



A Recipe for Life

Food is fun, especially when it's food that you have cooked yourself. There is nothing quite as tasty as golden-brown peach cobbler cooked in a Dutch oven ... unless it's a perfectly grilled steak with a piping-hot baked potato. Or maybe a Western omelet overflowing with cheese, peppers, and onions. Or maybe ... well, you get the idea.

Cooking is an important skill when you are camping, but it is also an important skill back home. Unless you want to get by on ramen noodles and fast-food burgers for the rest of your life, you need to learn how to cook. That is what this program feature is all about—as a new backcountry gourmet, you can learn techniques to tickle your palate and amaze your family and friends. You may even go head-to-head with other Scouts in a cook-off where you have the chance to prove your skills. No matter who wins, there will be plenty of delicious food to enjoy afterward.

So grab your apron, and let's get started. Bon appétit!

Objectives

This month's activities should:

- Focus on the basics of preparing good meals.
- Develop the skills needed to become self-sufficient in cooking for oneself and others.
- Teach a variety of cooking methods.
- Prepare Scouts to utilize different heat sources when cooking.
- Emphasize the importance of good nutrition by introducing the USDA MyPlate guidelines.
- Highlight potential cooking hazards and how to prevent them.
- Teach Scouts how to plan menus, purchase food, and store perishables properly.

RELATED ADVANCEMENT AND AWARDS

- Camping, Cooking, and Wilderness Survival merit badges
- Cooking requirements for Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class ranks
- Ranger: Cooking core requirement



Leadership Planning

As a leadership team, you may want to discuss the following items when choosing cooking as your program feature during your planning meetings.

1. Will the four meetings support a weekend dedicated to cooking or a one-day event to further skills and work on advancement?
2. How can this month's program teach cooking skills required for Tenderfoot, Second Class, and First Class ranks?
3. How can this month's program help Scouts earn the Cooking merit badge?
4. Which of our youth leaders have the necessary cooking skills to lead instruction during the next four weeks?
5. Who else could provide instruction?
6. Where can we obtain stoves and other equipment the unit doesn't have?
7. What changes should we make to the sample meeting plans that would fit our needs better?

PARENTS CAN HELP WITH THE COOKING PROGRAM FEATURE BY:

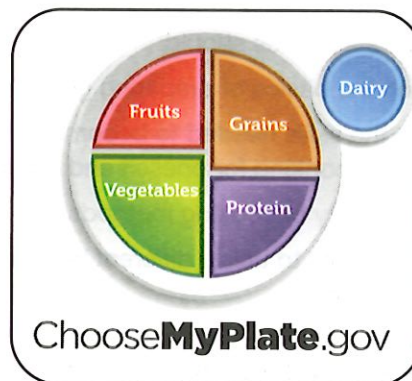
1. Working with their Scouts to learn the "home cooking" requirements for the upcoming event or giving them guidance with the Cooking merit badge
2. Providing favorite recipes that can be adapted for camp
3. Assisting instructors as needed
4. Modeling the use of the MyPlate guidelines at home
5. Providing transportation for the main event
6. Helping with food purchasing

INFORMATION SPECIFIC TO COOKING

Safety

Cooking requires attention to several key safety concerns.

- Avoiding burns and fires should be a major focus. Be careful to keep any items that could catch fire (paper towel rolls, dish towels, pot holders) away from the heat source. Be sure to use dry pads or hot-pot tongs to handle heated pans. Hot liquids or grease might also cause burns, so be sure to avoid spills and splatters. Keep a fire extinguisher and first-aid supplies on hand in case they are needed.
- Cuts are always a risk when using knives, so be careful and follow safe practices.
- Proper food storage and handling are of prime importance. Be sure that all foods requiring refrigeration are kept in an ice chest or refrigerator, and do the same with leftovers after a meal. Always cook meats and fish at the proper temperature to avoid making someone sick from food poisoning.
- Clean as you go and wash hands, with soap, prior to preparing foods and after handling raw meat or any foreign substance. Also, clean utensils as you go.
- Be aware of any food-related allergies or intolerances among those who will be eating the meal. See the *Cooking* merit badge pamphlet for more details.





