clean your room” can mean many different things. If the room is a real mess, cleaning the whole thing seems overwhelming – even to an adult. It’s best to break the job down into manageable portions, and then focus on one specific task at a time. Clear directions foster success.

Let me share a couple of examples. When I first began teaching FCH, I would ask one girl to wash the dishes, another to clean the countertops, and so on. The dishes got washed – in cold water murky with batter from the mixing bowls. The countertops were wiped with a sponge dipped in the dishwater so they dried with streaks of dough all over! Class time ran out. The girls went home. The kitchen needed to be cleaned all over again.

Another day I showed my class a messy closet and asked the girls what needed to be done to clean and organize it. I thought it was obvious, but my question was greeted with silence. I persisted and finally someone said, “It looks good to me” and the other girls agreed! That was an eye-opener for me. I realized I needed to ask more specific questions such as, “How could I arrange the things on this shelf so I can find them more easily?” Then they began to get the idea. That’s when I started demonstrating how to do these household tasks.

For clean-up time, I wrote each job, with directions (kids are known to forget!) on a card and handed one to every girl at the start of each class. Here’s a sample: “Please wash the dishes. Rinse them first. Fill the dishpan with clean, hot soapy water. Wash them with a dishrag, then rinse and set in the dish drainer. Thank you!” Guess what? The girls did a great job and the kitchen was clean. They learned that “many hands make light work”. We all worked together, achieved our goals, and felt a sense of joy in our accomplishments.

Now I assign each girl one or two tasks and hand them the written directions at the beginning of each class. The expectations are clear and, at clean-up time, everyone knows what to do. Each girl needs to realize she has an important task to complete so that one or two do not end up doing most of the work.

Train the girls well. Not only is that helpful to you now, but the girls gain valuable homemaking practice.

Keep the girls' ages in mind. While everyone needs to learn to clean a sink, other tasks are more appropriate for older girls. Always supervise cleaning activities and avoid dangerous chemicals and any hazardous activities.

Teach the girls to be observant so they notice small tasks that need to be done and diligent to take care of them while they're still small. "An ounce of prevention" is surely worth a "pound of cure"!

The Skill Pages in the Homemaking section cover a variety of homemaking tasks. I suggest you begin with "Cleaning the Kitchen" since so much class time is spent there. The girls need to learn how to clean up in the kitchen. Never assume they know how to do any task. Give them a copy of the handout to keep in their notebook, then select just a few skills to teach at one time.

It's best to start with a lesson on washing and drying dishes and cleaning the sink and countertops. These are necessary tasks every time you cook. Ask the girls to read the directions aloud as you demonstrate each step.

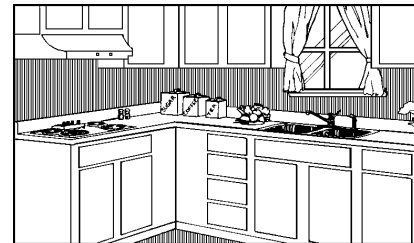
Show the girls what cleaning items you want them to use and where they are kept. Every kitchen is different, with different cleaning needs depending on the type of surface to be cleaned. They may do things differently in their own home, and girls should check with their mothers to learn which cleaners are best for their home.

In Appendix A, I've included sample Task Cards for some of the clean-up tasks you may need the girls to do during class. You may copy these, cut them apart and use them with your class. Or, write your own to suit your needs. Review the skills until the girls can confidently complete each task. Confidence enhances our enjoyment of any activity!

**SAFETY FIRST! Follow all directions and safety precautions on the labels of any cleaning products you use. Avoid bleach and other harsh chemicals. Always carefully supervise all activities. Store all cleaners out of reach of young children.**

## *Cleaning the Kitchen*

Families spend a lot of time in the kitchen. It is often the gathering place for family members and visitors alike. We store, prepare and eat food there. It's the heart of our home. Let's learn how to care for it well.



There are many surfaces to keep clean in the kitchen and a **variety of tools and cleaning solutions** to choose from. You do not need to purchase a lot of different specialized cleaners. For most tasks, hot soapy water will work fine. A glass spray or all-purpose spray is helpful. Purchase one with anti-bacterial properties to use on surfaces that come in contact with raw meat or eggs.

When we bring groceries home, we bring produce that may have come from countries half a world away! We bring in food that has been handled many times by many people: from farm to processor to warehouse and onto trucks before someone stocks it on our supermarket shelves. Products are handled by other shoppers, the checker who scans the groceries, and the bagger before we even get them to our car!

Is it any wonder that germs and viruses may be unwelcome "hitch hikers" from the grocery store to our kitchen? In addition, bacteria such as E. coli and salmonella may be present in some raw foods. These pathogens can sicken us. **The kitchen is one room where cleanliness is absolutely essential** to protect our family from illnesses.

Before we learn cleaning techniques, we must consider the cleaning tools we use.

**Sponges, dishrags, scrubbers** - Bacteria thrive in moist environments. Sponges, wet dishrags and scrubbers are major breeding grounds for bacteria. Food gets trapped in the little holes of sponges, pot scrubbers and brushes. Bacteria multiply rapidly. Then, if you wipe the counter or wash the dishes with an unsanitary sponge or rag, you spread disease-causing organisms all over your kitchen.

