


Now You're Cookin'!

# Meals with Help from Teens!

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## Kitchen, Teens and Creativity

More children and teenagers are eating meals and snacks away from their home and family. Encouraging teens to help prepare food and clean up can help busy families manage their time. Teens learn important cooking skills and have fun, too. Cooking promotes creativity and helps teens form good eating behaviors that will last a lifetime.

### Did You Know?

- Only about one-third of families eat together at least once a day.
- Frequent family mealtimes are related to better school performance.
- On average, about 29% of kids occasionally make their own dinner.
- Children who help prepare a snack or meal are more likely to try the food.

## Benefits of Kids Cooking

- Cooking teaches! Kids use their math and language skills while following recipe directions. They learn about measuring accurately, cooking terms and fractions as they cook.
- Cooking builds self-esteem. Preparing foods for family and friends gives kids a sense of accomplishment.
- Cooking promotes smart food choices. Children and teens who help prepare food are more likely to taste the foods.

## Let's Get Cooking!

Try these tips to learn to prepare a basic white sauce used in homemade macaroni and cheese. You'll also learn how to make homemade pizza and fruit smoothies.

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Don't settle for macaroni and cheese out of a box! Impress your friends with your gourmet cooking skills and increase your calcium by whipping up this irresistible homemade mac and cheese dish.

## Cooking Tip No. 1

Measuring accurately is important. Do you know your "measurement equivalents"?

a. How many tablespoons are in a cup?

b. How many tablespoons are in a stick of butter?

c. How many fluid ounces are in one cup of milk?

Answers: a. 16 tablespoons; b. 8 tablespoons; c. 8 ounces.

## Cooking Tip No. 2

A white sauce (made of milk, butter or margarine and flour) can be used for lots of foods — pasta, vegetables, even over meat loaf or sliced potatoes. Add cheese for flavor and thickening. Watch for easy recipes that use a basic white sauce — you'll be surprised what you can cook!

Source: kidscooking.com

# Sarah's Own Baked Macaroni and Cheese

6 c. water
1½ tsp. salt
2 c. pasta or whole-wheat elbow macaroni (8 ounces)

**Sauce**
2 Tbsp. butter
2 Tbsp. flour
2 c. nonfat milk
½ medium onion – chopped finely
2 bay leaves (optional)
1/8 tsp. nutmeg (optional)
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
1 c. shredded low-fat mozzarella cheese
1¼ c. grated reduced-fat sharp cheddar cheese
Topping
½ c. whole-wheat (or white) bread crumbs
1 Tbsp. butter

Preheat oven to 350 F.

**Pasta directions:** In a medium saucepan, bring water and salt to a rolling boil. Add pasta and cook 6 to 8 minutes. Slightly undercook pasta that will be baked further. Drain pasta in strainer and set aside.

**Sauce directions:** While pasta is cooking, melt 2 tablespoons butter in a large saucepan over medium heat. Using a whisk, add 2 tablespoons whole-wheat flour and stir for 3 minutes. Be careful; it burns easily! Gradually whisk in milk. Add onion, bay leaves, nutmeg (if desired) and pepper. Reduce heat and simmer, stirring often, for 15 minutes. Mix cheese together and place in separate container. Remove sauce mixture from heat, remove bay leaf and stir in 1½ cups of the cheese. Stir in the macaroni. Pour half the mixture into a baking dish and sprinkle on half of the remaining cheese. Top with the remaining macaroni-sauce mixture and the remaining cheese.

**Topping directions:** Melt 1 tablespoon butter in small pan. Add bread crumbs and toss to coat. Sprinkle over the top of the cheese.

Bake in 350 F oven for about 30 minutes, until bread crumbs are slightly browned and crisp.

Recipe source: Adapted by Sarah Wells from several recipes.
*Makes six servings. Each serving has 390 calories, 15 g fat, 22 g protein, 43 g carbohydrate, 0 g fiber and 990 mg sodium.*

## Cooking Tip No. 3

Making dough is a great way to get kids and adults excited about cooking! You can make mouthwatering fresh bread, buns or pizza crust. Dough recipes all start with some form of the same ingredients — flour, liquid, leavening (such as yeast or baking soda), sugar and salt. Most also have a type of fat, such as butter, margarine or oil.