Nutrition

Planning well-balanced meals requires a bit of effort, but the result is well worth it. Guidelines provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture at www.choosemyplate.gov will help you balance these five types of foods:

- Fruits (fresh, canned, frozen, or dried; fruit juice)
- Vegetables (fresh, canned, frozen, or dried; vegetable juice)
- Grains (bread, cereal, pasta)
- Proteins (meat, poultry, seafood, eggs, nuts)
- Dairy (milk, cheese, yogurt, ice cream)

Not included are fats and oils, which should be used sparingly.

SPICE UP YOUR COOKING

Salt and pepper are popular seasonings, but you should also try chili powder, garlic powder, Italian seasoning, and cumin. Other options include bouillon, soy sauce, hot sauce, tamarind, mint, basil, cilantro, and ginger. Go easy with seasonings during the cooking; you can always add more flavor at the table.



SAMPLE CAMP RECIPE: CHICKEN WITH BROWN RICE

- Nonstick cooking spray
- 3 cups of brown rice (precooked at home and properly stored)
- 10-ounce package frozen green peas
- 2 cups precooked chicken breast, chopped into small pieces
- ½ cup cholesterol-free, reduced-calorie mayonnaise
- ½ cup slivered almonds, toasted (optional)
- 2 teaspoons soy sauce
- ¼ teaspoon ground pepper
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon dried tarragon leaves

Coat a 3-quart Dutch oven or large casserole dish with cooking spray. In the Dutch oven or dish, combine rice, peas, chicken, mayonnaise, almonds, soy sauce, and seasonings. Mix well and cover. Bake at 350 degrees for 15 to 20 minutes or until heated through. Serves six.

Hint: Place the palm of your hand 5 inches from the coals. If it takes you 5 to 7 seconds to pull away, the coals are at a medium temperature, which is 350 to 450 degrees. If it takes a few seconds more before your hand feels too hot, the coals are at low temperature, 250 to 350 degrees.



Cooking Methods

bake. To cook by dry heat as in a conventional oven, in a Dutch oven, or in aluminum foil. Cookies, cakes, pies, and roasts are typically baked.

broil. To cook using a direct heat source such as over or under an open fire. Meats such as steaks, ribs, or chops are typically broiled. Constant attention is needed to avoid overcooking.

boil. To cook in water or other liquid hot enough to bubble (212 degrees for water at sea level), such as boiling water for oatmeal. Boiling water is the first step in cooking items like rice, spaghetti, or noodles.

panfry. To cook using a hot skillet and a small spoonful of cooking oil. Meats and vegetables are typically panfried. You can panfry potatoes or fish you have caught over an open fire in the outdoors.

stir-fry. Usually done in a wok or a large skillet with a small amount of cooking oil. Vegetables like celery, carrots, peppers, onions, cabbage, pea pods, and tomatoes are often stir-fried with thinly sliced cuts of pork, chicken, or steak and served with rice. Shrimp is another good ingredient, but check for shellfish allergies. Food can be seasoned to taste while stir-frying.

deep-fry. Cooking that requires a deep pan and immersion in very hot oil (more than 300 degrees). Care must be taken to prevent splatter and burns. Common foods for deep-frying are french fries, chicken nuggets, hush puppies, doughnuts, and fish.

roast. A method of cooking a larger portion of meat, pork, chicken, or turkey in a Dutch oven over hot coals or in a regular oven (using a roasting bag makes cleanup a snap). The key to success lies in timing the cooking, carefully adjusting the temperature based on the weight of the item.

simmer. To cook over reduced heat in liquid just barely at the boiling point. Simmering makes the sauce richer and more flavorful the longer it stays on the heat source.

steam. To place food on a rack or special device over boiling or simmering water in a covered pan. A basket or strainer is held over the water, and the resulting steam cooks the items. Steaming is most commonly used to cook vegetables.

stew. To cook slowly over low heat or slow boiling. Beef is one of the most common meats for stewing.

microwave. This is the most common indoor cooking method used by Scouts. A microwave oven heats food by radiation. Care must be taken to use microwavable dishes and NO metal objects, including aluminum foil.

Special Cooking Events

In addition to cooking at every campout, here are some ways to make cooking more fun for your group.

Family Day. Have patrols invite their families to a full meal cooked by the Scouts.

Dutch Oven Instruction/Competition. Spend a day learning to cook in Dutch ovens, then put your skills to the test.

Food Field Trip. Take a tour of a food manufacturing plant, farm, bakery, or cannery. Learn how the facility prepares, processes, and packages food and what safety measures they take.

