

# half-hour HUNGRIES



36 awesome  
dishes for kids  
to make when  
time is short!

Little Kitchen's  
*Sabrina Parrini*

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My babies.

# Introduction

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## Dear kids,

Do you often come home hungry after school? Have you ever wanted to cook your family a meal, but don't want to slave away for hours and hours? Are you sick and tired of eating the same old shrink-wrapped snacks every day?

Then this is the book for you!

I like cooking and I love eating, but sometimes I just feel like whipping up a fast and tasty treat. I know you've got school to go to, homework to do and friends to hang out with. So I've made sure that *Half-hour Hungries* is full of awesome recipes you can cook in roughly 30 minutes, to leave time for other important things in your life.

So grab your apron, pick up your mixing spoon and let's get cracking!

Lots of love,

*Sabrina x*

## Dear parents,

Thanks for buying this book!

I learnt to cook when I was really young. When I was eight years old, I bought my first-ever cookbook, *Cool and Creamy: The Ice-cream and Frozen Yoghurt Book*, at a school fete. It was love at first sight – I spent months poring over each page. I even went so far as to colour in all of the black-and-white recipe illustrations!

This book still sits on my bookshelf, decades later. I look at it from time to time and good memories come flowing back: memories of after-school cooking adventures and lazy Sundays spent experimenting with different ice cream flavours and toppings.

I remember my mum's country-style kitchen, with its daggy brown tiles and olive green bench. I remember being impatient waiting for my ice cream to set, and proud when I could finally serve it to my family.

I don't know if what I cooked was any good, but I remember my mum encouraging me nonetheless. Back then, my kitchen may not have been filled with culinary greatness, but I recall the time I spent cooking there with great fondness. I hope this book will help your child create similar happy memories in the kitchen.

So here's to our children, their enthusiasm and every culinary masterpiece they create.

Lots of love,



# How to use this book

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30 minutes? Too easy!

Thanks to the efforts of my 25 little recipe testers, I found that most of the dishes in this book can be cooked in roughly 30 minutes.

This is an estimate, though – the timing also depends on how old and experienced in the kitchen you are. You'll get quicker and more confident the more you practise – so keep cooking!

When I first thought about writing this book, I knew it'd be dangerous to get you to rush around collecting the ingredients, assembling the equipment, prepping the food and cooking the recipe in 30 minutes. So for now, to be safe, just try to do the cooking part of the recipe – from the method section onwards – and see how you go with the 30-minute time frame.

Don't rush, though! Unlike a *MasterChef* challenge, cooking from this book isn't a race.

This book is split into three chapters:

- **Speedy Snacks** – recipes that can be cooked in 10-20 minutes
- **Easy Eats** – recipes that can be cooked in 20-30 minutes
- **Bigger Bites** – recipes that can be cooked in 30 minutes or more

Every recipe has a rough timing guide to help you plan your meal. Prep time refers to the time it takes to collect your ingredients and equipment, and prepare everything as directed in the ingredient list. Cooking time refers to the time it takes to follow the actual method section of the recipe.

# Safety tips

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Although cooking is great fun, it's important to remember that some things in the kitchen can be dangerous if you're not careful. For this reason, it's very important to have an adult stay in the kitchen with you the whole time you're cooking.

## Knives and sharp equipment

Knives, peelers, graters and food processors are sharp, so when they are called for in a recipe, I recommend that an adult should always be close by to help. Very small children may not be experienced or big enough to use knives safely, in which case an adult should do what is required.

Sharp knives are safer than blunt knives because you don't need to use as much pressure to cut with them. When you use less pressure, you are less likely to slip and cut yourself.

Don't put a knife – or anything sharp – into a sink of water for washing where it can't be seen. If someone doesn't know it's there, they might cut themselves.

## Oven and stovetop

Ovens and stovetops get very hot, so I recommend that an adult should always be present when they are in use. Ask an adult to help you turn the heat on and off and to adjust the temperature to the correct level.

When using the oven, remember to place your oven trays on the right shelves **BEFORE** you turn it on. In general, the middle shelf is the best spot for cooking, because it allows the hot air to move around your dish and cook the food evenly.

Stand back when the oven door is being opened as the hot steam can burn. Both adults and children should use oven mitts when moving things in and out of the oven. Ideally, they should be long enough to cover your forearms – and please make sure they are the right size for your hands: small mitts for small hands.

When cooking on the stovetop, always ask an adult to turn the heat on and to adjust it to the correct temperature. Either you or an adult **MUST** hold the handle steady when stirring something in a pan on the stovetop. Always wear oven mitts when working near a stovetop or with hot ingredients.

