

Lesson Seven - Poultry

Poultry means chicken and turkey, right? Those are the birds we eat most often, but ducks, geese, Cornish hens, and other birds are delicious as well. We'll start with chicken, a perennial favorite.

In this lesson, the girls will learn to:

- Safely handle raw poultry
- Identify the parts of a chicken
- Dredge raw chicken pieces in a flour mixture
- Prepare "oven-fried" chicken
- Use herbs to season food

Review:

- Oven Safety (Lesson 2)

Give each girl a copy of:

- Poultry Perfect Skill Page
- Crispy Oven-Baked Chicken Recipe Page
- Herbs & Spices Student Page

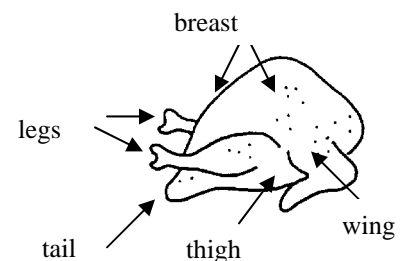
Fried chicken is one of the most popular foods in America, but it's also high in fat and calories. A healthier alternative – and much easier to prepare – is chicken coated with a flour mixture, then baked in the oven. The Colonel has his secret recipe of herbs and spices, but I think you'll find our Crispy Oven-Baked Chicken just as delicious!

Ask the girls to **name ways chicken can be prepared**. They're probably most familiar with chicken fingers or nuggets, but don't forget BBQ chicken, chicken casserole, salad or soup. Chicken is nutritious and inexpensive; learn to prepare it in a variety of ways.

It's important to remember that all raw poultry may contain salmonella and other bacteria that cause food poisoning. **Read "Poultry Perfect"** with the girls and stress the importance of safe food handling.

Using latex or plastic gloves while handling raw meat will help keep hands clean, and overcome some of the squeamish attitudes the girls may have about touching raw chicken. Even if gloves are worn, hands must be thoroughly washed with soap and water before and after handling raw meat. Throw used gloves away immediately after use.

Most girls are not familiar with all of the **parts of a chicken**. All poultry has the same basic parts. Buy one whole chicken (not cut up) so the girls can see where each part is located on the bird.



Set the **whole chicken**, in the package, in a flat pan to catch the juices. Ask the girls to read the label. What does this chicken weigh? How much is it per pound? What is the total cost?

Remove the bird from the wrapper. **Identify the parts of the chicken:** wings, legs, thighs, breast and back. Look inside the cavity. Pull out the contents. These are the “giblets” or internal organs of the chicken. Most often they are inside a bag with the neck. Many people cook these and use them in gravy.

Have the girls put on latex or plastic gloves and pass the chicken around so everyone has an opportunity to look at it closely.

Get out the package(s) of **legs and thighs** you will cook today. Give each girl a piece and have her locate that part on the whole chicken.

When you’re done, place the whole chicken in a zippered freezer bag and return it to the refrigerator or freezer to use another time. Freeze the giblets for later use, or discard them.

Tip: Be sure measuring spoons are dry before dipping them into the spice container.

Mix the flour, herbs and spices (we’ll discuss them more fully while the chicken is in the oven). Have the girls look closely at a set of measuring spoons and identify $\frac{1}{4}$ t. and $\frac{1}{2}$ t. **Measure** the paprika and show the girls how to **level off the spice** by running the straight edge of a knife across the rim of the measuring spoon (or by gently shaking the spoon to remove the excess paprika).

Measure the remaining dry ingredients into a bowl and stir well.

Rinse a chicken piece, put it into the flour mixture, and turn it to coat it well on all sides. This is **dredging** the chicken. Set it in the prepared pan as directed in the recipe.

Our recipe calls for 4 legs or thighs. You can use other pieces, but thighs and legs cook at about the same rate. It will be easier if everything is ready at the same time. Girls can work in groups of 2 – 4, depending on how much chicken you wish to prepare.

There’s plenty of flour mixture to coat 4 – 6 pieces of chicken. **Any flour mixture leftover must be discarded** as it may contain harmful bacteria from the raw chicken.

Melt the butter or margarine over low heat. Cover it to avoid splattering.

Baking time will vary depending on the size of your chicken pieces. It’s best to check for doneness with a **meat thermometer**. They are an inexpensive investment, especially compared to the cost of suffering from food poisoning! Yes, you can cut the chicken and see if the juices run clear, but a thermometer is more accurate. Temperature for **chicken pieces (bone-in) should be 170 degrees**. See the “Poultry Perfect” page for more information from the National Chicken Council.



