

Cooking and Nutrition : Progression of Skills



	Design	Make	Evaluate	Technical Knowledge
Nursery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk about what they would like to make and choose ingredients or flavours (e.g. fruit for smoothies, toppings for pancakes). • Make simple choices about taste, texture, and appearance. • Recognise that food can be changed (e.g., chopped, mashed, mixed). • Begin to make decisions with adult support on what ingredients they will need and how their food will look. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore different fruits, vegetables, and ingredients using their senses. • Learn to name, prepare and handle a range of foods safely and hygienically. • Practise using simple tools with support. • Help to combine and mix ingredients while following simple step-by-step instructions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taste their food and talk about what they like or dislike using descriptive language (sweet, sour, smooth, crunchy). • Respond to sensory experiences — taste, smell, texture, colour (facial expressions/reactions). • Begin to say how they might change their recipe next time (e.g. “I’d add more banana”). • Share their creations and talk about how they made them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to understand that some foods are healthy and help our bodies grow. • Understand the importance of washing hands and keeping work areas clean when cooking. • Recognise that ingredients can be combined or changed through mixing, cutting or heating.

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Year R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn what a recipe is and how to follow one. Plan how to follow a recipe with adult support. Understand why fruits and vegetables are important. Describe simple features of familiar foods (soft, crunchy, sweet). Choose ingredients based on testing using their 5 senses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use basic cooking skills – mixing, cutting soft fruit, pouring, stirring. Follow instructions and adult-led steps safely. Combine ingredients to make a simple dish. Handle food safely and hygienically with adult guidance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use taste and sensory vocabulary to describe foods (sweet, sour, crunchy, smooth). Express preferences about taste, smell, texture. Evaluate their products discussing specific changes they would make. Begin to compare their product with others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand that some foods come from plants and animals. Learn simple healthy eating messages (e.g. eating fruits/vegetables, washing hands). Recognise that food must be clean and prepared safely. Show an understanding of healthy eating messages linked to the Eat-well Guide.

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KS1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and explore simple recipes, designing a key component considering preferences. Select ingredients and plan simple dishes for a purpose (e.g. picnic, lunchbox). Annotate and label simple design ideas for dishes. Consider colour, texture, and taste. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow simple step-by-step recipes. Complete a variety of cooking skills (measure, mix, spread, cut, knead, shape etc.) successfully and safely. Prepare foods safely following hygiene routines independently. Assemble and decorate dishes with some independence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taste and describe their creations using texture and flavour vocabulary. Compare their product to their original recipe idea and suggest improvements. Evaluate using brief annotations and notes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know all food comes from animals or plants and identify which foods can be grown, reared, or caught. Learn the message of the Eatwell Guide and use it to create balanced meals. Understand which foods are more readily available when and why. Food ingredients should be combined according to their sensory characteristics Know why hygiene is important when preparing food.

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	Design	Make	Evaluate	Technical Knowledge
LKS2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research, plan and adapt a recipe to suit purpose, taste, or dietary needs. Understand how ingredients can be adapted or substituted. Consider preferences based on their target audience. Select ingredients based on nutritional level, taste, texture and target audience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow a recipe accurately whilst successfully making an adaptation. Prepare ingredients safely (chopping, grating, weighing). Combine and cook ingredients with control. Present food in an attractive way. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use technical vocabulary related to materials and ingredients. Evaluate adapted recipes for taste, appearance, and texture against pre-set criteria. Suggest realistic improvements and justify choices. Reflect on what skills were used and improved in the making process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose ingredients based on their seasonality and where they come from and whether they are fresh, pre-cooked or processed. Apply knowledge of food groups and the Eatwell Guide to plan healthy dishes. Know how cooking changes food. Discuss that ingredients have functions (binding, thickening, flavouring) and describe what these are. Understand basic food safety and hygiene.

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	Design	Make	Evaluate	Technical Knowledge
UKS2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design a three-course menu or street food product for a given purpose and specific audience. Consider seasonality and sustainability. Consider nutrition, portion size, sustainability and appeal based on target audience and market research. Write step-by-step plans showing ingredient and technique choices. Justify choices made when creating recipes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare and cook dishes using a range of techniques and equipment (boiling, baking, frying, combining flavours). Work safely and hygienically with increasing independence. Prepare ingredients independently using their properties to decide how is best to prepare them. Make adjustments based on taste testing. Present finished dishes thoughtfully, considering aesthetics and function. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critically evaluate dishes based against the original design on sensory qualities, presentation, and nutritional value. Suggest detailed modifications to improve taste, texture, or presentation. Write reviews or critiques of food justifying evaluations. Reflect on cultural and environmental aspects of food production. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand where and how ingredients are sourced ("farm to fork") and their environmental impact to inform critical decisions on which ingredients should be used. Apply cooking skills confidently to prepare meals. Demonstrate an understanding of heat transfer and irreversible changes when cooking (baking). Apply key hygiene and safety principles independently.