Ages: 9-11

Potatoes two ways

75 min · indoors · all year round



Prep:

- Potatoes - 800 g
- Milk or plant-based drink - 120 ml
- Butter - 30 g
- Salt - 1/2 tsp
- Dried paprika - 1/2 tsp
- Saucepan and baking tray
- Bowls and plates - 2 of each
- Potato masher, colander and spatula
- Knife, hob and oven - used by an adult
- Timer, A4 sheet and pen

Step by step (~75 min):

1. Divide and weigh the potatoes into two equal 400 g portions. Equal weight matters if you want a fair comparison.
2. An adult cuts the first portion into 2 cm cubes and boils it for 15-18 minutes. Cut the second into wedges, mix with half the butter and the paprika, and bake at 200 °C for 30-35 minutes.
3. While the potatoes cook, predict which will be softer, smell stronger and be ready faster.
4. An adult drains the hot water. The teenager mashes the cubes, adding warm milk, the remaining butter and salt.
5. Compare three things: the surface, the sound when a piece breaks and how it feels in your mouth. Write down three observations and check them against your predictions.

If it's not working: If the two versions are not ready at the same time, record their cooking times separately and compare only the finished potatoes' qualities. Do not decide in advance which method is best.

Playing together: A child aged 6-8 washes and mashes potatoes under supervision; a child aged 9-11 measures and compares; an adult works with the knife, boiling water and oven.

Make it your own: Change the size of the wedges, add the same seasoning to both after cooking or compare the amount of washing-up and hands-on time.

Let's talk:

- "What changes did the cooking method cause?"
- "Which criterion matters most to our family on a weekday?"
- "Did your predictions match?"

Stay safe: An adult drains the hot water. An adult uses the knife, hob and oven; keep oven gloves dry and turn pan handles inwards.

Why try this:

Your child makes a prediction, compares two cooking methods and discusses how to choose between them. An ordinary family meal becomes an opportunity to investigate and reason together.