Turn the handles of pots and pans so they face to the back or side of the stove. Handles poking out could cause an accident if someone accidentally knocks them. Never leave them unattended and always remember to turn the heat off when you're finished.

Always use a timer, so you don't overcook or burn anything; it's easy to forget how long something has been cooking! Never leave the kitchen when you have something on the stovetop as it may burn or catch on fire.

## Spills

Always clean up spills straight away. Spills on the floor make it slippery and you could slip and fall over. Wipe up with paper towels and once you've cleaned up, tell everyone else to be careful of the wet floor.

## Allergies

If you don't already know, check with your parents or an adult to find out if you're allergic to any foods. If you are, ALWAYS tell the adult you are cooking with before you start. They might not know or they might have forgotten. Make sure you both check the recipe carefully to make sure it doesn't use any ingredients you can't have. If you're unsure about something, it's safer to choose another recipe instead.

## Food safety

It's important to follow some simple hygiene rules when cooking so that no one gets sick! If you're cooking with both raw meats and vegetables, make sure you use two separate chopping boards and never use the same knife to chop vegetables after you've cut up meat. This is because raw meats sometimes have bacteria in them (that are killed by the cooking process), and you don't want them to end up on your veggies!

# Ingredients

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Although *Half-hour Hungries* focuses on quick, healthy and wholesome food, we also believe that eating is about balance. That means we do sometimes use sugar, butter, cream and cheese in our recipes. You could say we're into being healthy, but without taking it to extremes.

Unless I specify something else in the recipe, these are the ingredients I recommend you use:

- Onions are brown onions.
- All garlic cloves are peeled.
- Milk is full-cream.
- Cream is full-fat (low-fat cream does not whip).
- Meat is free-range and lean.
- Canned tuna is preserved in oil and without added flavourings.
- Eggs are 60 gram, free-range, and should be brought to room temperature before cooking.
- Quality brands of pasta and risotto rice are less likely to break apart during the cooking process than the cheapest brands.
- You can use either vanilla-bean paste or vanilla extract in the recipes.
- Stock is homemade if possible as the flavour is so much nicer.

# Equipment

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For each recipe you'll find a list of the equipment that you'll need to prepare the dish.

## Knives and chopping boards

Use a bigger knife for bigger ingredients and a smaller knife for small ingredients. Serrated knives are best for slicing bread. Remember that all knives should be kept sharp, as blunt knives are more dangerous.

Always use a chopping board when you're using a knife so that you don't scratch the kitchen bench tabletop. It is important that the board doesn't slip around on the bench, so either use one that has a non-slip rubber base or rubber feet, or place a damp tea towel beneath the board to keep it steady. A bigger board is better, as you have more room to work on.

Use two chopping boards if you need to prepare meat and vegetables in the same recipe.

## Scissors

Scissors are ideal for snipping herbs. Use small, child-safe scissors where possible.

## Graters and peelers

Little chefs will find a box grater is easiest for grating and zesting. Conical graters and microplaners may be suitable for older children, but they do require a little more dexterity because of the shape and the angle at which you need to hold the food. Try to use a grater that has a rubber handle on it and a non-slip rubber base to prevent accidents occurring due to loss of steadiness.

It takes a bit of practice to use a peeler. Try to hold food steady on a chopping board and peel in long, smooth movements, rather than little bits at a time.

## Measuring jugs, measuring cups, measuring spoons

Although sometimes you will have to weigh an ingredient out using kitchen scales, wherever possible I've suggested using measuring jugs, cups and spoons to measure ingredients.

Don't use regular cups and spoons because they come in all sorts of different shapes and sizes, which means they won't be accurate.

This book uses standard Australian metric measures (1 tablespoon = 20 ml, 1 cup = 250 ml). American and European measures are a little bit different (1 tablespoon = 15 ml, 1 cup = 240 ml or 285 ml), so check your measuring equipment carefully to see which it is.

Jugs are for measuring liquids, like milk and stock. To measure accurately, sit the jug on the work surface and measure the ingredient to the marked line – not over or under it.

Cups are for measuring solid ingredients, like rice or flour. To measure accurately, heap the ingredient up high, then use a spatula to smooth over the top and make it level.

Spoons are for measuring smaller amounts of liquids or solids, such as honey or milk, baking powder or sugar. To measure accurately, heap the ingredient up high, then use a spatula to smooth over the top to make it level.

