

FN-HNB.001

KITCHEN-ON-THE-GO

A Guide for Food Demos Anywhere

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Food demonstrations are a key part of Family and Consumer Sciences programming. This handout serves as a reference tool for assembling a mobile kitchen that can be used to demonstrate almost any recipe in almost any location. These locations may include but are not limited to farmers markets, supermarkets, community centers, health fairs, and libraries. In this document, you will find items for a basic kitchen kit, and tips and strategies for setup, cleanup, food safety, saving time, and other considerations.

BASIC KITCHEN KIT

The following table provides a comprehensive list for a basic mobile kitchen to provide a food demonstration in most locations. When selecting the items for your basic kitchen kit, be mindful of items that would be available to your audience. This is not a recipe-specific kitchen kit. Check the specific recipe being demonstrated for items that may not be included in this basic kitchen kit.

CLEAN/SAFETY Unscented sanitizing wipes Hand sanitizer Paper towels Trash bags Food thermometer First aid kit Food-prep gloves	CUT Medium-sized knives Paring knives Cutting boards Vegetable peeler Kitchen shears	MEASURE Dry measuring cups Liquid measuring cups Measuring spoons	MIX Mixing bowl set Mixing spoons Large slotted spoon Flexible spatulas Turners Manual can opener Forks
COOK Heat source Sauce pan set Skillet Pot holders Hot pads/trivets Colander Kitchen timer	SERVE Tablecloths Trays Tongs Ladle Tasting cups/plates Disposable cutlery Napkins	MISC. Zip-top storage bags Aluminum foil Food wrap Extension cord (long) Power strip	OPTIONAL (space-permitted) Vegetable scrub brush Apron

HEAT SOURCE

Different recipes call for different cooking methods. You may find that the recipes you frequently demonstrate use the same type of heat source and keeping that appliance in your Basic Kitchen Kit is ideal. For some, it may be helpful to have multiple heat source options available that can be added to the assembled kit when the recipe to demonstrate is selected. Below are suggestions of heat sources

that will work in most locations. Note that all require an electrical source except the butane stove. When using electric appliances, be mindful not to plug in too many appliances at one time which could overload the electrical circuit.

- Cooktop or hotplate
- Electric skillet
- Electric griddle
- Toaster oven
- Butane stove (be sure to use only butane as a fuel source when indoors)

CONTAINER

Containers will vary depending on what is available to you for purchase and the size of your basic kitchen kit. When choosing your container for carrying the kit, consider ease of lifting it in and out of your vehicle as well as accessibility for different locations. Ideally, your kitchen kit should fit in one container that requires only one trip before setup. Tape the Basic Kitchen Kit Checklist to the outside of your container to use as a guide each time you repack or restock your Basic Kitchen Kit (see below). This will ensure all supplies are available for your next food demonstration.

Some suggested containers include:

- Rolling suitcase
- Wheeled cooler
- Wheeled crate or cart
- Plastic totes with collapsible dolly or wagon

SETUP

- Arrive early, if possible, to clean, organize, and prepare any ingredients necessary.
- Clean the space with unscented sanitizing wipes prior to setup.
- Consider setting up the food demonstration space with a disposable tablecloth which makes for easy cleanup. However, some may prefer reusable options. Look for vinyl tablecloths that represent your university colors which have a heavier weight and can be cleaned easily with sanitizing wipes.
- Solid-color tablecloths make it easier for the audience to see the food being prepared.
- Never demonstrate a recipe for the first time in front of an audience. Always practice first.
- When using loud kitchen appliances, never talk over the sound. Make your point and then turn on the appliance.
- To save time, only demonstrate measuring once with liquid and dry ingredients. Premeasure all other ingredients and have them ready to be used on the demonstration table. For example, if the recipe calls for 3 cups, measure 1 cup as a demonstration and have the other two premeasured.
- Travel with an extension cord when using electric appliances. Unless you know the food demonstration facility or site well, you may be farther from an electrical outlet than you realize.
- If possible, visit the location in advance to understand the setup of the space and resources available (e.g. electrical outlets, water source).

