FOOD PREPARATION

Ready, Set, Cook

Before you mix two ingredients together, set yourself up for success. Take a few minutes to prepare so your cooking will be safe, on-time, and tasty.

Preparing to Cook

Read through the following suggestions to help you prepare to cook. If you have a family, involve your children or other adults to make it fun. It also teaches children cooking skills and spreads the work around.

You!

The very first step to cooking starts with yourself.

- Remove extra jewelry and pull long hair back.
- Wash hands for 20 seconds with hot, soapy water.
- Wear an apron or large shirt to protect your clothing.

Work Area

Prepare a clean, clear work area.

- Start with a clear surface to work on, such as a counter top or table.
- Wash the food preparation surface and any cutting boards with hot, soapy water.

Recipe

Read through the recipe completely before starting.

- Look for any cooking terms or directions that you may not understand.
- Make sure that you have all ingredients and equipment listed.

Ingredients

Having the ingredients ready to use in the recipe makes the cooking process go faster.

- Assemble all the ingredients needed.
- Prepare ingredients according to the recipe instructions, such as chopping an onion or slicing a carrot.
- Think about what you can substitute if you don't have one of the ingredients. For example, you may use canned diced tomatoes instead of fresh diced tomatoes.

Equipment

Assemble all the equipment you need.

- Find alternatives if the recipe includes equipment you don't have. If you don't have a whisk, use a fork. No mixer? Use a large spoon.
- Keep kitchen safety in mind. Use sharp knives safely. Limit equipment that your children use to safe tools like spoons and plastic knives.