## Mixing bowls

I recommend you have several different-sized mixing bowls – small, medium and large – to match the quantity of ingredients. Metal or plastic bowls are ideal as they are light and won't break if you drop them. Shallow bowls make mixing easier for children. When mixing in a bowl, use one hand to hold the bowl steady on the work surface and one hand to mix.

## Food processors and electric mixers

Both these machines make kitchen work easier! Food processors are great for chopping ingredients quickly or turning them into a paste. Sometimes you have to scrape the ingredients down from the sides of the bowl so they mix in properly. Always make sure an adult puts in and removes the sharp blade and that they help you turn the machine on and off.

Electric mixers make baking cakes and biscuits (cookies) easy. An adult should help you fit the correct attachment to the machine, help you set the correct speed and watch while you use it. A paddle attachment is used for beating, while a whisk is used to whip cream or egg whites.

## Saucepans

I use a set of different-sized saucepans with a spout for easy pouring. Smaller saucepans are perfect for melting butter or chocolate or cooking smaller quantities. Use a large saucepan for cooking soups, pasta or rice. Saucepans should have a tight-fitting lid and a handle that won't get hot when you are cooking.

## Frying pans

As the name suggests, these are for frying ingredients – often in a little bit of oil or butter. Non-stick pans are great because you can fry without oil and they are very easy to clean. Use a deeper pan for deep-frying. Some ingredients, such as nuts and spices, are dry-roasted without oil. Make sure your frying pans have a handle that won't get hot when you are cooking.

## Colanders

These are used to drain boiled vegetables and pasta. Always ask an adult to help you and be careful to stand away from the hot steam. The safest way to drain hot items is to place the colander in the sink and pour the hot contents in.

## Sieves and sifters

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These have a fine mesh and are used to sift flour, icing sugar or cocoa to remove any lumps. They are often used when making cakes or batters, to ensure the mixture is smooth and light.

## Oven

We used a fan-forced oven to test the recipes in this book. Generally, fan-forced ovens cook faster than other ovens, so you might need to adjust cooking temperatures and times if you have a conventional oven.

## Baking trays, cake tins and muffin tins

Baking trays are metal trays for cooking things in the oven. Some are deep and are used for roasting meat. Shallow baking trays are used for cooking things like biscuits. Often, baking trays will need to be greased before use to stop food sticking. Use a piece of scrunched-up baking paper to rub the tray all over with a little butter or oil.

Cake tins and muffin tins come in different shapes and sizes. Make sure you use the correct size for the recipe you are preparing and grease or line it with baking paper according to the instructions.

## Baking dishes and ovenproof dishes

These are dishes that can be used in the oven without breaking. They are used for bakes, slice-and-bake casseroles and pies.

## Wire racks

These are essential for cooling cakes or biscuits after they come out of the oven.

## Utensils

**Spoons** can be wooden or metal and are used for stirring. In general, I recommend using spoons with long handles when stirring something in a pan on the stovetop to keep hands well away from hot contents. Slotted spoons are useful for lifting solid ingredients, such as gnocchi, out of a liquid.

**Tongs** are perfect for moving things around in a pan or on the barbecue.

**Whisks** are used when you want to remove lumps to make a smooth sauce, or when you want to incorporate some air into ingredients such as cream or egg whites.

**Bowl scrapers** and **palette knives** are perfect for scraping out bowls or for spreading fillings or icing onto cakes.

**Spatulas** are useful for turning all sorts of things over in pans or for lifting them out.

**Ladles** are perfect for serving soups and stews as they hold more than spoons.

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**Biscuit (cookie) cutters** come in all sorts of fun shapes and sizes and are great for making biscuits and scones.

**Pastry brushes** are used to brush pastry with melted butter, egg or milk before baking, so that it turns golden and shiny. A brush can also be used to marinate meat before cooking.

**Plastic wrap** comes in rolls and is used to wrap and seal food to stop it from drying out in the air.

**Kitchen towel** is absorbent paper that is used for mopping up spills in the kitchen or for draining food that has been fried.

**Baking paper** is often lightly coated in silicon and is used to line baking trays and cake tins so that biscuits or cakes won't stick.

# Time-saving tips

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Rushing around in the kitchen is never a good idea: it can cause you to make mistakes, or worse, hurt yourself. There are safe ways to speed up the cooking process without putting your health at risk, though – here are a few suggestions.