What should you do? The easiest solution is to **purchase a pack of inexpensive dishrags**. Discount stores often sell them by the dozen. Use one only for dishes, another for wiping counters. During the day, hang them on a rack so they dry quickly. Put them in the laundry at the end of each day. Wash in hot water. A little bleach with the detergent will help remove stains, but always ask an adult before you use bleach. It's a good idea to purchase dishrags and towels in light colors that can be bleached.

According to the makers of Clorox, the amount of bleach used in the laundry does not disinfect sponges or dishrags. The concentration needed for disinfection would ruin fabric. Use bleach to whiten laundry & remove stains, but hot water is needed to help kill bacteria.

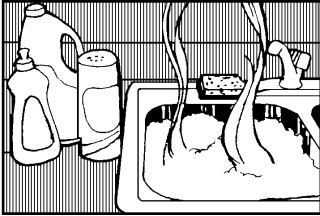
Although **paper towels** are an added expense, they are cost-effective for cleaning up bacteria-laden spills. Throw them away immediately after use. **Anti-bacterial wipes** are expensive but convenient. Purchasing these items when they are on sale and using coupons makes them more affordable.

**Kitchen Towels** – If you dry dishes, keep dishtowels that are used only for this purpose. Have a **separate hand towel**. Thirsty terry-cloth towels are best to dry hands, but they leave lint on glassware and dishes. Use a smooth cotton towel for dishes. “Flour sack” towels work very well. They are no longer made from flour sacks, but many still retain that name. They are inexpensive and can be purchased in packs in most discount stores.

**Why not use just one towel for hands and dishes?** When we dry our hands, many germs are left behind on the towel. If you then use the same towel to dry dishes, you spread the germs all over the silverware and other things that go into your mouth. This is one way illnesses can be spread from one family member to the others.

Keep a good supply of both types of towels – at least six of each. When they get damp, put them in the laundry and use a clean, dry towel.  
**Change kitchen towels daily.**

Now let’s learn how to do kitchen tasks.



**Washing dishes** - If you have a dishwasher, learn how to properly load and use it. Only use detergent made for dishwashers; any other type of detergent may cause a sudsy mess! Dishwashers, especially if you use a heat boost feature, can sanitize dishes with much hotter water than we use washing them by hand. This is especially important when a family member is sick.

If you **wash the dishes by hand, use hot, clean soapy water** in a clean dishpan that is used only for dishes. If you wash dishes in the sink, be sure to clean the sink before you do the dishes.

First remove bones and any other loose food on the dishes and discard. Give dishes a quick rinse and stack them next to the sink. Wash silverware and glasses first. Rinse each in hot water and place in a drainer. If the dish water becomes dirty or gets cold, dump it out and refill the dishpan with clean, hot soapy water.

If you have a small load of dishes, you may let them air dry in the drainer. Put them away as soon as they are dry. Or, dry the dishes with clean dish towels. When one towel gets damp, switch to a fresh, dry towel.

When the dishes are done, spray the dishpan and drainer with anti-bacterial spray. Wipe dry with a paper towel. Remember: bacteria like wet environments. Keep the dishpan and drainer dry when not in use.



**Clean the sink** - The kitchen sink harbors more bacteria than the bathroom! Studies have shown more germs thrive here than anywhere else in the home. We prepare food near the sink and wash dishes in it. It should be cleaned daily.

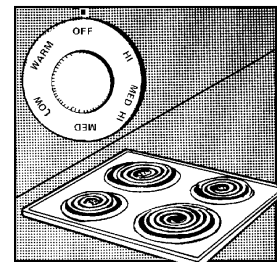
Bacteria need food and water to thrive. Both are often present in the kitchen sink. First, get rid of any food particles in the sink, and then rinse it. Use an anti-bacterial spray or cleanser that is appropriate for your type of sink. Scrub all sink surfaces with a paper towel or dishrag. Rub hard to remove stuck-on substances. Discard paper towels. Dishrags should be hung in the laundry room. Do not re-use until properly laundered.

**Wash the countertops** – Wipe up loose crumbs carefully so they don't land on the floor. Spray the counter lightly with window or all-purpose spray. Rinse a clean dishrag in hot water. Wring it out and wipe off the countertop. Be sure to scrub off anything that sticks to the surface. Rinse the dishrag frequently as you work.

If raw meat or eggs have been on the counter, wipe up any liquids with paper towels and discard. Spray the surface with an anti-bacterial spray and wipe with paper towels. Discard them.

**Wash the kitchen table** after each meal. Brush crumbs into a wastebasket. Put a clean dishrag into hot soapy water; wring it out well and wipe the table. Wipe vinyl tablecloths and placemats in the same way. You may need to rinse the dishrag out several times.

**Clean the stovetop** – Be sure all burners are turned off and that they are cool. Most stovetops can be cleaned using the same method as the countertops. However, ammonia and other harsh cleaners can ruin shiny metal trim, and smooth sealed cooktops may need a special cleaner. Check the appliance manual for any special instructions.



