

Cooking - Learning for life

Cooking is an involved process that's much more than just heating up a can of food and plopping it on a plate. It's an activity that can strengthen patrol spirit and bring all 12 points of the Scout law into practice. Successful cooking is an attitude for service and a strive for excellence. It begins with planning and menu preparation, moves through shopping for food, meal preparation and ends with offering thanks, consumption of the goods, and clean-up. A good cook is able to please both himself and his fellow Scouts while providing a well-balanced, nutritious, and enjoyable meal. Meals should be the highlight of a camping trip, not just a necessary, mundane chore that somebody gotta' do.

Here's a rundown on how the Scout Law impacts on cooking:

TRUSTWORTHY - The Scout who has been entrusted with meal preparation has a weighty responsibility indeed. His patrol members are counting on him to provide a tasty, nutritious, and filling meal in an attractive package. He should do his best not to disappoint them.

LOYAL - Patrol members stick by their patrol cooks, no matter what the other guys might be having for dinner. There's always time to outdo them next trip.

HELPFUL - It has been said that too many cooks spoil the broth, but most cooks would appreciate assistance with gathering firewood, cleaning up and other mundane tasks. Offer to help. In fact, a good cook will realize that he can't do it alone and ask for help BEFORE he needs it. If you can follow instructions you might even be entrusted with custody of the broth for a short while.

FRIENDLY - Mealtime should be a pleasant experience that's enjoyed by everyone, even if the cook was somewhat less than successful. A pleasant word can go a long way and there's always the next meal to look forward to.

COURTEOUS - "Please" and "thank you" should be standard vocabulary at every mealtime. Nobody likes a rude or pushy mealtime guest.

KIND - Don't berate the cook if you don't like the food! He probably didn't plan the menu and certainly can't cater to individual tastes every time. Your time in the job is coming. How would you like to be treated?

OBEDIENT - The cook is in charge! Stay out of the kitchen unless you're invited in. No Questions asked.

CHEERFUL - There is some good even in bad meal; Make the best of every situation.

THRIFTY - A good cook doesn't waste food or money. Nutritious, filling and tasty meals don't need to cost a lot.

BRAVE - Dare to try different foods, even if they don't look appetizing. You might be surprised and stumble upon a new favorite dish.

CLEAN - Nobody likes a dirty cook or kitchen. Keep them clean and keep healthy.

REVERENT - Offer thanks for every meal, either as a group or individually.