

KIDS CLUB

NEWSLETTER



Dear Kids,

Welcome to our new ChopChop Kids Club newsletter! Are you home from school right now? This is the perfect time to learn to cook—or, if you already know how to cook, to master some skills. Plus, if you can make a meal or two, you'll be helping your family in such an important way (and your adults will be *so happy*). You might not be shopping much, so the trick will be using what you've already got at home. We have ideas about that.

Let's get started!



CUBAN Black Bean Soup

Rich in flavor and soft in texture, black beans are perfect for soup. Black bean soup takes well to the classic Latin American flavors of cumin, chili powder, cilantro, and lime—add more or less of any of these, depending on what you have and like.

■ ADULT: YES ■ HANDS-ON TIME: 30 MINUTES ■ TOTAL TIME: 2 HOURS 30 MINUTES ■ MAKES: 10 CUPS

KITCHEN GEAR

Cutting board
Sharp knife (adult needed)
Measuring spoons
Colander or strainer
Measuring cups
Large, heavy-bottomed pot
Wooden spoon or heatproof spatula
Pot holders

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons vegetable or olive oil
- 2 large onions, peeled and chopped
- 2 carrots, scrubbed or peeled and chopped
- 2 celery stalks, chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, peeled and minced or chopped
- 1½ teaspoons dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper (if you like spicy)
- 3 (15-ounce) cans black beans, drained and rinsed (or 5 cups cooked beans)
- 8 cups low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice or red wine vinegar
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro leaves, for garnish (if you like)
- ¼ cup plain yogurt, for garnish (if you like)

INSTRUCTIONS

Wash your hands with soap and water, then gather all your equipment and ingredients and put them on the counter.

1. Put the pot on the stove and turn the heat to medium. Add the oil. When the oil is hot, add the onions, carrots, celery, garlic, oregano, and spices and cook until tender, 10 to 15 minutes.
2. Add the beans and broth, raise the heat to high, and bring to a boil. Lower the heat to low and cook, partially covered (with the lid open a bit to let the steam out), for 2 hours, stirring frequently. (If at any point the soup seems too thick and is starting to look like mud, add up to 2 cups more broth or water.)
3. Stir in the lime juice or vinegar and taste the soup. Does it need anything to boost the flavor? More spices? Another squeeze of lime juice or splash of vinegar? A grinding of black pepper? A pinch of salt? Add whatever you think it needs. Serve right away, garnished with cilantro and yogurt, if you like, or cover and refrigerate up to 3 days.



SOUP-ER FUN RESTAURANT

Soup has to sit on the stove for a while, so you'll have plenty of time to work on a fun activity with your family. Here's how to play: Pretend you are starting a soup restaurant. Make a menu listing the different kinds of soups you will serve, with a description of each soup and prices. You can also make a section with different topping options. Draw pictures of the ingredients in each soup. Come up with fun names for your soups, the toppings, and, of course, the restaurant itself. Arrange chairs and invite family members to your restaurant. Let them order off the menu, bring them (drawings of) their food, and give them their check when the meal is finished! Get out the Monopoly money or make some pretend money of your own, and do the math.



TOO MUCH SOUP?

Many soups (especially bean- and vegetable-rich ones) freeze well. Label resealable plastic bags and then fill them with the cooled soup. Press out all the air and seal. Lay them flat on a baking sheet in the freezer until they're frozen solid. After that, you can store them stacked up in the freezer or lined up side by side until you're ready to thaw and reheat them.

DO YOU HAVE MORE BLACK BEANS?

Try one of these recipes:

Black Bean Hummus

www.chopchopfamily.org/recipe/black-bean-hummus

Black Bean and Corn Quesadillas

www.chopchopfamily.org/recipe/black-bean-and-corn-quesadillas

Toasted Barley and Black Bean Salad

www.chopchopfamily.org/recipe/toasted-barley-and-black-bean-salad

(Feel free to swap in brown rice for the barley.)

BOWLFUL OF MATH

Cooking involves a lot of math: calculating cost, measuring ingredients, changing serving sizes, and more. Here's some quick math for practice.

1. This soup takes $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours to make. If there are 60 minutes in 1 hour, how many minutes does this soup take?
2. This recipe makes 10 cups of soup. If you serve all the soup in equal portions to your 4 dinner guests, how many cups of soup will each person get?
3. This recipe makes 10 cups of soup. If a pint is equal to 2 cups, how many pints of soup does this make?

WHERE IN THE WORLD?

Do you have a globe or a map in your house? Use it—or find a map online—to locate Cuba. Then look in a book or online to find out more about the country. While you eat your Cuban Black Bean Soup, teach your family 3 things you've learned!



GET MOVING!

