

KIDS CLUB

NEWSLETTER



Welcome to week 2 of our new ChopChop Kids Club newsletter! (If you missed the first one, it's [here](#).) This week we're focusing on older bananas. You know the kind: they're brown and spotty and past the point of slicing into your cereal. But they're perfect for banana bread! If you have a little brother or sister at home, they can help you mash the bananas for this recipe. It's a fun job, it's pretty much impossible to mess up, and they'll feel so good about getting involved! And if you've got an older sibling at home, maybe they can help you with the parts you're not so sure about—like using pot holders to take the loaf out of the oven. And if it's just you? There'll be more banana bread to go around.

Have fun going bananas!



5-Banana Banana Bread

Five bananas might sound bananas to you, but that's the amount we've landed on for perfectly moist, naturally sweet banana bread. If you don't have that many bananas, you can make half the recipe and bake the batter in a muffin tin that you've greased or lined with paper wrappers. The muffins will need to bake for a shorter time—25 minutes or so—and you'll end up with around 12 muffins.

■ ADULT: YES ■ HANDS-ON TIME: 30 MINUTES ■ TOTAL TIME: 1 HOUR 30 MINUTES ■ MAKES: 1 LOAF

KITCHEN GEAR

Loaf pan
Measuring cups
Measuring spoons
2 large bowls
Fork
Large spoon
Silicone spatula
Pot holders

INGREDIENTS

- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil (for the pan)
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ½ cup whole-wheat flour
- 1½ teaspoons baking soda
- 1½ teaspoons kosher salt
- 5 very, very overripe bananas, peeled
- ½ cup sugar
- 8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, melted and slightly cooled (melt the butter in a small pot over low heat or in the microwave), or ½ cup vegetable oil
- 2 large eggs, at room temperature
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- ½ cup toasted walnuts or pecans (if you like, and nobody's allergic)



INSTRUCTIONS

Wash your hands with soap and water, then gather all your equipment and ingredients and put them on the counter.

1. Turn the oven on and set the heat to 350 degrees. Using your clean hand or a paper towel, lightly coat the loaf pan with the 1 teaspoon oil.
2. Put both flours, the baking soda, and salt in a large bowl and mix well. Set aside.
3. Put the bananas in the other bowl and, if they're not very soft, use the fork to mash them. Add the sugar and mix until it's as

smooth as you can get it. There should be no big chunks of banana.

4. Add the butter, eggs, and vanilla to the banana mixture and mix well. Add the flour mixture, a little at a time, and then the nuts, if using, and mix well. Scrape the mixture into the prepared pan.
5. Once the oven temperature has reached 350 degrees, put the pan in the oven and bake until firm in the center, about 1 hour.
6. Set aside to cool a bit, then remove from the pan. Cool before slicing. Wrap leftovers in plastic wrap.

TRY THIS

Cocoa Banana Bread: Instead of 1 cup all-purpose flour, use ½ cup flour and 1 cup unsweetened cocoa powder.

TOO MANY OLD BANANAS?

Freeze them to use later in smoothies—or to make more banana bread. Here's how:

1. Peel an overripe banana.
2. Slice it into thin rounds.
3. Put the slices in a resealable plastic bag and put the bag in the freezer.



WHERE IN THE WORLD?

We love bananas! Unlike other fruits that have a particular growing season, bananas grow year-round in tropical places—including Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, and the Pacific. Can you find those places on a map?

DID YOU KNOW?

The largest bunch of bananas ever grown was harvested by Manuel Kabana in Spain in 2001 and contained 473 bananas!



KITCHEN SCIENCE

Why do bananas turn brown?

BY VAYU MAINI REKDAL

The banana is a beautiful fruit—bright yellow on the outside, a mellow creamy white on the inside. However, over time, bananas change color, eventually turning unrecognizably brown and changing in flavor, too.

The browning of bananas is a natural part of ripening. As the banana matures, it gives off a gas called ethylene. Ethylene surrounds the banana and signals to the fruit when it's time to soften and mature. Eventually, the ethylene causes

production of brown pigments with the help of oxygen in the air, transforming the color and texture of the fruit.

Understanding this process is helpful in the kitchen. For example, if you place bananas inside a bag, they will ripen faster because the ethylene gas builds up. You can also mix bananas with other fruits, as the ethylene will trigger their ripening process as well. Peaches and avocados are good partners, but you should explore other options and try for yourself. Perhaps you will be the first to discover something no one has ever seen before!

KITCHEN SKILL

How to crack an egg



While you are still learning, you might need an adult to help make sure that when you crack the egg, none of the eggshell gets into the bowl. If a piece of the shell does fall in, use an empty shell half as a "spoon" to remove it. Make sure to thoroughly wash your hands, along with any countertops, utensils, and bowls that the raw egg touches, with hot, soapy water.

1. Make sure the raw egg's shell is not already broken or cracked. (If it is, throw it away.) Hit the midpoint between the more-rounded (wide) end and the pointier end of the egg against the rim of a bowl.
2. Hold the egg over the bowl with the cracked part facing up.
3. Pry the shell open gently and allow the egg to slide into the bowl.



GET MOVING: BANANA ROLL

This exercise is really good for your stomach and back muscles. To do it, lie down on your stomach on a mat or carpet. Now reach your arms straight out in front of you and stretch your legs back behind you (both should be shoulder-width apart). Lift both your legs and your arms a few inches off the floor and hold for 5 seconds. Flip onto your back while keeping your arms and legs lifted and hold for 5 seconds. Roll back onto your stomach in the opposite direction and repeat. Try to do this for 30 seconds. Practice every day and see if you can work up to a full minute!





DO YOU HAVE MORE BANANAS?

Try one of these recipes.

- **Banana Dutch Baby** www.chopchopfamily.org/recipe/banana-dutch-baby
- **Banana Applesauce with Almonds** www.chopchopfamily.org/recipe/banana-applesauce-almonds
- **One-Ingredient Banana Ice Cream** www.chopchopfamily.org/recipe/one-ingredient-banana-ice-cream

◀ **One-Ingredient Banana Ice Cream**

GAME: BANANARAMA

Here's a fun game to play while your banana bread bakes. Give each player a piece of paper and a pencil. When someone yells "Banarama!" players have 5 minutes to race through the house writing down everything they can see—either inside or out the window—that's yellow or that starts with the letter B. At the end of 5 minutes, each item on the list scores 1 point, except for items that are both yellow and start with B, which score 2 points. The player with the most points wins.

This is a pretty adaptable game. How would you play it if it were strawberry-themed?

6 WAYS TO EAT BANANAS

1. Sandwich peanut butter and banana slices between two pieces of French toast.
2. Spread whole-wheat toast with mashed banana.
3. Top oatmeal or yogurt with banana slices.
4. Sandwich peanut butter between banana slices and freeze them.
5. Slice a banana in half lengthwise (leave the peel on), then wrap it in foil and bake in a 350-degree oven for 15 minutes. Use a spoon to eat it out of the peel.
6. In a blender, whirl 1 sliced banana with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup plain yogurt, a splash of fruit juice, and a couple of ice cubes for an instant smoothie.



A-PEELING MATH

1. The average American eats 100 bananas every year. If you eat 2 bananas a week, how many bananas do you eat in a year? Are you under or over the average?
2. Bananas cost around 58 cents per pound, making them one of the least expensive fruits. (Apples are \$1.32 per pound, oranges \$1.39 per pound, and grapes \$2.28 per pound.) There are (usually) 3 bananas in a pound. If a recipe has 6 bananas in it, how much would it cost? How many pounds of bananas are in the Banana Bread recipe?