The nutrition and calorie information for the finished pizza depends on your choice of toppings. Top your whole-wheat pizza crust with healthy toppings! Choose your favorites and make a pizza with all the food groups. Here are some ideas:

**Fruit Group and Vegetables Group**
Tomato-based pizza sauce
Fresh green pepper slices
Pineapple chunks
Purple and green onion slices
Black olives
Fresh tomato slices
Yellow squash slices
Fresh jalapeno pepper slices
Fresh mushroom slices
Fresh garlic
Zucchini slices
Fresh basil, rosemary or thyme

**Protein Foods Group**
Canadian bacon
Reduced-fat sausage
Canned shrimp

**Protein Foods Group**
Part-skim shredded mozzarella cheese
Shredded/grated provolone or Romano cheese

Try making this highflying, savory, nutritious pizza!

## Whole-wheat Pizza Dough

1 c. all-purpose flour (plus additional flour as needed)
1½ c. whole-wheat flour
1 tsp. salt
1¼ c. warm water (105 F to 115 F)
2 Tbsp. olive oil
2 packets* active dry yeast
1 tsp. sugar

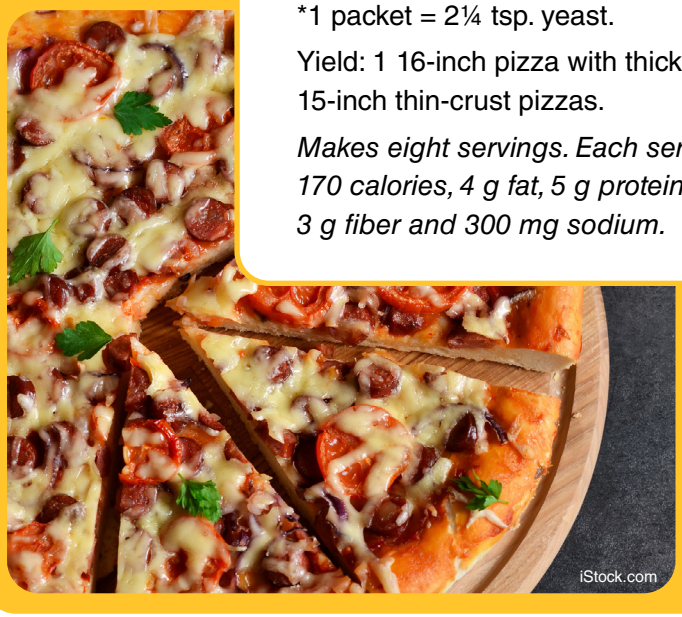
Use a mixer with a dough hook or mix by hand in a large mixing bowl. Combine all dry ingredients except sugar and yeast. Make a "well" in the center of the dry ingredients. Combine warm water, yeast, sugar and olive oil. Slowly add liquid to dry ingredient "well" and mix until all flour is incorporated, adding more flour to make a ball. Knead on a floured work surface for about 10 minutes or until dough is smooth and elastic. Shape into ball, place into lightly greased bowl and turn once to grease entire surface. Cover bowl with clean towel, place in a warm, draft-free location and let rise until double.

Preheat oven to 425 F. Punch down dough, form into a small circle and place on floured work surface. Let rest for 5 minutes and then press out dough until it is slightly larger than pan size (use a rolling pin if you like). Fold dough in half and half again. Place "wedge" onto greased 16-inch pizza pan that's been "dusted" with corn meal. Unfold dough and crimp edges to form a crust. You also can divide dough in half to make a thin-crust pizza; use a rolling pin to press into two 10-inch by 15-inch pans. Top with favorite sauce and toppings and bake for 15 to 20 minutes.

*1 packet = 2¼ tsp. yeast.

Yield: 1 16-inch pizza with thick crust or two 10-inch by 15-inch thin-crust pizzas.

*Makes eight servings. Each serving of crust has 170 calories, 4 g fat, 5 g protein, 29 g carbohydrate, 3 g fiber and 300 mg sodium.*



## Did you know?

Cream cheese, cream and butter are dairy foods, but they are not part of the dairy group. Foods made from milk that retain their calcium content are part of the dairy group. Choose fat-free, reduced-fat or low-fat dairy group foods to reduce calories if needed. Drinking milk isn't just for kids. Here's how to whip up a refreshing low-fat, calcium-rich fruit smoothie in no time.

## Fruit for the Day Smoothie

1 7-ounce can mandarin oranges (in light syrup)
2 frozen bananas, peeled and sliced
2 c. frozen unsweetened strawberries
1½ c. fat-free milk

Add all ingredients to the blender in the order listed above. Be sure to hold down the lid and blend on low speed for 30 seconds. Then blend on high speed for one minute.

*Makes four servings. Each serving has 140 calories, 0 g fat, 4 g protein, 33 g carbohydrate, 3 g fiber and 45 mg sodium.*




## Eat Smart. Play Hard. Together

- For more information about food safety and nutrition, contact your county office of NDSU Extension.
- Visit the NDSU Extension website at **www.ag.ndsu.edu/food**

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