

Apple Cider Recipe

Freshly brewed apple cider is a perennial favorite for the winter holidays, and it's one beverage that will please both kids and adults. Preparing this concoction is a process your child will genuinely enjoy and learn from as well! As he helps you prepare this delectable winter treat, he will learn crucial cooking skills, such as measuring, knife safety, and how to follow recipe directions.

The best cider is made by brewing it all day in a crock pot, but if you're short on time or you don't own a slow cooker, you can use a pot and simmer it on the stove, on low, for a few hours.

What You Need:

- 1 gallon apple juice
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 2 teaspoons fresh chopped ginger
- 3 orange slices
- 1 lemon
- 1 tsp whole cloves
- 1 tsp powdered nutmeg

What You Do:

1. Have your child use a spoon to peel the ginger before you chop it, using the edge of the spoon to cut into the peel. This method takes less skin off than using a regular potato peeler.
2. Chop or slice the ginger into small pieces. The longer you plan to cook the cider, the larger the slices can be because they will boil down.
3. Ask your child to slice the orange and lemon so you can slice it up. You will want to float the slices in the cider as it cooks, and you can eat the rest of the fresh fruit or save it for other recipes.
4. Have your child pour the juice into the pot or slow cooker. Add the sliced ginger, orange, and lemon.
5. Invite your child to measure out the remaining ingredients and add the cinnamon stick, cloves, and nutmeg. Help him stir the concoction, cover the pot, and set the heat on low.
6. If you're using a slow cooker, you can simply leave the apple cider to brew overnight for approximately eight hours. If you want the cider to be done faster, set the cooker on high and cook for only four hours. On the stove, you will have to monitor the cider so that it's simmering on low but does not boil, and you can leave it for between two to four hours.
7. When it's done, ask your child to choose to either strain the extra ingredients or leave them in the pot as a garnish. Ladle the cider into warmed mugs, and serve it up to guests piping hot!

For variations on the recipe, add any of the following:

- Cardamom for a richer, spicier taste
- Black pepper for a surprising kick
- Maple syrup or honey for extra sweetness

This delicious drink tastes great alone, but is a perfect match when paired with these soft and chewy gingerbread cookies!