Fundraising Cooking Event. Hold a fundraiser that involves serving a breakfast or supper that you have prepared. Typical options include pancakes or a spaghetti and meatball dinner.

Advancement and Cooking Merit Badge Day. Recruit a merit badge counselor and other instructors to help Scouts complete advancement requirements related to cooking.

COOKING COMPETITIONS

Challenging your peers to a cooking competition is fun at any age. In recent years there have been countless TV shows dedicated to such contests. While the exact rules and procedures may vary, the competitions all provide an opportunity to showcase culinary skills. (See “Chopped” Camp Style on the next page.)



COOKING GAMES

Flapjack-Flipping Relay

Equipment: For each team, a frying pan and a linoleum “flapjack” with a white X painted on one side

Method: The teams line up in relay formation. Pans and flapjacks are placed along a line 20 feet in front of the teams. On signal, the first Scout from each team runs to the line and flips his flapjack. Then he runs back, tags the next Scout, and so on until all have run.

Scoring: Award 2 points for each flapjack thrown into the air, turned over, and caught properly. Deduct 1 point if the flapjack hits the side of the pan, falls on the floor, or does not turn over. Give 5 points to the first team to finish with all flapjacks correctly flipped. The team with the most points wins.

Note: For an extra challenge, run a string horizontally about 4 feet above a table. Award bonus points for flipping flapjacks over the string.

Cooking Kim’s Game

Equipment: 8 to 10 different cooking utensils: spatula, measuring cup, potato peeler, wire whisk, cheese grater, salt shaker, paring knife, slotted spoon, can opener, food tongs, etc.; a large towel; paper and a pencil for each player

Method: Arrange the cooking utensils on a table and cover them with the towel. Have teams huddle around the table. Give them 3 minutes to identify the cooking utensils, listing them on the paper provided. Teams then go to their corners, combine their lists, and make notes on how each item is used. After they hand in their lists, uncover and identify the items. Explain the use for each one.

Scoring: Score 2 points for each item correctly named, and deduct 1 point for each incorrectly named. Give a bonus of 1 point for each proper use identified. The team with the highest score wins.

What’s Cooking

Equipment: Copies of the MyPlate guidelines (available on the USDA website); paper and pencil for each team

Method: All teams gather in separate corners. The game leader gives a short talk about using the MyPlate nutrition guidelines and hands out the MyPlate guidelines. Then each team plans a workable menu for an overnigher, including breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Menus must adhere to the MyPlate balance and include a food list and estimated food costs.

Scoring: Have youth or adult leaders judge each menu by the following standards: cost of food, ease of preparation, and balanced diet. The team with the best menu wins.

Note: The meeting continues as the menus are graded. Announce the winners during the closing.

Potato Peel Relay

Equipment: A potato for each player; a potato peeler and bag or bucket for each team.

Method: Place the equipment on a table at one end of the room and have teams line up relay-style at the other end. On command, the first Scout on each team runs to the table and completely removes the skin from a single potato. The player then returns and tags the next in line. The relay continues until all have participated.

Scoring: Scoring is based on time and completeness (quality) of the peeled potatoes.

Note: The potatoes should be cooked and eaten after the game.

‘Chopped’ Camp Style

Equipment: Select a cooking style (e.g., camp stoves or Dutch ovens), including heat source. Provide a set of cooking utensils and a supply of assorted vegetables, spices, dairy items, and other basic ingredients. Choose four secret ingredients for a main dish and four secret ingredients for a dessert. (Ingredients for the main dish might be a can of Spam or a Cornish hen, a jar of orange marmalade or a jar of olives, a sweet potato or a package of ramen noodles, and a few carrots or an ear of corn; for the dessert, ingredients might be crescent rolls or a hamburger bun, bananas or peaches, a cup of yogurt or cream cheese, a chocolate bar or a jar of peanut butter.)

Teams compete against each other to prepare a main dish and a dessert using the specified secret ingredients (as well as any staples they choose). Give them an equal but limited amount of time, such as 10 minutes for planning and 30 minutes for cooking. Play two rounds, specifying one set of secret ingredients for each round.

A panel of two to four judges will evaluate each dish on taste, creativity, presentation, and use of the ingredients. The first-place team in the first round gets 10 extra minutes for the second round. The prize could be a kitchen gadget for the winning team’s patrol box.



