



**Bedfordshire**  
Fire and Rescue Service

## Students' guide to cooking and safety in the home



## Cooking safety facts

## How to avoid an electrical fire

## You are more at risk from fire when asleep, so make a bedtime check

## Be prepared by making a plan of escape in the event of a fire

-  Cooking oil is a highly flammable liquid
-  Food and grease residue in grills and ovens can act as a fuel for fire
-  Regularly empty the crumb tray in your toaster; crumbs can also act as fuel for fire
-  Long hair and scarves should always be tied back as they can set alight easily
-  Never leave a pan on the stove unattended.
-  Ensure pan handles are turned inwards and not sticking out, so they can't be knocked off
-  **DON'T USE WATER to put out a pan fire, water will cause the fire to spread**

-  Make sure all electrical appliances have a British or European safety mark when you buy them
-  Don't overload sockets – appliances use different amount of power – the limit is 13 amps
-  As a rule of thumb, if your electrical appliance is made to produce heat i.e. hair dryer, it should have its own socket
-  Look out for signs of dangerous or loose wiring such as scorch marks and hot plugs and sockets
-  Unplugging appliances helps reduce the risk of fires
-  **NEVER CHARGE YOUR MOBILE PHONE OVERNIGHT !!!**

-  Close inside doors at night to stop a fire from spreading
-  Turn off and unplug electrical appliances unless they are designed to be left on i.e. freezer
-  Check your cooker is turned off
-  Put candles and cigarettes out properly
-  Make sure exits are kept clear
-  Keep door and window keys where everyone can find them
-  **DO NOT THINK "IT WILL NEVER HAPPEN TO ME" ...**

-  Plan an escape route and make sure everyone knows how to escape
-  Make sure exits are kept clear at all times
-  The best route is the normal way in and out of the property
-  Prepare a second route in case the first one is blocked
-  In the event of a fire - **GET OUT, STAY OUT AND CALL 999**
-  **NEVER IGNORE A SMOKE ALARM IF IT GOES OFF**

## Simple Breakfasts



### 1. Yoghurt pot with fruit and nuts:

**Ingredients:** 100g (small) pot of natural yoghurt (low fat if you want to be healthy), any fresh fruits – blueberries, plums, strawberries, chopped apples, grapes etc., hazelnuts or almonds (you can buy them ready blanched or do it yourself by soaking in boiling water for 2 minutes, then peeling off the skin), seeds or granola if you like

them. Add a dash of juice of your choice, or nectar.

**Tools:** A chopping board, sharp knife, a bowl, or glass dish, or glass tumbler.

**Instructions:** Chop up the fruits, and place one layer into the dish, add a dash of juice, top with yoghurt, then another layer of fruit. Add a sprinkle of seeds or granola to the top if you like some crunch.



### 2. Porridge with berry fruits:

**Ingredients:** 300ml milk (semi or skimmed), 30g porridge oats (this is about 1 heaped tablespoon), pinch of salt, handful of berry fruits (cherries, blueberries, raspberries) and pomegranate seeds, molasses, cinnamon (optional), nuts (optional).

**Tools:** Saucepan (or microwave), spoon for stirring, dessert bowl, cling film if using microwave, chopping board, sharp knife.

**Instructions:** Heat the milk till simmering, add the salt, then the porridge oats, stir well and cook at a simmer on a low heat till the porridge is thick. Stir during cooking to stop it sticking. If you cook in the microwave, make sure you use a microwavable cooking bowl, and cover with cling film during cooking. Cook on high for 2 minutes, stir well, re-cover, and cook on high for a further 1-2 minutes. Stir well, leave to stand for a couple of minutes, whilst chopping up the fruit. Pour over a little molasses, add fruit and nuts, and enjoy!



### 3. Ham and poached eggs on toast:

**Ingredients:** 2 eggs, 2 slices ham, 1-2 slices of buttered toast, salt and pepper, vinegar.

**Tools:** Large shallow pan (frying pan is good), wooden or plastic spatula, kitchen towel (optional), toaster or grill.

**Instructions:** Boil a large pan of lightly salted water, and keep simmering over a gentle heat.

Carefully crack your eggs into a cup or bowl. Add a good dash of vinegar to the boiling water (white wine is best but malt is OK too). Swirl the simmering water vigorously with a spoon or spatula until it's circling, then slide the eggs into the pan.

Put your toast on now.

Poach the eggs for 2-3 minutes until the whites are set, and the yolk is cooked how you like it (runny is good!), then lift from the pan with a slotted spatula, and drain well (on kitchen towel if you have it).

While the eggs are cooking, butter the toast, lay two slices of ham on top, then add the poached eggs, and salt and pepper to taste.

## Tasty Snacks



### Spicy Potato Wedges:

**Ingredients:** Baking potatoes (or sweet potatoes), salt, paprika powder and cooking or olive oil. Sauce of your choice e.g. ketchup, brown sauce, sweet chilli, sour cream.