There are various types of meat thermometers.

Photos courtesy of USDA

The chicken does not need to be turned during baking. You can do so, if you wish to make it crispier. Show the girls how to safely turn the pieces with a pair of tongs (or have an adult do this step).

After clean-up, allow time for the girls to smell each of the herbs and spices they used, as well as any others you may have on hand. Potted herbs are often now available in supermarkets, as well as fresh-cut herbs in bags. If possible, buy some potted parsley and some fresh herbs to show the girls. Read **“Herbs & Spices” Student Page** and discuss.

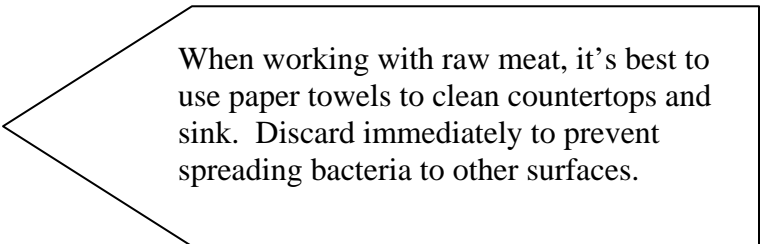
What you’ll need for this lesson:

Ingredients (per recipe):

4 chicken pieces, legs or thighs
3/4 Cup All-Purpose flour
4 T. (half a stick) of butter or margarine
Cooking oil spray
Salt, pepper
Paprika
Onion Powder
Thyme
Poultry Seasoning

Supplies:

9” x 13” pan (or similar sized pan)
An extra pan for the raw whole chicken
Foil
Latex or plastic gloves
Medium bowl for flour mixture
Medium or large bowls for raw chicken pieces
Tongs
Measuring cup for flour
Measuring spoons
Table Knife for leveling dry ingredients
Large Spoon for mixing dry ingredients
Paper Towels
Antibacterial Spray



When working with raw meat, it’s best to use paper towels to clean countertops and sink. Discard immediately to prevent spreading bacteria to other surfaces.

To serve:

Plates
Forks & Knives
Napkins
Salt & Pepper
Glasses or paper cups
Beverage

Name:

Cooking with Herbs & Spices

Herbs and spices enhance the flavor of food. We'll mix several with flour to make a delicious coating for our oven baked chicken.

What's the difference between herbs and spices? **Herbs** are the leafy parts of a plant; they may be used fresh or dried. **Spices** are the aromatic parts of the plant: buds, fruit, berries, roots or bark. Most of the time, spices we use are dried, though some, like gingerroot, may also be used fresh.



Our chicken recipe uses common, dried herbs and spices. You probably already have most of them. If not, they are readily available in the spice section of the grocery store. You can also buy herbs at many health food stores where they are sold by the ounce. You can purchase only as much as you need. The herbs are cheaper, fresher and more flavorful than most found in the grocery store.

We'll use two spices: **pepper and paprika**, and several herbs: **thyme** (pronounced "time") **and poultry seasoning**. Poultry seasoning is a mixture of herbs that varies by brand. It generally contains sage, marjoram, rosemary and thyme. Purchase one that does not add salt.

Salt is often added to herb and spice mixtures. It's easy to inadvertently add too much salt to a recipe. If you add onion salt, garlic salt, and poultry seasoning that contains salt, you'll end up with mostly salt for flavoring, and very little herbs or spices! It's best to use pure herbs and spices, then add just the amount of salt you need. Remember, it's easy to add salt at the table, after tasting the food. But, while cooking, use a light hand when adding salt.

Onion powder, (not onion salt) is the other seasoning in our recipe. Onion powder is pulverized dry onion. Since it's not diluted with salt, the onion taste is strong and a little goes a long way.

Many grocery stores now sell **fresh-cut herbs** in the produce section. They may also have potted herbs you can take home to grow. In recipes, be sure to note if the herbs are dried or fresh. Dried herbs have a stronger flavor than fresh because they are more concentrated. If you need to **substitute dried herbs for fresh**, use about half as much of the dried herb. It's best to start with less, then taste the food and add more if needed.

Check your cupboards to see what other herbs and spices you have on hand. Keep them tightly sealed, in one place so you can find them easily when cooking. Properly stored, spices will keep about 3 years, herbs 1-3 years.

Herbs and Spices Guide

Here are some seasonings that work well with certain foods. These are just a few suggestions. The more you use herbs and spices, the more familiar you'll become with them and with your taste preferences. When trying a new recipe, always start with a little less seasoning than called for. Taste a little of the food and then add more seasoning if desired.