- Put your apron on and tie your hair back if it's long.
- Read the whole recipe through first before you start cooking. Make sure you understand everything. If you don't, ask an adult to explain.
- Follow the time-saving tips for each recipe.
- Have all of the ingredients and equipment neatly laid out on your work surface.
- Find an adult to be your kitchen hand. Ask them (nicely!) to help you with ingredient preparation.
- Measure out all of the ingredients into the correct amounts.
- Use a food processor to finely dice onion and garlic. You can also use it to grate cheese and veggies with the grater attachment.
- Pre-heat your oven and boil and salt pasta water in advance, if necessary.
- Have a garbage bin nearby to keep the kitchen tidy.
- Clean as you go. No one likes a messy cook, or a messy kitchen!
- Before you cook, make sure you have a clean, uncluttered work surface.
- Set your table beforehand, so when the food is ready you can tuck in!



# Speedy Snacks

Recipes you can cook  
in 10-20 minutes

# Summer sunset juice

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This juice is not just pretty to look at – it tastes amazing and is packed with vitamins, too! This recipe calls for grenadine, which is a sweet, red syrup made from pomegranate.

Serves 2

Prep time: 30 minutes

Cooking time: 20 minutes

## Ingredients

300 g (10½ oz) watermelon, rind removed, diced roughly

5 oranges, peeled and quartered

15 g (½ oz/¼ cup firmly packed) mint leaves

5 large ice cubes

1 tablespoon grenadine

2 sprigs mint, to garnish

## Time-saving tips

Have all your equipment and ingredients ready

Find a kitchen hand to help you prepare the ingredients ahead of time

## Method

Position the jug of your juicer underneath the juicer spout.

Switch the juicer on and carefully feed in the watermelon, orange quarters and mint leaves. If your juicer's jug is too small to hold all of the juice in one go, feed in the fruit in batches and transfer the juice into a larger jug.

Using a spoon, skim off and throw away any foam sitting on top of the juice. Add the ice to the jug and mix well. Divide the juice between 2 tall glasses, using a spoon to prevent the ice from falling in.

Measure the grenadine into a small glass. Use a drinking straw to suck up half of the grenadine – try not to drink any! With two fingers, tightly pinch the top of the straw and place the straw into the bottom of one glass of juice. Relax your grip on the straw – this will release the grenadine at the

bottom of the glass. Repeat this process for the second glass of juice.

The grenadine is heavier than the fruit juice, so it will sit at the bottom of the glass while the fruit juice floats on top!

Garnish with the sprigs of mint and serve immediately with a straw in each glass. Mix well before drinking.





# Mango smoothie

My husband, Anthony, taught me how to make this amazing drink a few years ago. Now I make every time we have a big party. I hope you love it as much as I do!

Serves 2

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 10 minutes

## Ingredients

2 large mango cheeks, peeled and frozen

1 egg white

1 tablespoon sugar syrup

400 ml (13½ fl oz/1⅔ cups) milk

## Time-saving tips

Have all your equipment and ingredients ready

Find a kitchen hand to help you prepare the ingredients ahead of time

Skin and freeze several mango cheeks in advance, so you have them on hand

Use ready-made sugar syrup

## Method

Put mango cheeks, egg white, sugar syrup and milk into the jug of your blender.

With the lid on, blend on high for a minute, or until all of the mango has been pureed.

Carefully pour the smoothie into 2 glasses and serve immediately.

### Equipment:



Measuring spoons



Measuring jug



Blender



2 tall drinking glasses



# Nacho-flavoured popcorn

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This is a tasty variation on buttered popcorn that one of my Little Kitchen teachers, Lisa, taught me to make with my cooking students. Serve it at your next party or for National Popcorn Day – 19 January. It's sure to be a hit!

Makes approximately 5 cups

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cooking time: 15-20 minutes

## Ingredients

2 tablespoons vegetable oil  
70 g (2½ oz/¼ cup) popping corn  
30 g (1 oz/1½ tablespoons) salted butter  
½ teaspoon sweet paprika  
½ teaspoon garlic powder  
½ teaspoon onion powder  
½ teaspoon sea salt  
30 g (1 oz/¼ cup) parmesan cheese, finely grated

## Time-saving tips

Have all your equipment and ingredients ready

Find a kitchen hand to help you prepare the ingredients ahead of time

## Method

Measure the oil into a large, heavy-based saucepan and add two kernels of popping corn.

**With adult help:** Heat the saucepan over medium-high heat. When the two kernels pop, tip the remaining popping corn into the saucepan and quickly put the lid on. Wearing an oven mitt, hold the lid on tight and gently swirl the pan around so all of the popping corn gets coated in oil.

Soon you'll hear the corn start to pop! Keep the lid on and don't peek, because the corn could escape from the pan and burn you. If you really want to see what's happening, try using a saucepan with

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