**Tools:** Baking tray, kitchen towel, freezer or sandwich bags.

**Instructions:** Preheat the oven to 200°C.

Wash and dry the potatoes. Leaving the skin on, slice them down the middle lengthwise, then cut each half into wedges (like slicing up an apple). Place the wedges into a bag.

Drizzle in a good glug of the oil, then 2-3 shakes of paprika and a pinch of salt. Close the bag and shake it till the wedges are well coated. Remove the wedges from the bag and place on an oiled baking tray (or you can line the tray with foil to save washing up). Bake in the oven for 30-35 minutes till golden brown and crispy. Serve with your favourite sauce.



### Cheese on Toast with a Twist:

**Ingredients:** Fresh bread, grated cheddar cheese, mango chutney, slice of ham, Worcestershire sauce, salt and pepper.

**Optional Extra:** fresh tomatoes thinly sliced. You can also substitute bottled bolognese sauce for the mango chutney.

**Tools:** Grill pan, grater, aluminium foil, chopping board, sharp knife, cheese grater.

**Instructions:** Pre-heat the grill to medium hot. Place foil over the grill pan to catch any melted cheese (so you don't have to wash up!) Grate the cheese or slice it thinly if you don't have a cheese grater (or buy grated cheese, but more expensive that way). Chop the ham into small pieces. Slice the tomatoes if used.

Put bread on the foil under the grill until brown / toasted on one side.

Place the toasted side of bread face down and spread the soft side with butter and mango chutney. Cover with the sliced tomatoes, then chopped ham and finally the grated cheese. Season with salt, pepper and Worcestershire sauce to taste.

Place the grill pan back under the grill until cheese starts to bubble. Remove from under the grill, and allow to cool for a couple of minutes before serving. Enjoy!

### Stay safe whilst grilling

- DO NOT put cheese in the toaster
- Keep your grill pan clean as fat and food grease can act as fuel for fire
- If you don't want to clean the pan, put foil in it and replace after each use
- Grills will cook quicker than an oven
- When cooking never leave your cooker unattended – distractions like mobile phones, animals and children can cause fire
- **Make sure to turn off your grill after cooking**

## Easy Suppers



Photo: Marcus Guimaraes



### 1. Ratatouille for Two:

**Ingredients:** 1 onion sliced thin, good glug of olive oil, 1 garlic clove peeled and crushed (you can crush it with the back of a large knife and a good thump), celery stalk chopped fine, 1 pepper (any colour) sliced into strips, 1 aubergine sliced into strips, 1 courgette cut into chunks, 1 x 400g tin chopped tomatoes, 1tsp oregano, pinch chilli

(flakes or dash hot sauce), 1tsp sugar (brown is best), salt and pepper, 100ml water, fresh basil (optional), 2 slices toast.

**Tools:** Frying pan, spoon for stirring, chopping board, sharp knife.

**Instructions:** Heat the pan till the oil is hot but not smoking, fry the onion and garlic until soft and translucent.

Add the celery and cook for 2 minutes. Add peppers and cook for 3 minutes.

Add aubergine, courgette, tomatoes, oregano, chilli, sugar, salt and pepper, and the water, and simmer for around 30 minutes on a low heat. Stir occasionally. Add more water if it gets too dry.

Serve on hot buttered toast, with a sprinkle of torn basil on top.

### 2. Two egg omelette with different toppings:

**Ingredients:** 2 eggs, 2 dessert spoons cream, knob of butter or good glug of olive oil, salt and pepper, sprinkle of fresh or dried herbs to taste (oregano is good).

Optional toppings: shredded smoked trout or salmon, chopped spinach leaves, grated cheese,

chopped fresh tomatoes, rocket leaves, cooked baby broad beans (simmer for 1-2 minutes).

**Tools:** Mixing bowl, fork, spatula, frying pan (non-stick), sharp knife, chopping board.

**Instructions:** Prepare your chosen toppings in advance so they are

ready. Beat the eggs lightly in a bowl with the cream and a pinch of salt and pepper. Heat the olive oil or butter in the frying pan until hot but not smoking (or you will burn the butter), pour in the egg mixture and swirl around till it coats the bottom of the pan evenly. Cook gently for 1 minute then drag the spatula across the pan to lightly scramble the mixture. Add toppings and cook on a low heat for a further 2-5 minutes until the omelette is set to your liking. You can fold it in half if you like.

Photo: Van Chaplin; Styling: Amy Burke



### 3. Salmon with pesto and vegetable strips: If hungry, serve this on a bed of cooked ribbon noodles:

**Ingredients:** 1 salmon fillet, 3tsp green pesto, olive oil, 1 courgette sliced into thin strips, 1 red pepper sliced into thin strips, 100g cooked ribbon noodles (optional), salt.