**Clean the microwave oven** – Wipe out the inside with hot soapy water. Any time food splatters during cooking, wipe it up right away – before it has a chance to harden. This makes your job much easier! If food has hardened in the microwave, place a microwave-safe cup half-filled with water into the microwave. Microwave on High 1-2 minutes or until it comes to a boil. Leave the door shut for 5 minutes; the steam will soften the cooked on food. Carefully remove the hot water and wipe out the oven. Wipe the outside of the microwave with warm water and wipe dry.

**The refrigerator** holds much of the food we eat. Check the food inside frequently and throw out anything that has spoiled. If you're not sure how long something has been in the refrigerator, it's best to throw it away. If you check daily, you won't waste food. Keep masking tape and a marker in the kitchen. Label food with the date it was opened or cooked. Then you won't have to guess whether or not it is still fresh.

Wipe up any food spills in the refrigerator immediately with paper towels. Clean the area with anti-bacterial cleaner. Discard paper towels. Store raw meat in secure wrapping or in plastic bags so meat juices do not leak onto other foods. Keep fresh fruit and veggies in the drawers designed for them and away from raw meat.

Wipe off the shelves, bins and the inside of the door with hot soapy water every few weeks or more often, if needed.

**The kitchen floor** should be kept free from crumbs and food. This attracts insects. Keep a broom and dustpan handy to sweep the floor as needed. Spills must be wiped up immediately so no one slips and falls.

Kitchen flooring varies greatly: linoleum or vinyl flooring is common; tile, carpet and wood floors are also found in the kitchen. Most vinyl and tile can be mopped or scrubbed with hot soapy water. Follow the manufacturer's directions for other types of flooring. Wash the floor weekly.

**Cupboard doors, knobs, handles and the outsides of appliances** tend to get sticky. Wipe them off with hot soapy water as needed. For a streak-free shine, wipe again with plain hot water and wipe dry. To minimize the spread of germs, especially when someone is sick, wipe handles and knobs with an anti-bacterial wipe, or a paper towel dampened with anti-bacterial cleaner.

**When you are done in the kitchen**, glance at the work areas. Are the countertops clean? Check the kitchen table and the floor. Has anything spilled in the refrigerator, or down the front of a cupboard? Give everything a good visual check. If you get in the habit of cleaning up each time you use the kitchen, the task will be much easier.

**Safety Reminder:** Always ask an adult before using cleaning products and follow their directions. Keep all cleaning products out of the reach of young children.

**A word of caution about bleach:** It is a very effective disinfectant and cleaner, but it is a powerful chemical that can harm you and your clothes. Only use it with adult supervision and permission. **Ammonia** is another strong cleaner that should be used only with adult permission. **Never** mix ammonia and bleach: this creates a very harmful gas!

## Cleaning the Bathroom

The bathroom is used all day long. Water is always present in this room and dampness provides ideal conditions for bacterial growth. Bathrooms need special attention and regular cleaning.

As you clean bathroom surfaces, you want to **avoid spreading germs** from one area to another. You will need an antibacterial spray and a liquid disinfectant along with paper towels, and clean rags. Antibacterial wipes are expensive but they come in handy when cleaning areas like the bathroom.

Start cleaning the bathroom by putting **toilet cleaner in the toilet**.

Carefully squeeze the bottle so the cleaner goes all around the rim and sides of the toilet bowl. Use toilet cleaner with caution and only with permission! It can stain your clothes and burn your eyes if it splashes. Leave the cleaner in the toilet for 5 – 10 minutes while you clean other areas in the bathroom. Then scrub the toilet bowl with a toilet brush. Flush the toilet and rinse the brush in the clear water in the toilet. Put the brush in a holder used only for this purpose. If possible, set the brush and holder outside in the sun to dry.

**Spray the outside of the toilet tank** with disinfectant and wipe clean with paper towels. Follow the same procedure for the outside of the toilet all the way down to the floor. Discard these towels.

**Bathroom sinks** should be cleaned frequently. Consider how many times we wash our hands, brush our teeth, and then spit the water into the sink! All family members often use the same sink. If one person is sick, it is easy to spread germs on the faucet handles, so cleanliness is important. During times of illness, the sink should be cleaned daily.

Spray the sink, faucet and handles with a disinfectant cleaner. Rub all the surfaces thoroughly. Rinse with clear water. Dry with paper towels and discard them.

Use a clean paper towel or rag to **clean the countertop**. Spray with disinfectant and wipe with a damp cloth. Rinse the cloth as necessary and wipe the countertop until it is free of dust, hair, and dirt. Dry it for a streak-free shine.

**The tub or shower stall** should be cleaned weekly or more often if necessary. No one wants to take a bath in a tub with a dirty ring left from someone else! Scouring powder is very effective but because it is abrasive, it may scratch the tub or tile. Over time, that will dull the finish and make it harder to keep clean. It's best to use it only to remove stubborn dirt or stains.



Disposable toilet wands with cleaner in them are available to clean the toilet. They are more expensive than toilet cleaner and a toilet brush and they may not disinfect as well as liquid toilet cleaners. Read the product labels carefully and be a wise shopper to make the best choice for your family!

Most of the time a tub-and-tile spray or antibacterial spray will clean the tub or shower well. Spray the surface; rub with a rag, and rinse. Most of these cleaners give off a strong smell and should be used only in a well-ventilated area. Keep the spray away from your face and clothes.

