

To cook or not to cook

Debbie

My whole family is really interested in cooking, and I've been helping in the kitchen since I was four years old. I'm 13 now, and I can make many different kinds of dishes. I asked for, and got, a blender for my birthday. Now I'm really into making soups and smoothies. My speciality is strawberry smoothie, and there's absolutely no one who doesn't like it. I want to learn how to prepare Indian food. I love spicy food. One of these days I want to travel to India to see how they prepare things like naan and curry.

Billy

I think it's very important that everybody knows how to cook, so that you can look after yourself one day. I can make some simple things, nothing fancy. But that's OK, because I don't like fancy food anyway. My brother taught me how to make filled jacket potatoes, and it's still one of my favourite dishes. I can also make things like coleslaw, noodles and omelettes. I can't prepare meat very well, though. My hamburger patties are either burnt or raw. I'm not vegetarian, but unless I learn how to grill or fry meat, I may become one by accident.

Imani

Why would anybody spend time in a kitchen when you can get a takeaway or buy a ready-made meal from a shop? There are so many things you have to do when you make your own food. For a start, you have to plan the meal and make a shopping list. Then you have to go and buy everything you wrote on the list. Then you have to make the food and hope that everything turns out alright – that you don't cut yourself or burn something. Afterwards, there is the cleaning up to do. And for this you need washing-up liquid, tea towels and so on. Phew! No, cooking is not for me. Luckily there's bread, as in sandwiches, which I have for breakfast, lunch and dinner. And apples. No need to cook those!

Chen

I don't like takeaways because the food is often too greasy. I especially don't like Chinese takeaways, but this is probably because my mum is an excellent cook. She's Chinese, and when she starts preparing some traditional Chinese food, you can smell it a mile away. My friends love her food, and they often come over to our place at around dinner time. My mum always invites them to stay for a meal, and they always say yes. I think if you're a good cook, you will always have friends. Preparing food is a social thing.

Lena

Food? Love it! In my house, we eat our way around the world! Curried veggies from India. Fish and chips from England. Hamburgers from the U.S. And of course, sushi from Japan. Mushrooms from Finland and meatballs from Sweden. But cooking itself? If I have to, I can make a sandwich, open some cans and boil an egg. That's it. Plenty of time to learn how to cook when I'm older. For now, when I'm hungry I have added the pizza place to my favourite numbers on my phone.