

# 10 Clean Kitchen Cooking Strategies For Families

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Parents continue to provide us with feedback that a primary challenge is how to increase play time with their children. Parents identified shortcuts that they use in the kitchen when preparing multiple meals for family members throughout the week. Listed below are the top ten strategies:



- Organize your kitchen before your start to cook by:
  - Washing dishes or storing them in the dishwasher
  - Wiping down the kitchen counters
  - Setting up an accessible garbage bin
  - Setting up an accessible recycle bin

- Review the recipe you plan to prepare by:
  - Placing recipe ingredients on the counter
  - Placing measuring cups and utensils on the counter
  - Assembling the recipe
- Rinse and pickup ingredients after preparing a recipe

that can include:

- Storing rinsed dishes in the dishwasher or piling them on the counter

- Picking up all used ingredients

- Cooking the recipe and storing until ready to eat

Continue the clean kitchen cooking process that includes:

- Reviewing and preparing recipes

- Rinsing and picking up ingredients after preparing all other recipes

Set the table for a meal when food is cooking.

Wash all dishes or continue to load them into the dishwasher.

Take out the garbage and recycle bins when full.

Wipe down kitchen counters.

Enjoy your dinner as a family with the various food courses.

Clean-up after dinner by:

- Washing dishes or turning on the dishwasher

- Taking the garbage and recycle bins out to the garbage cans

- Wiping down kitchen counters

Parents have reported that once they use these strategies, they have one or more hours of time a day for their children and themselves. Additionally, preschool children can set the table and wipe down counters. Elementary age children can clean up dishes and load the dishwasher. Children of all ages can assist in the meal preparations and cooking. Middle school children can manage the kitchen with this process. High school students can manage the meal preparations and planning throughout the week or on specific days.

When your children assist in meal preparations, there is even more free time for family play. Your children will learn how to support the family needs. They can also learn how to organize themselves for planning and creating nutritional family dinners. These skills will support them in their academic learning and preparation for future independent living.

Happy meal time and play!

Mary Ann

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