

BENEFITS OF COOKING AT HOME



Cooking a homemade meal for your loved ones can provide you with a great feeling of accomplishment. Why should having your favorite people around you, enjoying food that you've made from scratch, be a one-off thing? Have you considered taking up cooking as a hobby? For older people it's important to have as many hobbies as possible, as they help to combat feelings of loneliness and keep you fit and active. Cooking can provide you and your loved ones with plenty of benefits, and there are many guides and recipes out there to help you perfect your meals. Let's look at some of the benefits of taking up cooking as a hobby.

1. It's Healthier: It's highly likely that the food you create in your kitchen will be much healthier than the processed foods you find in supermarkets. Likewise, you can ensure that it's lower in calories and more nutritious than the meals served up in restaurants and fast food outlets. You have complete control over the recipes that you choose to follow and the portion sizes that you serve up. This will lead to a much healthier diet and will reduce the risk of obesity and the medical conditions that come with it. Cooking at home can also boost your mental health. For more information, read our list of the top 6 mental health benefits of cooking.

2. Happy Happy Happy: Cooking the perfect meal is going to bring a smile to your face. You could be in the foulest of moods beforehand, but once you taste your food and see the reactions of your loved ones eating it, your frown will be turned upside-down. There have been studies that suggest cooking is a therapeutic activity. According to the Like to Cook blog, this is because: "When you cook, you stimulate your senses. The feel of the new flour you bought at the market, the smell of those fresh strawberries, the sound of

the whisk beating, all those things can stimulate your senses, which contributes to getting more endorphins, those feel-good hormones that put a smile on your face.” As we mentioned at the beginning of this article, cooking will also provide you with a great feeling of accomplishment. By the end of your session, you’ll be left very proud of the meal you have made.

3. Bring the Family Together: Everybody loves a good homemade meal. Older people need to see their family as much as possible, to avoid feeling lonely, and cooking a masterpiece for them is the perfect way to do so. Cooking can become a family activity too. Perhaps your grandchildren can help with the ingredients or by setting the table. Or maybe they can read out the instructions given to you on the iPad recipe that you’re using. When the food is ready, and the table is set, everybody comes together to discuss their lives. Food encourages talk and positivity.



4. Make mealtimes a social experience. The simple act of talking to a friend or loved one over the dinner table can play a big role in relieving stress and boosting mood. Gather the family together and stay up to date with each other’s daily lives. If you live alone, invite a friend, coworker, or neighbor over.

5. Switch off screens. Take a break from the TV, turn off your phone, and avoid other distractions so you have a real chance to connect with the person you’re sharing a meal with. By avoiding screens and eating with others, you’ll also help to avoid mindless overeating and potentially even enjoy your food more.

6. Cook with others. Invite your spouse, roommate, or a friend to share shopping and cooking responsibilities—one prepares the entrée, the other dessert, for example. Cooking with others can be a fun way to deepen relationships and splitting the costs can [make it cheaper](#) for both of you. Cooking a couple of additional servings will even leave you with leftovers for the next day.

7. You Avoid Food Allergies As you're choosing the ingredients that go into your meals, you're ensuring that you're avoiding any potential food allergy reactions or sensitivities. Some of the most common allergies include nuts, gluten, and shellfish, and these can be missed in restaurants or processed food. By cooking at home, you're giving yourself control over this problem and can cook the foods that your loved ones are able to eat.



8. Confidence Booster If you're lacking in confidence, cooking might be a good option for you. Perfecting several different recipes from around the world proves that you have the ability and skill to try new things and present your "work" to friends and family. Cooking is a challenge, but when you create a masterpiece, your confidence is going to improve.

9. Food Safety We've already discussed that you're going to avoid any food allergies or sensitivities by cooking your food, but by doing so you're also lowering the risk of any food-related illnesses. Food poisoning is an all-too-common problem for those of us who eat out at restaurants or fast-food outlets. By using your ingredients and skills to cook the meals you're eating, you can rest assured knowing that your food is safe to eat and won't make your loved ones ill. To minimize any risks in your kitchen, check out our article on kitchen safety tips for older people.

10. Leads to a Clean Kitchen You want to make tasty food that won't put people in any medical danger. Therefore, you're naturally going to keep your preparation areas clean and tidy. Without even realizing it, this will lead to you cleaning your kitchen daily. Your worktops will be wiped down and cleared away, as will your table, and your plates and cutlery will be washed and stored away ready for the next cooking

session. To complement your new hobby, perhaps you could take up gardening and grow your fruit and veg.

REFERENCE:

<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/healthy-eating/cooking-at-home.htm>