E.D.G.E. Ideas

Explain how it is done—Tell them.

Demonstrate the steps—Show them.

Guide learners as they practice—Watch them do it.

Enable them to succeed on their own—Have them practice/teach it.

EXPLAIN

- Explain the importance of learning to cook at home and while camping.
- Discuss the safety measures needed to minimize risk while preparing meals.
- Present the MyPlate nutrition guidelines and explain why they are important.
- Explain the importance of following cleanliness and proper food storage guidelines to ensure no one gets sick.
- Discuss the need for good menu planning and the key elements to consider.
- Describe how to time cooking a meal so that everything is ready to serve at the same time.

DEMONSTRATE

- Present basic cooking utensils and demonstrate how to use them.
- Show examples of various heat sources and explain how they are utilized while camping.
- Take potatoes or carrots and demonstrate how to slice, dice, chop, and julienne them; explain the reasons for using each option.
- Demonstrate how to plan a balanced menu and how to estimate the food cost.
- Present a video on cooking Dutch oven meals.
- Demonstrate the proper way to use the three-tub dishwashing method.

GUIDE

- Work with Scouts as they plan a dinner menu based on the MyPlate nutrition guidelines, and help them to understand the balance needed for healthy meals.
- After the sample menu is complete, have Scouts list the ingredients needed and have them determine the quantity and estimate the cost of each.
- Under a controlled situation, have Scouts cook simple things using various methods with close supervision, giving guidance as needed.
- Have the Scouts review the cleanup process with a leader to ensure the process is safe and effective.

ENABLE

- Have Scouts develop a menu for an outing, including the complete list of foods needed and all the tools necessary to cook their meals. If there are missing elements, challenge them to review their plan and see if they can make proper adjustments. Offer help as needed without doing it for them.
- On an outing, oversee the cooking process and let the Scouts know you are there if they need help. Allow them to make mistakes as long as safety is not an issue. Later, have Scouts reflect on their experience and various ways the meals could be improved. Offer suggestions for consideration.

MAIN EVENT SUMMARIES

● ESSENTIAL

Day Activity

Cooking at every main event—Cooking is an important part of most main events, so plan a main event where cooking shares top billing with another type of activity. New Scouts can focus on basic menus with limited ingredients, while more experienced Scouts will prepare more complex recipes or help to teach and guide the other Scouts.

■ CHALLENGING

Day Activity

The master iron chopped chef kitchen showdown—Plan a competition that can be done by groups or individuals in a set amount of time with specific ingredients or just a general category of food. Whether the goal is being the best or the most creative at preparing a specific dish, everyone will get a chance to be judged on technique, taste, and presentation. Decide on your own rules, but always remember to have fun.

◆ ADVANCED

Weekend Activity

Ultimate self-reliant cooking—Can you cook without pots and pans? How about without a kitchen and utensils? What if you didn't have a store to shop for items? Spend a weekend learning and practicing the art of cooking with these limitations. This activity is not for the timid. Does your group have what it takes?



COOKING

Meeting Plan: Introduction to Cooking



Week 1 Date _____

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME*
Preopening 15 minutes before meeting	As Scouts arrive, ask them what was the worst camp meal they have ever eaten. Ask why they didn't like it and how it could have been made better. Make a list to use during the opening session.		6:45 p.m.
Opening Ceremony 10 minutes	Flag presentation Scout Oath and Scout Law Uniform inspection		7 p.m.
Group Instruction 5 minutes	Review the list from the preopening. Ask Scouts why those meals were so bad. (Were meals cooked improperly? Were the ingredients substandard?) Explain that this month's meetings will help them learn to be better cooks and to be proud of their meals.		7:10 p.m.
Skills Instruction 45 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain that there are six essentials to cooking a good meal: time, ingredients, recipes, cookware, heat sources, and technique. Give each group a complete dinner menu. Then give them 25 minutes to plan what they need for the six essentials and who will take each role in the preparation. For the balance of the time, have a review board evaluate the groups' plans and then help in reviewing them. 		7:15 p.m.
	Have these Scouts serve as the review board for the Essential activity. They do the same planning as the Essential group but then serve as the review board.		
	This group prepares the dessert from the menu described above to be served during the last 10 minutes of the session.		
Breakout Groups 15 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan a menu using camp stoves for breakfast, lunch, and dinner on a campout. Begin planning for participation in the main event. 		8 p.m.
Game 10 minutes	Play Flapjack-Flipping Relay (described earlier).		8:15 p.m.
Closing 5 minutes	Announcements Leader's minute Closing		8:25 p.m.
Total 90 minutes of meeting			
After the Meeting 15 minutes	Leadership team reviews plans for the next meeting and for the main event.		