**Vinegar** is also an effective and inexpensive cleaner. It is cheaper to buy a gallon jug of vinegar.

Use about

½ Cup of vinegar in a bucket of water to clean countertops, floors and mirrors. You can use undiluted vinegar to cut through grease and tough grime in the kitchen and the bathroom. It's a good alternative to chemical cleaners.

**Clean mirrors** by spraying lightly with glass cleaner and rubbing dry with dry paper towels or a lint-free rag. Do not use hand or bath towels to clean mirrors. They leave lint on the glass and the cleaner may damage the towel.

If there are open shelves in the bathroom or other furniture, **dust** them. The bathroom is one of the dustiest rooms in the house! Toilet paper, tissues, and towels all create lint and dust.

After all the surfaces in the bathroom have been cleaned, **clean the floor**. Sweep or vacuum to remove loose dirt from the floor. Pour the recommended amount of a liquid disinfectant cleaner into a pail of hot water. Read the label of the product you use and follow all directions. Use a sturdy rag or sponge to scrub the floor. Be sure to rinse it in the hot water frequently as you work. Wring it out well so you don't leave puddles on the floor. You may use a mop instead, but it does not clean as thoroughly.

When you are finished, dump the water down the toilet. Rinse the pail at an outdoor hose if possible, otherwise put some water from the tub into the pail and dump that in the toilet also. You do not want to spread germs from the floor to other areas of the bathroom or house.

**Hang towels and washcloths** over towel bars so they can dry quickly. Bacteria grow on these, too, so it's important they dry as quickly as possible. Launder them frequently.

**Liquid hand soap** is better than bar soap for washing hands. Germs remain on bar soap and can be spread from one person to another. Be sure to wash your hands when you have finished cleaning.

Now the bathroom should look sparkling clean! We like to look our best and we spend a lot of time in the bathroom bathing and fixing our hair and face. We'll enjoy it more if we keep the bathroom looking nice, too.

**Safety Reminder:** Always ask an adult before using cleaning products and follow their directions. Keep all cleaning products out of the reach of young children. **Bleach** is a very effective disinfectant and cleaner, but it is a powerful chemical that can harm you and your clothes. Only use it with adult supervision and permission. **Ammonia** is another strong cleaner that should be used only with adult permission. **Never** mix ammonia and bleach or products that contain these: this creates a very harmful gas!

## Dusting and Vacuuming

The furniture and floors throughout our home need to be cleaned regularly. Dust accumulates quickly on all surfaces. Besides looking unsightly, dust aggravates allergies and asthma. Let's learn how to tackle the dust and clean the rooms in our home.

Before you start, look at the room. Pick up things that don't belong on the floor and put them away. Clear clutter that tends to accumulate on dressers, tables, and other surfaces. Hang up clothes. Make the bed.

It's much easier to clean when you don't have to spend a long time tackling clutter first! You can make the job easier if you remember:

*A place for everything, and everything in its place.*

Practicing this principle saves time and energy. You'll know where to find things when you need them and waste less time looking for them.

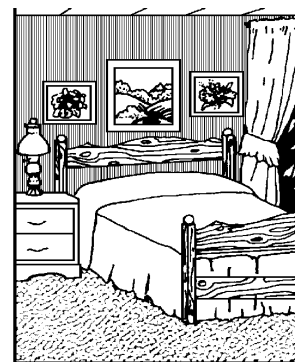
You know how horses are kept in a corral, fenced in so they don't get lost. Use the same idea with your belongings: corral them by putting them into boxes, storage trays, drawers, or plastic bags. The containers can be as simple as a shoe box or a bigger cardboard box. Plastic storage containers of many sizes and shapes are available at discount stores. Zipper seal plastic bags of different sizes can hold letters, papers, pencils, hair bows, jewelry and so many of the small things that clutter our rooms.

Once everything has a place, be diligent and put things away. It always seems easier at the time to just drop things on the bed or floor, or set them down. Pretty soon though, other things get set on top of them and we can't find what we need. When this happens, you'll have to spend extra time sorting through things and putting them away. You'll be thankful if you develop the good habit of putting your things where they belong.

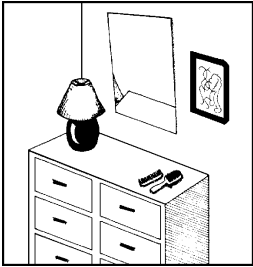
After any clutter has been cleared, you're ready to clean. Gather the supplies you will need: dust cloths, window cleaner and paper towels, vacuum cleaner, dust mop or broom. You may also like to use a spray polish or other special cleaning products. Whatever you need, bring everything into the room you are cleaning. A box or plastic caddy to hold your supplies is handy and makes it easy to carry them from room to room.

When you clean a room, **start at the top and work down**. If you sweep the floor first, and then clean off the table, dust and crumbs will probably fall onto the floor you just cleaned!

Use a **dust rag** that grabs and holds dust. There are many types made for this purpose, including disposable cloths that can be used for dusting by hand, or attached to a mop to dust floors. Avoid feather dusters. They



tend to scatter dust, not pick it up and remove it. You don't want to just move dust from one surface to another. You want to collect the dust into a rag and then shake the rag outside, away from open windows and doors. It pays to have several quality dust rags to use as you clean. When one is full of dust, use another one, and then shake them all outside at one time.



