

THE HOT CHOCOLATE SHOP KIDS COOKBOOK



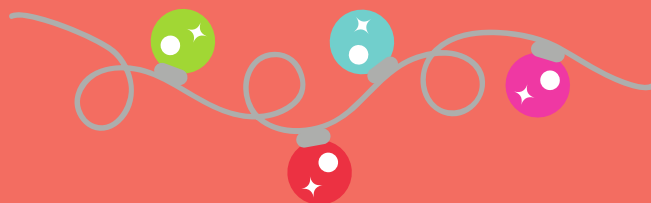
Dramatic Play is a fun way for kids to test out grownup roles. The Hot Chocolate Shop is just one example. Your child can pretend they are in charge. They get to play the role of shop owner, and you or other children can play other necessary parts, such as “customer.”

Using the printed signs in your Playdatebox, (download extra copies at Playdatebox.com/polar-express), help them set up their own hot chocolate shop complete with paper cups and straws, pretend (or real) cookies they can sell, some play money, and a costume such as an apron and hat or even just a nametag.

To make an afternoon of it, join your child in a cookie baking project, or serve up some homemade hot cocoa. The recipes are included in this pamphlet.

If you aren't going to be on hand to supervise, you'll want to prevent spills and messes, so teach them that “pretend” food is almost as good as the real thing.

- Let them draw and design their own cookies or doughnuts on heavy cardboard.
- Some crumpled brown kraft paper may make a good substitute for cocoa.
- Try cotton balls in place of marshmallows, or leave real miniature marshmallows out on the counter to dry and get hard a day or two before you plan to set up your play station. They'll be less likely to get stuck on clothing or carpets



Homemade Hot Chocolate



 Skill Level: EASY

Ingredients

- 4 cups Whole Milk
(whole or 2% tastes best)
- 1/4 cup Unsweetened Cocoa Powder
- 1/4 cup Granulated Sugar
- 1/2 cup Semisweet Baking Chips (chocolate chips)
or chopped chocolate bar
- 1/4 teaspoon Vanilla or Mint Flavoring

Place milk, cocoa powder, and sugar into a saucepan. Whisk over medium heat until warm.

Add chocolate chips and whisk until they melt. Stir in vanilla and serve.



Gingerbread Train Cookies

The Ingredients

- 1/2 c. (1 stick) butter, softened
- 1/2 c. firmly packed brown sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1/4 c. molasses
- 1 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract

- 2 1/2 c. all-purpose flour
- 2 1/2 tsp. ground ginger
- 1 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp. ground nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- 1/4 tsp. ground cloves
- 1/4 tsp. kosher salt

See following page for mixing and baking instructions.

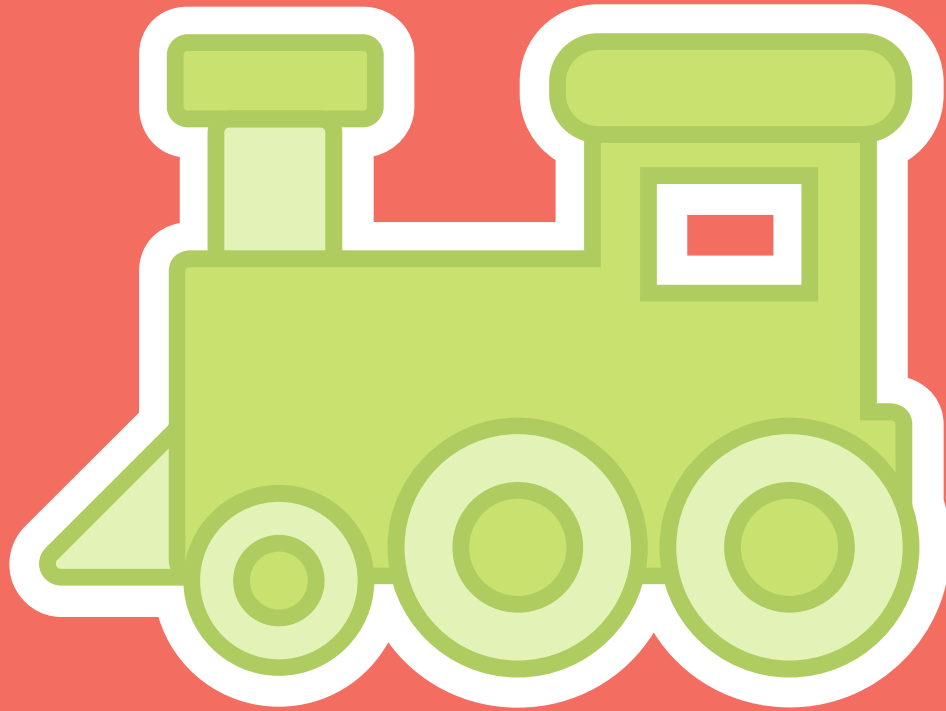


Gingerbread Train Cookies

Instructions

This is a fragrant recipe, so part of the fun is allowing your child to smell each of the spices as you add them.

1. Combine the butter and brown sugar in a large bowl and mix with an electric mixer until well-combined and fluffy.
2. Next, beat in the molasses, egg, and vanilla until well-combined.
3. In a separate, smaller bowl, mix all of the dry ingredients (let your child help you measure!) Whisk the flour, ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg, baking soda, cloves and salt together.
4. Add the dry ingredients to the butter and brown sugar mixture and mix just until the flour is all incorporated (don't overmix!)
5. Shape the dough into two 1"-thick disks and roll each between 2 sheets of wax paper to $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick.
6. Refrigerate until firm, at least 30 minutes.
7. Heat oven to 350 degrees F.
8. Line baking sheets with parchment paper. Cut out cookies in the shape of a train engine using the template on the next page.
9. Place on the prepared baking sheets at least 1" apart and chill for 10 minutes.
10. Bake until the cookies are set and the edges are beginning to brown, 12 to 15 minutes. Let cool on the baking sheets for 3 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.



Use the train template above if you don't happen to have a train-shaped cookie cutter.

Just cut out the train shape, place it on top of the gingerbread dough once it is rolled out, and trim around the outside edges of the template with a sharp knife.





Buttercream Frosting

Ingredients

- 3 cups confectioners' sugar
- 1/3 cup butter, softened
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/4 teaspoon lemon or almond extract (optional)
- 1/4 teaspoon butter flavoring (optional)
- 3 to 4 tablespoons milk

Instructions

1. Beat confectioners' sugar, butter, extracts and flavoring in a bowl.
2. Gradually stir in enough milk to achieve desired consistency.
3. Color icing as desired with food coloring, or leave white.
4. Place icing into a pastry bag with a decorator's tip. Twist a twist-tie around the top of the bag to help prevent leaks.
5. You can substitute a zip-top heavy freezer bag for the pastry bag by snipping off a small corner of the bag. This isn't as precise, but may work just fine for the kids.
6. Frost cookies, adding hard candies for wheels, and other decorations as desired.