



Getting started with cooking doesn't have to mean buying lots of fancy kit. A few good-quality tools can make cooking easier, safer, and more enjoyable, whether you're teaching in the classroom, cooking at home, or running a food activity.

Here are some top tips on what equipment to choose, why it makes a difference, and how it can build skills and confidence in the kitchen.

- 1 **Buy the best quality equipment you can afford:** Good-quality tools last longer, work better, and are safer to use. It's worth investing in sturdy items rather than replacing cheaper ones more often.
- 2 **Use hand blenders and mixers:** These can make chopping, blending, and mixing much quicker and save lots of time when you're cooking with a group.
- 3 **Choose stainless steel pans:** Stainless steel is durable, easy to clean, and doesn't scratch easily. It also works well on most types of hobs, making it a great all-rounder.
- 4 **Buy small knives with 8cm serrated blades for little hands:** These knives are easier and safer for children to handle. The serrated edge helps them cut through foods without needing too much force.
- 5 **Portable induction hobs are a great option:** If you don't have access to a full hob, portable induction hobs are safe, easy to use, and energy efficient. They're also handy for cooking in classrooms or other shared spaces.
- 6 **Air fryers are handy to have:** Air fryers cook food quickly, use less energy than an oven, and can help reduce how much fat is needed to make favourites like potato wedges.

Cooking equipment checklist

Here are some useful items to get started. You don't need everything at once – just build up your kit as you go!

Essentials:

- ☐ Knives (include some small 8cm serrated knives for children, and a few sharp chef's knives for adults)
- ☐ Chopping boards (different colours can help avoid cross-contamination)
- ☐ Mixing bowls
- ☐ Plates, bowls, and cutlery (forks, spoons, knives)
- ☐ Measuring jugs and spoons
- ☐ Wooden spoons or spatulas
- ☐ Baking trays and roasting tins
- ☐ Colander or sieve
- ☐ Saucepan(s) and frying pan(s) – stainless steel is a great choice
- ☐ Tea towels and oven gloves
- ☐ Grater
- ☐ Peeler

Handy Extras:

- ☐ Hand blender or mixer (to speed up tasks)
- ☐ Portable induction hob (great if you don't have access to a full hob)
- ☐ Air fryer (quick, energy-saving, and useful for healthier versions of favourites)
- ☐ Scissors (for herbs, packaging, or light prep jobs)
- ☐ Storage containers (for leftovers or packed lunches)