**Dust the tops of dressers, shelves and other furniture first.** If it is above your head, ask an adult for help. Carefully dust knick-knacks, clocks, picture frames and anything else that has collected dust. After dusting several surfaces, thoroughly shake the dust rag outside, or switch to a clean one.

Once the top surfaces are dusted, look at the lower shelves, drawer fronts, furniture legs and windowsills. Work your way around the room until you have dusted everything from top to bottom.

You're almost ready to clean the floor. Check the **baseboards** first. In most rooms, baseboards run along the bottom of the wall where it meets the floor. These get very dusty. Run a dust rag or a dust mop along the baseboards, then shake the mop or rag outside.

Fold up **small throw rugs** and shake them vigorously outside.

**Carpets** should be **vacuumed** at least once a week. Dirt and dust settle into the rug. Dirt is ground into the fibers every time we walk on it. Carpeting lasts longer when it's cleaned regularly. Ask an adult to help you learn which settings to use on your vacuum cleaner. Different types of carpeting in your house may require a different setting.

Start in one corner of the room and vacuum in outward strokes as far as you can comfortably reach. Overlap each stroke a few inches so you don't miss part of the rug. Work your way back toward the door, vacuuming each section of the room as you go. Do not vacuum "helter-skelter" attacking a little dirt in one corner and then something you see on the other side of the room. This wastes both time and energy.

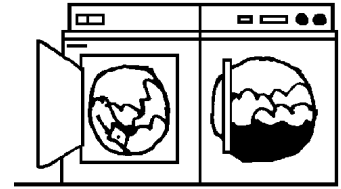


If the room has wood, tile or other hard surface floors, use a dust mop, broom or a bare floor attachment that comes with many vacuum cleaners. If you sweep or use a dust mop, have a dust pan handy to collect and dispose of loose dirt. Use the same technique as vacuuming: start on one end of the room and work your way back to the door.

Put your cleaning supplies away and enjoy you clean room!

## *Doing the Laundry*

To keep our clothes and household linens looking nice and lasting longer, we need to learn how to wash and dry them properly. If you have helped do the laundry, you probably know that clothes must be sorted and water temperature selected. Let's see what other things we need to learn before we just "throw" those clothes in the washer. Always ask adult permission before you do the laundry or use appliances.



There are many different types of laundry detergents, fabric softeners, bleach and other additives. Some of these, especially bleach, are dangerous and should be used by an adult. Ask your mother to explain the laundry products she uses and be sure you understand how to use them correctly.

First, check clothes for **stains** or very heavy dirt. These areas need to be treated with a stain stick, spray, or full-strength detergent before they go into the washer. Always read the directions on these products first to be sure they are safe for the type of fabric and test a small area that won't show. Pre-treat the clothes as needed.

There are several things to consider when you **sort the laundry**. Often we just separate laundry into dark and light loads. Sometimes that works fine, but what about delicate garments, cleaning rags, and clothes with food stains? Do we put those in the same load even if they are all light colored? No. Delicate clothes need to be washed on a gentle cycle or by hand, but that would not be sufficient to clean heavily soiled clothes. Let's learn about the different settings on our laundry appliances.

**Washers and dryers have different cycles** so that clothes with different needs are washed appropriately. A **delicate cycle or knit cycle** uses gentle agitation and the wash time is short. The **permanent press cycle** has a "cool-down" period and does not extract as much water during the spin cycle. This helps prevent wrinkles. We use a **regular or heavy duty cycle** most often. These have a vigorous wash cycle that you can set for varying lengths of time and the spin cycle extracts the most water from the clothes.

**Dryers** also have various settings: a delicate or low heat setting, a permanent press setting, and a hot setting for towels and other sturdy fabrics are the most common. Washers and dryers vary a great deal: front loaders, top loaders, and now there are machines with steam

cleaning. Look at the machines you use and learn what settings are available. The appliance manual will give further information.

**Now let's sort the clothes.** Sort the dark clothes from the light or colorfast clothes.

Remove anything that is **delicate**: lingerie, garments with lace or special trim, some knit fabrics, sheer fabrics. It's always a good idea to **read the care label**. Laundry directions are written on labels in clothes and household linens; sometimes they are on the back of a label. Anything that says delicate, or hand wash, needs to be washed and dried separately.

If possible, wash **towels** in a load by themselves, especially when they are new. They give off a lot of lint in the washer and the dryer. If you put towels in the same load as socks and corduroy pants, the socks and pants will be covered with lint!

There's another reason to wash towels by themselves. Terry cloth towels are rough. If you wash them with smooth sheets or smooth knit fabrics, the rough towels rub against them in the wash and cause **pilling**. "Pills" are little balls of fiber that are created by friction against fabric. Pilling often occurs on garments under the arms and in other areas that get rubbed as we wear them. These pills can be removed with special clothes shavers. Proper washing will also minimize pilling.

Wash **sheets and pillowcases** together, without other clothes if possible. You can wash similar colored clothes with them, but the long sheets twist and often catch the other clothes, especially in the dryer where you will end up with a dry sheet tightly twisted around a ball of damp clothes!

