

# Maths at our house: cooking

Cooking provides many opportunities for learning about maths and how to follow instructions and procedures.

Younger children can help with making food and older children can learn to follow recipes or instructions on packets and cook independently. The language of fractions and measurement will come out as you talk about making things together.

## Cooking: counting

- Count the amounts of each ingredient being used in recipes.
- Count the numbers of items being made.
- Ask your child to read the number off the recipe and then count the cups or spoons required.
- Count the cutlery when you are setting the table.

## Cooking: measuring

There are many different types of measurement included in cooking, including cups, teaspoons, tablespoons, millilitres, litres, grams, kilograms.

Older children can learn about the equivalencies between measures such as 250 ml = 1 cup or 16 tablespoons = 1 cup or 1000g = 1 kg.

Discuss how important it is to be exact when measuring. Why do your measurements need to be more accurate when you are baking than when you are making a stir-fry?

## Cooking: figuring

Cooking provides plenty of opportunities to do some “figuring out” for children.

1. **Increasing and decreasing:** If you need to double a recipe, (or increase it by 3x, or  $1\frac{1}{2}$  x or 10x) you can ask your child to figure out how much of each thing is needed now. You can do the same if you need to halve a recipe or only mix up half of a packet of something.
2. **Fractions:** Explore what  $\frac{1}{2}$  and  $\frac{1}{4}$  and  $\frac{1}{3}$  mean within the context of cooking. This may mean learning to choose the right measuring spoon or cup, or estimating with a bigger spoon or cup. It can also involve taking a block of butter and cutting it into pieces to get the right fraction (like  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup = 125 g or the 500 g cut into quarters).
3. **How much, how many?** If you are making food for a large group or for a bake sale ask your child to help you figure out how much of each of the ingredients you will need or how much it will cost altogether and how much each thing should sell for in order to make money. When shopping for ingredients, take your child with you and ask them to compare prices and help decide the most cost efficient way to make the large batch.

Reference: <https://nzmaths.co.nz/maths-our-house-cooking>