<u>For:</u>	<u>Try these herbs and spices:</u>
Beef	Black pepper, thyme, bay leaf, garlic powder, onion powder, oregano, basil, marjoram, parsley, dry mustard, chili powder, red pepper, curry powder
Poultry	Paprika, poultry seasoning, sage, parsley, rosemary, marjoram, thyme, celery seed, lemon pepper, garlic powder, onion powder, chives, ginger, dill, curry powder
Fish	Dill, lemon pepper, coriander, marjoram, tarragon, curry powder, parsley, white or black pepper, chives
Vegetables	Garlic powder, onion powder, nutmeg, basil, oregano, marjoram, lemon pepper, black pepper, parsley, chives

You will also find **seasoning mixes** in the grocery store. Cajun mixes and Jamaican Jerk seasoning are hot and spicy. Italian or pizza seasonings mix oregano, basil, garlic, onion and other spices. Mexican seasoning and Southwest blends will usually include cumin, chili pepper, garlic, onion and other types of pepper.

Many mixes include **salt**. Be a smart shopper and read the label to find the sodium content. Or, read the list of ingredients; the main ingredient is listed first. If someone in your family limits salt intake, use seasoning mixes that are not high in salt. Or, let each person add the seasoning at the table.

Want to learn more about herbs and spices? Here are two sources to contact with your parent's permission.

McCormick & Co. 1-800-632-5847 or www.mccormick.com
Penzey's Spices 1-800-741-7787 or www.penzeys.com

Name:

Crispy Oven-Baked Chicken

Ingredients:

4 chicken pieces: legs or thighs
3/4 Cup All-Purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon salt, optional
Dash of pepper
1/2 teaspoon paprika
1/4 teaspoon onion powder
1/2 teaspoon thyme
1/2 teaspoon poultry seasoning
2 Tablespoons butter or margarine, melted
Cooking Oil Spray

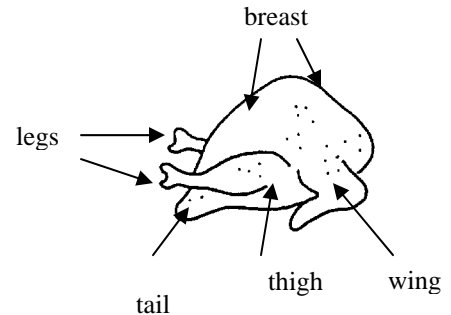
Method:

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Line a 9" x 13" pan with foil, then spray with **cooking oil spray**.
2. Mix the **flour** with all the **herbs and seasonings** in a medium sized bowl. Blend well. Set aside.
3. Rinse the **chicken pieces**. Place them in a separate bowl or pan.
4. Dredge the **chicken** in the **seasoned flour**, thoroughly coating each piece. Discard any leftover flour mixture.
5. Place the **chicken pieces** in the prepared 9" x 13" pan so that they do not touch each other.
6. Bake at 375 degrees for 20 minutes. Take the pan out of the oven and brush the chicken with **melted butter or margarine**. You may turn the pieces over with tongs if you wish, but it is not essential.
7. Return the pan to the oven and bake 15 minutes more, or until done. Insert a meat thermometer into the thickest part of a piece of chicken. It must reach **170 degrees** to be thoroughly cooked.

Variations:

- Replace half of the flour with cornmeal for an extra crunchy crust.
- Try other combinations of herbs. Rosemary, tarragon, garlic or lemon pepper can be used alone or in combination with the herbs above.
- For a spicy twist, add 1/4 teaspoon of cayenne pepper to the dry ingredients.

Poultry Parts



The back is the underside.

Dredge means to coat with flour or other dry ingredients.

Ask for adult help for Step 6.

Poultry Perfect!



An inspector examines raw chickens.

Poultry may contain salmonella or other bacteria that can cause illness. Proper handling and cooking eliminates the risk of infection. Follow these tips from the National Chicken Council.

Before you cook:

1. Refrigerate raw chicken promptly. Don't leave it on the countertop at room temperature. Never leave chicken in a hot car. After grocery shopping, refrigerate poultry and other cold foods as soon as you get home.
2. Packaged fresh chicken may be stored in its original wrappings in the coldest part of the refrigerator up to 2 days.
3. If it's not to be used within 2 days, freeze uncooked chicken in freezer bags or heavy-duty aluminum foil for up to 1 year.
4. Thaw chicken in the refrigerator, or in cold water – never on the countertop. It takes about 24 hours to thaw a 4-pound chicken in the refrigerator and 3 – 9 hours to thaw cut-up parts.
5. To thaw in cold water, place chicken in its original wrap or a water-tight plastic bag in cold water. Change water often. It takes about 2 hours to thaw a whole chicken.
6. Use the microwave to quickly thaw raw or cooked chicken. Check your microwave manual for directions.
7. Always wash hands, countertops, cutting boards, knives and other utensils used in preparing raw poultry with soapy water before they come in contact with other foods.