Most of the rest of the clothes can be washed on the **regular cycle**, keeping the colorfast and light clothes separated from the dark colors. Set the washer dial according to how dirty the clothes are. Some dials simply say: "light – medium – heavy soil" and others indicate the number of minutes you want the wash cycle to last. Usually 8 – 10 minutes is adequate unless the clothes are very dirty. Increase the time if necessary.

**Hot water** helps sanitize fabric and is especially good for colorfast towels, diapers, and some sheets. **Warm water** is suitable for most clothing that is colorfast. **Cold water** is best for colors that may fade in the wash, but be sure to use a laundry detergent designed for cold temperatures. As a general rule, warmer water does a better job of cleaning.



Use **liquid or powdered detergent**; they both work well. Fill the washer with water. As it fills, add the detergent. Be sure it is dissolved and then add the clothes. Pouring the detergent directly onto the clothes may cause permanent stains. Read the detergent label and use the recommended amount. Using too much detergent can cause damage to your machine, and a big sudsy mess spilling out of the washer!

Load the clothes into the washer so they have plenty of room to move freely in the water. Overloading can damage the washer and the clothes won't get clean.

If you use **liquid fabric softener**, use an automatic dispenser or wait until the rinse water has filled the washer and then carefully add the softener. It can discolor the fabric if it comes in direct contact with the clothes.

Unless you hang clothes outdoors or in a basement to dry, you will need to use a **dryer**. When you remove the clothes from the washer, shake them out a little as you put them into the dryer. Use the heat setting that is appropriate for the clothes. Many people set the dryer on the hottest setting so the clothes dry faster. But high heat causes shrinkage and more wrinkles. It's fine for towels, but clothing, especially knit fabrics, do better at a lower heat setting.

Do not overload the dryer. That can lead to dangerous overheating. Also, the clothes will dry unevenly and come out wrinkled.

Clothes will last longer and look better when they are properly laundered. Read your washer and dryer manuals to learn how to best use all of the appliance features.

**Safety Reminder:** Always ask an adult before using cleaning and laundry products and follow their directions. Keep these products out of the reach of young children.

**A word of caution about bleach:** It is a very effective disinfectant and cleaner, but it is a powerful chemical that can harm you and your clothes. Only use it with adult supervision and permission. **Ammonia** is another strong cleaner that should be used only with adult permission. **Never** mix ammonia and bleach or products that contain these: this creates a very harmful gas!

## Sew Much Fun!

### Future Christian Homemakers Teacher's Notes

Many girls enjoy sewing and begin fashioning fabric scraps into doll clothes when they are quite young. Wise is the mother who encourages her daughter and teaches her basic sewing skills.

It's sad to hear grown women admit they don't know how to sew on a button! For other women, like my mother-in-law, sewing has been a lifelong pleasure. Her skill kept her family clothed inexpensively and now, in later years, it's a creative hobby that provides hours of enjoyment.

**Everyone needs to learn the basics:** how to hem a skirt, mend a seam, sew on a button. With these skills, a woman can keep her family's clothes in good repair. Fortunately, these are not hard to learn and most can be done by hand, without expensive equipment.

It is helpful to have a **sewing machine**. A basic, portable model is fine for beginners and for most sewing projects. Many new machines have a host of computerized functions. If you can afford one and plan to do a lot of sewing, these are wonderful. But for average use, a basic model will do fine. Most sewing machine stores sell used or reconditioned machines at reasonable prices. You may find, as I did, that women in your church have a machine they will donate or lend to your class.

What other **sewing equipment** do the girls need? A sewing basket or plastic craft tote helps keep everything organized. I ask each girl to have the following items *labeled* with their name or initials:

- Sewing shears – Sharp scissors used only for sewing
- Packet of needles for hand sewing
- Straight pins
- Pin cushion
- Seam gauge
- Thread: White & black plus any other colors they need
- Seam ripper

All of these can be purchased inexpensively at Wal-Mart or a fabric store. The girls can add any other notions they wish, but these will suffice for most basic projects.

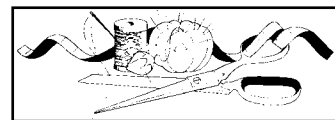
Before **sewing by machine** on fabric, have the girls **sew on paper** without any thread in the machine. This practice helps them learn to control the speed of their machine. Use notebook paper and have them sew on the lines straight across the page. Then draw curved and zigzag lines on plain paper, and have them sew on these. After sewing on paper, always change your machine needle; discard the old needle safely (inside a soda can or bottle, or carefully rolled up in a paper bag.)



Age 90 and still sewing!  
My mother-in-law sews a quilt that will become a treasured heirloom.



Trang makes a pillowcase as she sews for the first time on a machine!



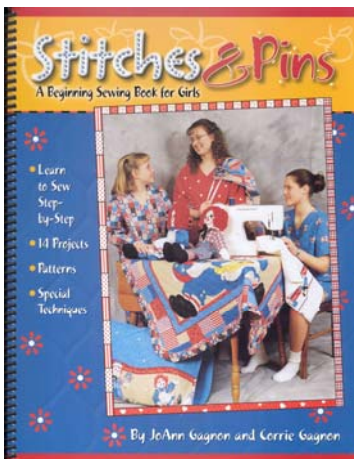
I like to begin by teaching **hand sewing**. Even when we sew by machine, most projects require some finishing touches by hand. My grandmother, in the 1920's, did not have a sewing machine and made many of her family's clothes entirely by hand! We've come a long way, but it's still essential to know how to sew by hand. Be sure the girls know how to sew a simple running stitch, and how to sew on buttons.