**Tools:** Chopping board, sharp knife, grill pan, aluminium foil, saucepan (if cooking pasta).

**Instructions:** If serving on pasta, start cooking the pasta first; fill the pan  $\frac{3}{4}$  full and bring to the boil, add a pinch of salt, add the pasta, stir well, then reduce to a simmer. Cook for 9-12 minutes (depends on pasta type and how firm you like it).

Whilst the pasta is cooking, preheat the grill to moderately hot 180°C / 350°F (5 minutes). Cover the grill pan with foil, and place the salmon fillet in the middle. Sprinkle with olive oil and smear with pesto. Grill for around 12 -15 minutes (fish should be slightly translucent pink in the middle when done). For the last 6 minutes of cooking time, add the vegetable strips, sprinkled with olive oil. Stir halfway through cooking time. Serve on a warm plate.

### Frying vs oven

- Make sure your oven is kept clean. Oven cooking is safer than frying
- Cooking oil is a highly flammable liquid
- You use less oil roasting than frying

## Student Classics



### Spaghetti Bolognese:

**Ingredients:** Olive oil, knob of butter, 200g beef mince, ½ onion finely sliced, 1 garlic clove, skinned and crushed, 1 x 400g tin chopped tinned tomatoes, 1 dessert spoon tomato puree, 1 stock cube, salt and pepper, pinch of sugar (brown is best but white is OK), oregano or mixed herbs, 125g dry spaghetti. **Optional**

**extras** – dash of tabasco, shake of soy sauce, shake of Lee and Perrins sauce (a sachet of Fajita mix also does the trick). Grated Parmesan cheese.

**Tools:** Frying pan or wok, medium saucepan with lid, colander or strainer, a frying pan splash guard.

**Instructions:** Pre-heat the frying pan, add olive oil, then add the chopped onions and garlic and fry over medium heat till transparent. Add the mince and tomato puree, and break up the mince with a fork as it starts to cook so that it's not lumpy. Cook over medium heat till the meat is browned, then add the stock, salt and pepper to taste, the herbs, sugar, and any additional sauces you like, plus the tinned tomatoes. Cover with a splash guard and simmer gently for 45 until the sauce is thick and creamy. Whilst the sauce is cooking, bring a large saucepan of water to the boil (only fill it 2/3 full or it will boil over). Add the spaghetti, stir it well so it doesn't clump together, then put a lid on and turn down to simmer for 10-12 minutes. Put the kettle on! When the spaghetti is cooked pour it into the strainer, pour boiling water from the kettle over it to wash off the starch, then serve with a knob of butter and the meat sauce. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.



### Crunchy Stir Fry:

**Ingredients:** Olive oil, 1 x garlic clove skinned and crushed, 1 bunch of spring onions, ½ bag of bean sprouts, shredded or sliced vegetables of your choice (peppers, carrots, broccoli, mushrooms, baby corn, courgettes), splash of soy sauce or sachet of stir fry sauce of your choice. Pack of rice noodles "straight to wok".

**Optional extras:** Small tin of bamboo shoots, small tin of water chestnuts, sliced. Meat, prawns or fish of your choice. Chopped fresh coriander, lemon juice.

**Tools:** Large frying pan or wok, chopping boards, sharp knife..

**Instructions:** Wash, peel and slice the vegetables into long, thin strips, including the spring onions. Finely chop or crush the garlic. Using a separate chopping board dice meat or fish into long thin strips. If using frozen prawns, place them in a bowl and pour boiling water over them to defrost.

Heat 1 tbsp oil in your wok or frying pan till it's smoking. Add garlic and onion and fry for 2 minutes, stirring all the time. If you chose to add meat or fish add now and cook for 3-5 minutes.

Add the shredded raw vegetables (except the beansprouts) - fry for 5 minutes - vegetables should be slightly crunchy. Add beansprouts, water chestnuts and bamboo shoots, and cook for 2 minutes, then add your preferred sauce, or the soy sauce. Add "straight to wok" noodles, and heat through for another 1-2 minutes. If using prawns add them last (otherwise they go hard and rubbery). Serve in a bowl with a sprinkle of lemon juice and chopped coriander to taste

### Dangerous Handles

Whilst using the hob, ensure that the handles for all the pots and pans are turned inwards to avoid them being knocked off the hob and causing an injury to someone

**Make sure ovens, grills and hobs are all switched off after cooking**  
**Never cook while drunk. Order a takeaway instead**



**Bedfordshire**  
Fire and Rescue Service

# Push the button Not your luck



**SMOKE ALARMS**  
**SAVE**  
**LIVES**

Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service  
Southfields Road  
Kempston, Bedford MK42 7NR  
Telephone number: Bedford (01234) 845000  
E-mail [contact@bedsfire.com](mailto:contact@bedsfire.com)  
Web: [www.bedsfire.com](http://www.bedsfire.com)