*All times are suggested.



COOKING

Meeting Plan: Health and Safety



Week 2 Date _____

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME*
Preopening 15 minutes before meeting	Test the Scouts' handwashing skills as they arrive. Have early arrivers spread a teaspoon of washable paint over their hands (including between the fingers) and then wash their hands with their eyes closed or while blindfolded. This exercise will demonstrate how well or poorly they do at handwashing.		6:45 p.m.
Opening Ceremony 10 minutes	Flag presentation Scout Oath and Scout Law Uniform inspection		7 p.m.
Group Instruction 10 minutes	Show a food safety video from the USDA (https://www.youtube.com/user/USDAFoodSafety/videos).		7:10 p.m.
Skills Instruction 40 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present the importance of safety while cooking. • Discuss the risk of burns and how to minimize burn incidents. Also discuss other possible cooking injuries, primarily cuts, and how to prevent them. • Explain proper treatment for burns, cuts, etc. 		7:20 p.m.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce proper food handling procedures to prevent foodborne illnesses. • Emphasize the need to follow safe handling practices including cleanliness and proper food storage. • Discuss the need to be aware of allergies and food intolerances among those who will eat the meal you are cooking. 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present nutritional guidelines based on the USDA's MyPlate model. • Explain the balance needed from the food groups and how the proper mix may vary depending on activities and the age and size of those for whom you are cooking. 		
Breakout Groups 15 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan a dinner menu incorporating the MyPlate nutritional basics. • The leadership group then evaluates the menu for proper understanding. • Continue planning for participation in the main event. 		8 p.m.
Game 10 minutes	Play What's Cooking? (described earlier).		8:15 p.m.
Closing 5 minutes	Announcements Leader's minute Closing		8:25 p.m.
Total 90 minutes of meeting			
After the Meeting 15 minutes	Leadership team reviews plans for the next meeting and for the main event.		

*All times are suggested.




COOKING

Meeting Plan: Planning for Success



Week 3 Date _____

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME*
Preopening 15 minutes before meeting	Develop several recipes with obvious errors, such as missing food group items, mismatched cooking resources, or missing ingredients. Have Scouts review the recipes and see if they can identify the errors.		6:45 p.m.
Opening Ceremony 10 minutes	Flag presentation Scout Oath and Scout Law Uniform inspection		7 p.m.
Group Instruction 10 minutes	Present the basics of menu planning. Review the principle of balancing food groups, matching the menu to planned activities and cooking resources.		7:10 p.m.
Skills Instruction 40 minutes	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form multiple groups, each including some Scouts who are more experienced than the others. • Have the experienced Scouts teach by example how to develop a full menu plan for a weekend trip. Include two breakfasts, two lunches, and two dinners. • Focus on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Planning complete, tasty meals – Developing a complete food list – Making plans to prepare and cook the food – Determining the costs and how the food items will be purchased 		7:20 p.m.
Breakout Groups 15 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan a camp menu that includes breakfast, lunch, and dinner and can be cooked without utensils. • All meals must use a heat source, and at least one must use a technique other than foil cooking. • Continue planning for participation in the main event. Work on advancement requirements as needed. 		8 p.m.
Game 10 minutes	Play Cooking Kim's Game (described earlier).		8:15 p.m.
Closing 5 minutes	Announcements Leader's minute Closing		8:25 p.m.
Total 90 minutes of meeting			
After the Meeting 15 minutes	Leadership team reviews plans for the next meeting and for the main event.		

*All times are suggested.