The girls enjoy a variety of sewing projects.



## *Sewing Curriculum*



A good sewing curriculum is essential if you want to teach, or learn, to sew well. JoAnn Gagnon, of Bunkhouse Sewing, has written wonderful books to take your youngest child (preschool), to your oldest through all the sewing skills they need to learn.

“**Stitches and Pins**” is written for the beginning seamstress in an easy to understand, step-by-step format. Patterns for girls sizes 8 – 16 are included. The projects begin with a simple pillowcase and progress to basic garments. The diagrams and instructions are clear and easy to follow.

Projects in this book include a laundry bag, doll quilt, hostess apron, reversible vest, skirt, pajamas, and more. Instruction pages teach the parts of the sewing machine, how to use patterns, how to pin, use bias tape, apply a facing, etc.

“**Pins and Needles**” is an intermediate sewing book that continues what the girls learn in “Stitches and Pins.” They learn to sew waistbands, zippers, and set-in sleeves. It includes quilting projects and projects using the serger.

**“Catch the Bug: 25 Fun & Simple Sewing Projects”** is designed for young children. With adult help, they can learn to make a drawstring purse, puppet, headband, pillowcase, tooth fairy pillow, and much more. Be sure to watch the Instructional Video: Teaching Young Children to Sew. It is amazing to see what a three year old can do with help from mother!

JoAnn has written devotional books to be used along with the sewing books so you can develop and train your child’s character as they learn to sew.

**“Buckles and Bobbins”** is a beginning sewing book for boys with projects they will love. **“Pintucks and Lace”** teaches heirloom sewing techniques.

Many of JoAnn’s books are available as e-books as well as hard copy, and patterns are included.

Whoever you are teaching, or if you just want to learn sewing yourself, you will find what you need at JoAnn’s website, [www.bunkhousesewing.com](http://www.bunkhousesewing.com) Be sure to watch the Instructional Slide Shows, and go to the “Where to Begin” section for helpful advice on sewing machines, fabric, supplies and notions. Sign up for the free “Tips for Teaching Children to Sew.”

Even if you never learned to sew, you can learn along with your child, with the help of JoAnn’s books. Sewing is an important life skill that helps children learn much more than just sewing! They also learn to concentrate, develop their attention span, practice patience, and learn from their mistakes. Eye-hand coordination is developed as well as coordinating the foot pedal on the machine with what they are doing with their hands.

Perhaps the best part is the joy and satisfaction they experience as they complete a project! You don’t need to teach self-esteem! It will be the natural outcome as they sew clothes, gifts, and items for their room. Happy Sewing!



*Answer page for*  
**Recipe Abbreviations Worksheet**

In recipes, abbreviations are often used for measurements such as teaspoon, tablespoon, and cup. It's easier to write T., t. or C. instead of the entire word. It's important that you learn common abbreviations.

Memorize these three abbreviations:

**t. = teaspoon**

**T. = tablespoon**

**C. = cup**

Write the ingredient list below using abbreviations. Follow the example.

2 Cups flour                      2 C. flour

2 teaspoons baking powder      2 t. baking powder

1 ½ teaspoons baking soda      1 ½ t. baking soda

½ teaspoon salt                      ½ t. salt

½ Cup butter                      ½ C. butter

3 tablespoons milk                      3 T. milk

It's important to read a recipe carefully. T. and t. often look very similar especially in handwritten recipes. But there is a big difference between a tablespoon and a teaspoon!

Memorize:

**1 tablespoon = 3 teaspoons   or   1 T. = 3 t.**

Imagine if you did not read a recipe carefully and instead of 1 **teaspoon** of salt, you used 1 **tablespoon** of salt! The finished product would probably taste too salty to eat, and your time and the ingredients would be wasted.

Write the ingredient list below using the appropriate word for each abbreviation.

3 C. flour                      3 Cups flour

2 T. oil                      2 tablespoons oil

1 t. salt                      1 teaspoon salt

1 ¼ t. baking soda                      1 ¼ teaspoons baking soda

1 T. milk                      1 tablespoon milk

## *High Altitude Adjustments*

Food cooks differently at high altitudes. Here are some tips to help you adjust recipes. The Crisco website states:

**What is high altitude?** Areas that are 3,500 feet above sea level are considered to be high-altitude areas.

### **Cooking** at high altitude

- All cooking processes are directly affected by atmospheric pressure.
- At sea level, water boils at 212° F, but on mountaintops and other high-altitude regions, the boiling point is much lower.
- For about every 500 feet of ascent, the boiling point is lowered 1°F.
- At a 7,000 foot elevation, water would boil at about 198° F. Because the water is boiling at a lower temperature, it would take longer to cook food by boiling.

### **Baking** at high altitude

Atmospheric pressure is less at high altitudes than at sea level or more normal elevations. This lower pressure affects the baking of cakes in several ways.