CLEANUP AND FOOD SAFETY

- Prior to setup and the food demonstration, pull back your loose hair or wear a cap.
- It is ideal to wear closed-toe shoes in case you drop a knife or other heavy kitchen equipment.
- Always wear food prep gloves when preparing and serving food to an audience.
- Use unscented sanitizing wipes after the food preparation. It may be necessary to sanitize during the food demo if raw meat, poultry, or eggs are being used.
- Zip-top storage bags are appropriate for packing and transporting leftovers.
- The appropriate way to handle dirty and clean kit items according to the Kentucky Department of Public Health Food Safety Branch is to have two plastic bags clearly labeled as “clean” and “dirty.” As items become dirty, place them in the “dirty” bag. Placing clean items in the “clean” bag keeps them from becoming contaminated during transport.
- For information about basic food safety, please visit <https://www.foodsafety.gov/>.

TIME-SAVING TIPS

- Create a “portable pantry” of items that are nonperishable such as cooking spray and spices that may accompany the portable kitchen. Consider storage of your portable pantry to keep items food safe.
- Do a “dry run” of your food demonstration at your office. Line up the necessary ingredients and equipment as you go and then pack to ensure all materials are ready.
- Label ingredients clearly that look alike (e.g. salt, sugar, baking soda, baking powder).
- Arrange ingredients on your food demonstration table in the order you will use them.
- Preassemble zip-top storage bags with enough disposable sampling materials (tasting cups and plates, cutlery, napkins) for your most typically sized group. Store in a convenient location within the Cooperative Extension Office. As needed, add the pre-assembled bags for the number of groups you intend to serve to your portable kitchen before your food demonstration.
- Depending on the purpose or location of the demonstration, it may save significant time to wash all produce prior to travel and setup for the food demo.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- If the food demonstration is outside, weather is an important factor to consider. For example, it may be helpful to have tablecloth weights and paperweights for napkins and other paper products in windy conditions.
- Plan time before and after your food demonstration program for packing, unpacking, and cleaning all kitchen items and utensils.
- Many of these items are multifunctional. For example, a metal fork may serve as a whisk and zip-top storage bags are sufficient for storing leftovers.
- While clear, glass mixing bowls are ideal to allow the audience to see the ingredients and food being prepared, they will add weight to the kit. If possible, choose clear plastic demonstration bowls for your kit. Clear plastic dessert bowls are great for small amounts of ingredients (1/2 cup or less).

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- A clear plastic storage bin with a red lid, filled with various kitchen items. Visible items include rolls of paper towels, plastic wrap, and other supplies. The bin is sitting on a wooden surface.



BASIC KITCHEN KIT CHECKLIST

- ☐ Unscented sanitizing wipes
- ☐ Hand sanitizer
- ☐ Paper towels
- ☐ Trash bags
- ☐ Food thermometer
- ☐ First aid kit
- ☐ Food-prep gloves
- ☐ Medium-sized knives
- ☐ Paring knives
- ☐ Cutting boards
- ☐ Vegetable peeler
- ☐ Kitchen shears
- ☐ Dry measuring cups
- ☐ Liquid measuring cups
- ☐ Measuring spoons
- ☐ Mixing bowl set
- ☐ Mixing spoons
- ☐ Large slotted spoon
- ☐ Flexible spatulas
- ☐ Turners
- ☐ Manual can opener
- ☐ Forks
- ☐ Heat source
- ☐ Sauce pan set
- ☐ Skillet
- ☐ Pot holders
- ☐ Hot pads/trivets
- ☐ Colander
- ☐ Kitchen timer
- ☐ Tablecloths
- ☐ Trays
- ☐ Tongs
- ☐ Ladle
- ☐ Tasting cups and plates
- ☐ Disposable cutlery
- ☐ Napkins
- ☐ Zip-top storage bags
- ☐ Aluminum foil
- ☐ Food wrap
- ☐ Extension cord (long)
- ☐ Power strip