COOKING

Meeting Plan: Cooking Basics



Week 4 Date _____

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	RUN BY	TIME*
Preopening 15 minutes before meeting	As Scouts arrive, have an array of cookbooks available with both camping and home recipes. Preview several cooking websites to make sure the content is appropriate, and have computers or tablets set up to display those websites. Encourage the Scouts to browse and look for new recipes to try during the main event.		6:45 p.m.
Opening Ceremony 10 minutes	Flag presentation Scout Oath and Scout Law Uniform inspection		7 p.m.
Group Instruction 5 minutes	Explain that Scouts will rotate in 10-minute intervals to observe four different cooking methods at separate stations: 1) camp stoves, 2) foil packs, 3) backpacking stoves, and 4) Dutch ovens.		7:10 p.m.
Skills Instruction 45 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scouts will move by patrol in a round robin to get basic instruction on the four different styles of cooking, focusing on the benefits of each style and how to use them effectively. If possible, real cooking demonstrations would be good, but instruction can be given without food. 		7:15 p.m.
	 Scouts with some cooking experience should run the first two stations, demonstrating how to cook with camp stoves and foil cooking.		
	 Scouts with the most cooking experience should run the instruction for Dutch ovens and backpacking stoves.		
Breakout Groups 15 minutes	Participants finalize their menus, cooking methods, equipment lists, and duty rosters for the main event. Challenge them to try new methods.		8 p.m.
Game 10 minutes	Play Potato Peel Relay (described earlier).		8:15 p.m.
Closing 5 minutes	Announcements Leader's minute Closing		8:25 p.m.
Total 90 minutes of meeting			
After the Meeting 15 minutes	Leadership team reviews plans for the next meeting and for the main event.		

*All times are suggested.



COOKING

Main Event: Cooking at Every Main Event



Date _____

Logistics

Location: _____

 Departure time: _____
 Return time: _____
 Duration of activity: Varies
 Budget: Completed _____ Approved _____
 Camping: Duty roster _____ Menu _____
 Transportation: Group _____ Self _____
 Tour and activity plan: Completed _____ Submitted _____

Essential (Tier I)

Cooking is an important part of most main events, so plan a main event where cooking shares top billing with another type of activity. New Scouts can focus on basic menus with limited ingredients, while more experienced Scouts will prepare more complex recipes or help to teach and guide the other Scouts.

Equipment List

- Cooking equipment: pots, pans, and utensils appropriate for meals planned
- Menu plan, including times for preparation and cooking, duty roster, etc.
- All needed food, properly packed to ensure sound food safety
- Clean water or a way to treat non-potable water
- Cleaning supplies: paper towels, garbage bags, biodegradable soap, sanitizing tablets or bleach, etc.

Activity

- Develop a theme for the weekend's meals (i.e., a particular type of cuisine or a specific cooking method).
- Try different cooking methods each month, focusing on areas in which Scouts have less experience.
- Develop menus that fit the experience level of the group.
- Include elements of challenge or competition to increase the fun.

Safety

- Safety precautions are important at all cooking events, especially to prevent burns or cuts.
- Proper food handling is always mandatory, and extra care is essential when cooking outdoors.

Notes

Consider having each group bring its menu items to a central location for a smorgasbord meal. This allows Scouts to see how others cook. The more complex menu items will inspire the less experienced Scouts to advance their cooking skills.



COOKING

Main Event: The Master Iron Chopped Chef Kitchen Showdown



Date _____

Logistics

Location: _____

Departure time: _____

Return time: _____

Duration of activity: Varies

Budget: Completed _____ Approved _____

Camping: Duty roster _____ Menu _____

Transportation: Group _____ Self _____

Tour and activity plan: Completed _____ Submitted _____

Challenging (Tier II)

Plan a competition that can be done by groups or individuals in a set amount of time with specific ingredients or just a general category of food. Whether the goal is being the best or the most creative at preparing a specific dish, everyone will get a chance to be judged on technique, taste, and presentation. Decide on your own rules, but always remember to have fun.

Equipment List

- Enough space and heat sources for everyone to be able to cook at once
- Enough cooking equipment for every participant or team
- Agreed upon ingredients
- Criteria on which teams or individuals will be judged
- Appropriate serving dishes for tasting
- Awards
- Cleanup supplies

Activity

- Decide what type of cooking competition will be held. You might design your own based on a favorite TV show or use the "Chopped" Camp Style example described earlier.
- Set the criteria on how the competition will be judged.
- Prepare and set out the ingredients.
- Hold an opening ceremony.
- Have individuals or teams compete by cooking their menu items.
- Have the meals judged and award prizes as needed.
- Everyone helps with cleanup.

