

KIDS CLUB

NEWSLETTER



Welcome to the latest issue of our ChopChop Kids Club newsletter! (If you missed the last one, it's [here](#).)

This month we're cooking with corn. Or at least we're sharing our simplest, most delicious way to let this summer star shine. Do you eat corn on the cob around and around? Or in rows, like a typewriter?

(Take a poll at the dinner table!) There's lots more here, too, including from-scratch popcorn, fun facts, questions, and activities to fill these hot summer days.

Stay cool and have fun.



Perfect corn on the cob

When corn is in season, there's nothing like it: It's so sweet and juicy that the kernels actually burst when you bite into them! Buy it super fresh—from a farm stand, if possible—and, for the best taste, eat it the day you get it! And trust us about the 3-minute cooking time.

■ HANDS-ON TIME: 10 MINUTES ■ TOTAL TIME: 10 MINUTES ■ MAKES: 4 SERVINGS

KITCHEN GEAR

Large pot
Pitcher
Tongs
Serving plate

INGREDIENTS

4 ears fresh corn, shucked
(see next page)

INSTRUCTIONS

Wash your hands with soap and water, then gather all your equipment and ingredients and put them on the counter.

1. Put the pot on the stove and then, using the pitcher, fill it halfway with water. Turn the heat to high and bring the water to a boil.
2. Carefully add all the shucked corn—one at a time—to the boiling water. Look at your watch or set a timer for 3 minutes.
3. After 3 minutes, turn the heat off and use the tongs to move the corn from the pot to the plate. Eat right away!

GET CREATIVE

Butter and salt are traditional seasonings, but there are many other ways to add flavor to your corn:

- A squeeze of lime juice and a sprinkle of chili powder
- A drizzle of olive oil
- A shower of minced fresh herbs, such as chives, cilantro, or basil
- A sprinkle of Parmesan cheese
- A smear of pesto



TRY THIS NOW

To make our version of Mexican street corn, brush the cooked corn with a mixture of 1 tablespoon olive oil, 1 tablespoon mayonnaise, the juice and grated zest of $\frac{1}{2}$ lime, 1 teaspoon chili powder, and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt.



Double-Corn Quesadilla



Corn and Basil Frittata

GOT MORE CORN?

Do you have frozen corn kernels or more corn on the cob? Try one of these recipes.

Corn and Basil Frittata: www.chopchopfamily.org/recipe/corn-and-basil-frittata/

Double-Corn Cakes with Fresh Corn: www.chopchopfamily.org/recipe/double-corn-cakes-with-fresh-corn/

Corny Black Bean Salad: www.chopchopfamily.org/recipe/corny-black-bean-salad/

Double-Corn Quesadilla: www.chopchopfamily.org/recipe/double-corn-quesadilla/



KITCHEN SKILL

How to Shuck Corn

Shucking corn is actually fun. For easier clean-up, try doing it outside, or over a garbage can or compost bin (or even a sheet of newspaper).

1. Starting with the outside layers, pull each side of the husk away from the top of the ear and tear it down and away from the cob until it rips off. Do this until you've peeled off all of the husk.
2. Break off the bottom stalk as close to the ear as possible. This takes some strength, but you can do it!
3. Pull and rub off as much of the silk as you can.

HA HA

Q: What did the corn say when it got complimented?

A: Awww shucks.

DID YOU KNOW?

Corn silk helps in the plant's pollination, and each strand corresponds to a kernel on the cob.

Homemade Popcorn

You can make popcorn yourself, right on the stovetop! And it's whole-grain and inexpensive, too. Our method is easy once you get the hang of it: Just read through the steps before you start, then try to follow them pretty exactly.

■ HANDS-ON TIME: 10 MINUTES ■ TOTAL TIME: 10 MINUTES ■ MAKES: 10 CUPS

KITCHEN GEAR

Measuring spoons

Large, heavy pot with lid

Measuring cups

Pot holders

Large serving bowl

INGREDIENTS

2 tablespoon vegetable, olive, or coconut oil

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup popcorn kernels

Kosher salt and seasonings (see below)

INSTRUCTIONS

Wash your hands with soap and water, then gather all your equipment and ingredients and put them on the counter.

1. Put the oil in the pot and add 2 popcorn kernels. Put the pot on the stove and turn the heat to medium-high.
2. Cover the pot and wait until you hear the kernels pop, 3 to 4 minutes. Once they pop, turn off the heat and take the pot off the stove. Now you know the oil is hot enough to pop the kernels evenly.
3. Add the rest of the popcorn kernels to the pot and put on the lid. Using the pot holders to hold the lid in place, carefully shake the pot well (you might need an adult to help you with this). Leave the pot for 1 minute to heat up the kernels.
4. Put the pot back on the stove, turn the heat back to medium-high, and wait. Using the pot holders to hold the lid in place, give the pot a good shake every now and then.
5. After a few minutes, the popcorn will start popping—slowly at first, and then almost all at once. Once the popping has slowed down almost to a stop (after about 1 minute of popping), take the pot off the heat and set it aside to finish popping for 1 minute.
6. Add salt and/or your favorite seasoning and give the pot one last shake, then pour the popcorn into the bowl.



GET CREATIVE

Season your popcorn with one or more of these. Start with 1 teaspoon and shake it around, then taste it and add more if you like:

- Curry powder
- Celery salt
- Your favorite seasoning blend (Italian, Cajun, taco, Old Bay, etc.)
- Garlic powder
- Grated lime zest
- Grated Parmesan cheese
- Chili powder

Kitchen Science: Why Does Popcorn Pop?

The transformation of a seed into one of our most popular snacks—in the blink of an eye—is a remarkable process that hides a lot of interesting science. Whereas the kernel is hard, the popcorn is light, crunchy, and delightfully fluffy.

Like most seeds, the popcorn kernel houses the majority of ingredients that the plant needs to start its journey toward a full-grown organism. These include starch and water, the two secret ingredients that make kernels pop.

Kernels contain as much as 15% water inside the hard shell. Heating them turns the water into steam. The steam dissolves the starch inside the kernel and forms a thick liquid. The steam and heat create lots of pressure, eventually causing the kernel to pop.

Instead of splashing everywhere, the starchy water mix cools down rapidly and instantly solidifies upon escaping the shell. This solidification is what makes the white, crunchy popcorn. (To see this in action, do an internet search for “slow motion popcorn” and watch a video!)



MATH ON THE COB

If $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of kernels makes 10 cups of popcorn, how much popcorn would 1 cup of kernels make? (Don't try this at home!)

FOOD HISTORY

People have been popping corn for thousands of years. Archaeologists in Mexico, for example, found evidence of popcorn from 3600 BCE. That's some pretty ancient snacking!



GET MOVING: POPCORN EXERCISE

1. Lie down on your back with your arms extended on the floor over your head.
2. Bring your knees to your chest and wrap your arms around your legs. (You're a popcorn kernel!)
3. Lift your head and bring your eyes toward your knees. Count to 5 while you hold this position, then spring back out to the starting position. (You popped!)
4. Repeat 5 times, if you can, or build up to this number over a couple of days.

PRACTICE GRATITUDE

We know it might sound corny (ha ha ha, sorry), but it's more important than ever to appreciate what you have. Think of 3 things you are grateful for today—they can be the biggest things (your family) or the smallest things (you just ate some fresh, juicy cherries)—and then do it again tomorrow. And the next day.