If you're feeling a little antsy, try dancing! Salsa is the most popular dance in Cuba. Dancing is a great way to get some exercise and also a fun way to move your body. With the help of an adult, find an online video to learn some basic salsa moves. Want to learn more? Look up the tango, mambo, rumba, or whatever else looks fun to you, then find some great music and teach the dances to your family.



KITCHEN SKILL

How to use a can opener

1. Set the can on a flat, hard surface.
2. Pull apart the two handles of the can opener. Flip the can opener over and look at the two wheels on the bottom. One is jagged (bumpy on the edges) and one is smooth. Place the smooth (cutting) wheel against the inside of the little rim at the top of the can and close the two handles tightly together with your left hand.
3. Place your right hand on the little wing-like part of the can opener. Slowly twist the wing while still squeezing the handles closed. This should make the smooth wheel start cutting into the can's lid and rolling around its edge. Continue to turn the wing until the smooth wheel has gone all the way around the top of the can.
4. Pull apart the handles of the opener.
5. Carefully, carefully lift up the top of the can. Use a fork to press down one side so that the other side pops up, then carefully pull it out. (Remember: the cut edges will be sharp!)

KITCHEN SKILL

Cooking Dried Beans from Scratch

It's fine to use beans from a can, but it's very satisfying and inexpensive to cook dried beans from scratch. The method is the same for different kinds of beans; all that changes is the cooking time.

ADULT: YES | HANDS-ON TIME: 5 MINUTES | TOTAL TIME: 2-10 HOURS | MAKES: 4-5 CUPS



KITCHEN GEAR

Large, heavy-bottomed pot
Colander or strainer
Slotted spoon
Pot holders

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound dried beans (pinto, black, lima, navy, white, kidney, garbanzo, or any other kind of bean)

INSTRUCTIONS

Wash your hands with soap and water, then gather all your equipment and ingredients and put them on the counter.

1. Put the beans in the pot and sort through them, tossing out any shriveled beans, little stones, or twigs.
2. Pour cold water into the pot so that the water comes up about 2 inches above the beans, then skim any stray bean skins or bits that float to the top. Depending on how much time you have, do one of these things:

a) Put the pot on the stove and turn the heat to medium-high. When the water boils, turn off the heat, cover the pot, and leave the beans to soak for 1 hour.

OR

b) Cover the pot and leave the beans to soak overnight or all day (at least 8 hours).

3. Drain the beans in the colander and rinse them with fresh cold water.
4. Put the pot on the stove and turn the heat to medium-high. When the water starts to boil, turn the heat down to low, put the lid on the pot, and simmer the beans ("simmer" means a very gentle boil) until they are tender but not falling apart, 30 minutes to 2 hours, depending on what kind of beans you have and how old they are. (Start testing the beans after they've been cooking for 30 minutes, and if they seem close, then taste again in another 15 minutes or so. If they don't seem close, taste in 30 minutes.)
5. Once the beans are cooked, drain them in the colander and continue with your recipe, or cover and refrigerate up to 2 days.

Mancala

If you have an egg carton and dried beans, you can make your own game! Mancala is played around the world, especially in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. The word *mancala* comes from the Arabic word *naqala*, which means “to move.”

Bean around!
Sanaai waits to
play the winner
of Mikayla and
Saul's game.



WHAT YOU NEED

- 1 empty cardboard egg carton
- Scissors
- Tape or stapler
- 36 dried beans (or marbles or paper clips)

MAKE THE GAME

1. Open up the egg carton. Cut off any flaps that are used for closing the carton. Cut off the top of the carton and cut it in half across its middle.
2. Slide one half of the top underneath each end of the bottom, extending beyond the bottom by a couple of inches to make a well at each end. Use tape or staples to attach them.
3. Put three beans in each of the egg cups, and leave the wells on each end empty. You're ready to play!



PLAY THE GAME

The object of the game is to capture as many beans as you can. The player with the most beans at the end of the game wins. Sit across from your opponent. The six holes nearest to you are yours, while the six holes on the opposite side belong to your opponent. The large well on each player's right side is their mancala.

1. The starting player takes the beans out of one of their holes and puts one bean in each cup, moving around the board counterclockwise. Keep going around the board, putting one bean in each cup, until you run out of beans. You should place a bean in your own mancala along the way, but not in your opponent's mancala (if the beans get that far).
2. If your last bean lands in your mancala, you get another turn. Otherwise it is your opponent's turn. But if your last bean lands in one of your holes that is empty, and the hole opposite contains beans, you steal your opponent's bean from that hole and place them and your last bean in your mancala, and it is then your opponent's turn.
3. The game is over when one player is out of beans, or when a player's mancala holds more than half the beans in the game.