- Heat rises from the bottom of an oven, but since there isn't sufficient air pressure from above to balance this upward pressure, the cake tends to expand too rapidly.
- Air cells in the cake can break and escape because of this too-rapid expansion, resulting in a cake that will dip or fall.
- Batter may overflow the pan due to the too-rapid expansion of the cake.
- Cakes can remain underdone if temperature is not raised to adjust for the lower boiling point at high altitudes.
- Due to rapid evaporation of liquids at high altitudes, cakes must be carefully timed to avoid excess dryness.

### **High-altitude conversion tips**

To convert standard recipes into those that can be used for high-altitude baking:

- Use 5% more flour to disperse the leavening action and slow down the rapid rise of the cake.
- Use 20% more water to counterbalance the rapid evaporation of liquids at high altitudes and the extra flour added to the cake batter
- Bake about 25 degrees higher to help "set" the cake's crust
- Reduce baking time by about 20% to prevent over baking at the higher temperature
- Fill pans 1/3 to no more than 1/2 full to avoid batter overflow caused by rapid cake expansion.
- Use cold water and large, cold eggs to give cake extra strength
- Generously grease and flour cake pans to prevent cake from sticking
- Remove top oven rack to prevent cake from sticking to it, since high-altitude cakes rise higher
- Have oven calibrated by a serviceperson periodically, since some thermostats are affected by altitude

### **High-altitude cookie adjustment**

Only cookies with lots of chocolate, nuts, or dates need adjustment: Reduce baking powder/soda by 1/2.

At very high altitudes, a slight reduction of sugar may help.

**Yeast breads** need no alterations. You may notice a slight difference, but not enough to make any changes.

### **Answers to other high-altitude questions**

For other questions, consumers should contact one of the following:

- The home economics department of a local state college
- The state agricultural extension service
- The home service department of the local utility company

This information provided courtesy of Crisco. For lots of great cooking tips, visit their website at: [www.crisco.com](http://www.crisco.com).



## **Sample Task Cards for Clean-up Time**

Print, cut out each task card and give one, or more, to each girl before clean-up time. Write your own task cards to meet your particular needs. Read the Homemaking Skills section and teach these skills to the girls.

### **Rinse & Stack the Dishes**

Put any food scraps in the garbage can.  
Rinse the dishes in warm water and stack them beside the sink.

### **Wash the Dishes**

Fill the dishpan with clean, hot water and one squirt of dish detergent. Wash the dishes with a clean dishrag. Rinse in warm water and set them in the drainer.

### **Dry the Dishes**

Use a clean, dry dish towel to wipe the dishes dry. Put them away.

### **Wash the Countertop**

Rinse a dishrag in warm water. Wring it out. Wipe up any food and discard in the garbage. Rinse the dishrag again. Spray a little cleaner on the counter and wipe clean.

### **Wash the Table**

Rinse a dishrag in warm water and wring it out. Wipe up crumbs and food and discard. Rinse the sponge or dishrag frequently in clean soapy water and wring it out. Wipe the table until it is clean.

### **Sweep the Floor**

Use a broom and dustpan. Sweep under the table and around all work areas. Sweep the debris into the dustpan and discard.

### **Wipe up Food Spills**

Look at the front of the cupboards in your work area. Check the floor. Wipe up any spills with a damp paper towel. Do the floor last! Discard the paper towels.

### **Wipe the Stovetop**

Turn off all burners. Wait until they have cooled. Rinse a dishrag in warm water and wring it out. Wipe the stovetop around the burners. Discard any food in the garbage. If necessary, spray a little all-purpose cleaner and wipe again.

# *Certificates of Achievement*



Mrs. Latour with FCH class proudly displaying their certificates at the end of the school year.

Everyone appreciates a little recognition! Throughout the year, I tell the girls I am proud of them and their accomplishments. At the end of each school year, I give each girl a certificate of achievement for a job well done all year long. We make refreshments and invite their parents to join us for the last class of the year. I call each girl forward, present them with their certificate, and give them a big hug! We dress up for this event and make it a special and memorable time.

On the following pages, you will find several certificates you might like to use. Or, create your own on your computer. Print each one on pretty paper; add each girl's name at the top and the date at the bottom.

In the photo above, I printed the certificates on gold parchment paper I purchased at an office supply store. I added teacup stickers on the left side because that year we hosted a tea party for their mothers.

You can also find blank certificate forms at an office supply store. Print one of the pages below; place it on a copier. Place the blank forms or pretty paper into the copier and print.

You can create a lovely keepsake for the girls, something in the years to come that will recall many fond memories of their time with you in FCH.

**NOTE:** When printing the certificates, you will be given choices under "Page Scaling." Select "None" to keep the margins as they appear on the computer screen.

# *Certificate of Achievement*

## *Future Christian Homemakers*

*“She looks well to the ways of her household...  
Let her own works praise her in the gates.”*

*Proverbs 31:27,31*

*Certificate of Achievement*

*Future Christian Homemakers*

*“She looks well to the ways of her household...”*

*Let her own works praise her in the gates.”*

*Proverbs 31:27, 31*

*Certificate of Achievement*

*Future Christian Homemakers*

*“She looks well to the ways of her household...  
Let her own works praise her in the gates.”*

*Proverbs 31:27,31*