Safety

- Safety precautions are important at all cooking events, especially to prevent burns or cuts.
- Proper food handling is always mandatory, and extra care is essential when cooking outdoors.

Notes

Exactly how you run the competition is less important than having fun while everyone practices their cooking skills. Numerous TV shows feature cooking competitions so with a little research and some imagination, your group should be able to design a fun activity.



COOKING

Main Event: Ultimate Self-Reliant Cooking



Date _____

Logistics

Location: _____

 Departure time: _____
 Return time: _____
 Duration of activity: Weekend
 Budget: Completed _____ Approved _____
 Camping: Duty roster _____ Menu _____
 Transportation: Group _____ Self _____
 Tour and activity plan: Completed _____ Submitted _____



Advanced (Tier III)

Can you cook without pots and pans? How about without a kitchen and utensils? What if you didn't have a store to shop for items? Spend a weekend learning and practicing the art of cooking with these limitations. This activity is not for the timid. Does your group have what it takes?

Equipment List

- If camping, appropriate shelter and sleeping gear
- Recipes not requiring pots and pans (e.g., spit-roasted chicken, eggs in a paper cup, etc.)
- An appropriate location with fire pit
- Items for starting and maintaining a cooking fire
- Proper equipment for cleanup

Activity

- Set up camp as appropriate.
- Assemble food items as needed.
- Make sure the area is safe from fire hazards.
- Safely prepare a cooking fire.
- Cook without utensils, pots, or pans.
- Enjoy your meal.
- Clean up as appropriate.
- Always put out your fire.

Safety

- Safety precautions are important at all cooking events, especially to prevent burns or cuts.
- Proper food handling is always mandatory, and extra care is essential when cooking outdoors.
- If you are cooking without utensils, give special consideration to fire safety.

Notes

This main event might be considered an add-on to teaching the Wilderness Survival merit badge. Since food, water, and shelter are the most basic of human needs, ultimate self-reliant cooking can make hardship somewhat bearable.



REFERENCES

Books

Camping, Cooking, and Wilderness Survival merit badge pamphlets; *Boy Scout Handbook*; *Fieldbook*; *Camp Cookery for Small Groups: Recipes for Groups of Eight*

Bittman, Mark. *How to Cook Everything: The Basics—All You Need to Make Great Food*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012.

Connors, Christine, and Tim Connors. *The Scout's Outdoor Cookbook*. Falcon Guides, 2008.

Herod, Lori. *Foil Cookery: Cooking Without Pots and Pans*. Paradise Cay Publications, 2007.

Jacobson, Cliff. *Basic Illustrated Cooking in the Outdoors*. Falcon Guides, 2008.

Jacobson, Don. *One-Pan Gourmet Fresh Food on the Trail*. International Marine/Ragged Mountain Press, 2005.

Mills, Sheila. *The Outdoor Dutch Oven Cookbook*. International Marine/Ragged Mountain Press, 2008.

National Museum of Forest Service History. *Camp Cooking: 100 Years*. Gibbs Smith Publishing, 2004.

Woodruff, Woody. *Cooking the Dutch Oven Way*. Falcon Guides, 2013.

Organizations and Websites

ChooseMyPlate

Website: <http://www.choosemyplate.gov>

Food Network

Website: <http://www.foodnetwork.com>

International Dutch Oven Society

Website: <http://www.idos.org>

The Recipe Link

Website: <http://www.recipealink.com>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Website: <http://www.foodsafety.gov>

U.S. Food and Drug Administration

Website: <http://www.fda.gov>

Related Program Features

Backpacking, Camping, Fishing, Fitness and Nutrition, Hiking, Project Planning, Sustainability, Winter Camping

Photo and Illustration Credits

Pages 34-1 (Shutterstock.com, courtesy: *fresh vegetables*, ©Africa Studio; *camping pots and pans*, ©Dancestrokes; *aluminum foil*, ©Sergiy Kuzmin; *camping gas stove*, ©Jovan Nikolic), 34-2 (*MyPlate graphic*, ChooseMyPlate.gov), 34-3 (*spices*, Shutterstock.com/©Luis Santos)

Acknowledgments

We are grateful to Ben Jelsema, Clermont, Florida, devoted Scouter and chairman of the Boy Scouts of America's Fishing Task Force, for developing the Cooking program feature.