

COOKING WORKSHOPS PLANNING AND PREPARATION



GUIDANCE AND ADVICE

Running cooking activities is a great way of bringing people together to learn new skills and share experiences. It is a particularly useful mechanism for reaching communities that don't easily engage. Here are some pointers to help you plan and prepare appropriate sessions.

1. IDENTIFY WHAT YOU WANT PARTICIPANTS TO GAIN FROM THE EXPERIENCE

This could be:

- Personal development
- Improving practical cooking skills
- Trying new foods
- Budgeting skills
- Understanding food labels
- Menu planning
- Confidence in the kitchen
- Healthy eating knowledge and practice
- Introduction to the catering industry
- How to teach others to cook
- Reducing food waste
- A social experience - cooking and eating together.

2. PLAN THE PROGRAMME

Think about:

- **Type of programme** - e.g. casual drop-in session, one-off introductory session, 4 or 6 week signed-up programme, targeted programme for people with specific needs?
- **Suitable session times** to fit in with participants' needs and lifestyles (2 hours gives a meaningful experience and allows time to sit and eat).
- **What to cook** to cover aims of programme, participants' situations and availability of ingredients.
- **Providing a certificate** / reward for completing the course.




3. WORK WITH A RANGE OF INGREDIENTS, COOKING PROCESSES AND TECHNIQUES TO BUILD CONFIDENCE AND DEVELOP PERSONAL SKILL

- **Fruit and vegetable** preparation to develop knife skills.
- **Basic recipes** - e.g. pastry, sauces, bread, cakes, soup.
- **Meat and fish** preparation and cooking - using cheaper cuts and species.
- **Methods of cooking** - baking, grilling, steaming, boiling, stir-frying, using the microwave effectively.
- **Home cooked alternatives** to takeaways and ready meals.

4. DEVELOP SYSTEMS OF WORKING SO COOKING SESSIONS ARE SAFE AND EFFICIENT

- Pre-session preparation - shopping, receiving food, portioning, weighing and measuring, gathering equipment, preparing set-outs.
- 'Rules of the room'.
- Washing-up and cleaning-down routines.
- Personal hygiene expectations - clean hands, prepared to wear aprons and tie hair back, cover cuts, remove unhygienic jewellery on hands and arms.



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