Photos courtesy of
USDA

While you're cooking:

1. Always cook chicken well done. It's best to check with a meat thermometer. Internal temperature for a whole chicken should reach 180 degrees, 170 degrees for bone-in parts, and 160 for boneless pieces.
2. If you do not have a thermometer, pierce chicken with a fork in the thickest part. Juices should run clear, not pink.
3. When barbecuing, keep chicken refrigerated until ready to cook. Do not place cooked chicken on the same plate used to transport raw chicken to the grill.
4. Marinade in which raw chicken has been soaking should be discarded, never used on cooked chicken.

After you cook:

1. Cooked chicken pieces may be kept in the refrigerator up to 2 days. Whole chicken, 3 days.
2. If you're transporting cooked chicken, put it in an insulated container or ice chest until ready to eat. Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold to avoid food poisoning - either below 40 degrees or above 140 degrees.
3. When reheating leftovers, cover to retain moisture and to ensure chicken is heated all the way through. Bring gravy to a rolling boil before serving.

Used with permission
National Chicken Council

Extending The Lesson... *Grocery Shopping*

Our chicken recipe is a very economical main dish. Because groceries consume a large part of the family budget, it's important to teach girls how to cook and shop, economically and wisely.



Many family expenses are fixed: rent or mortgage payments, car expenses, insurance and utility costs are a few that can be adjusted somewhat, but then the cost is not likely to change very much.

Groceries, on the other hand, are not a fixed expense. Did you know that you can buy food at sale prices? Families spend one quarter or more of their income on food. That adds up to thousands of dollars every year. It's well worth investing a little time to save money at the grocery store.

Many researchers have studied marketing techniques to get people to spend more in the grocery store. Everything is carefully planned - from attractive displays, food samples, eye-catching colors, even the music playing - to entice shoppers to spend more. If you enter the store unprepared, you will spend more money than intended.

Teach the girls to shop wisely:

- Make a grocery list
- Read and use grocery ads
- Organize and use coupons

Plan a typical family menu for one day. Have the girls write a list for breakfast, lunch and dinner. They need to include snacks and everything their family might eat in a day. Then have them **write a list of all the groceries** they would need. Go over the list together. Did they include butter or margarine for the sandwiches? What about salad dressing, sugar or sweetener for coffee and tea?

They may have many things on hand already. But it's important to list everything that's needed for meals to avoid unnecessary trips to the grocery store for an overlooked item. A mental checklist may be enough for experienced adults, but have the girls write down everything they will need. Then they can check their pantry and cross off the items they have on hand.

Grocery ads usually are published weekly in the newspaper. They are also available in most grocery stores. Get grocery ads for each girl; your own supermarket should be happy to provide them. If you have several supermarkets nearby, get different store's ads for comparison.

Sample Meals for One Day

Breakfast:

Cereal with bananas & milk
Orange Juice
Coffee - Dad, Tea - Mom

Lunch:

Grilled Cheese Sandwiches
Tomato Soup
Carrot Sticks
Cookies
Milk

Snack:

Apple Juice
Granola Bar

Dinner:

Crispy Oven-Baked Chicken
Mashed Potatoes
Tossed Salad
Green Beans
Brownies
Milk

Evening Snack:

Cocoa
Cookie

Every week, supermarkets feature sales. They want your business! Several items will be deeply discounted. These are called “**loss leaders**” and are usually prominently displayed on the front of the ad. Companies know they will lose money on these items, but they make up for it by the other purchases consumers make once in their store.

Look through the entire ad with the girls. Have them circle the items their family would use. Be sure they understand that they will not save money purchasing items their family will not use – even if they’re on sale!

Family menus can be planned around sale items. Or purchase food when it’s deeply discounted and store it for later use. This works well for canned goods, but meat and other fresh foods will need to be used promptly, or perhaps frozen if you have the space.

Here’s how I would **compare the food ads with the sample menu above**. I might discover that this week our favorite brand cereal is on sale. Generic store brands are usually cheaper, but the sale price is cheaper this week so I’ll plan to buy several extra boxes, especially if I have coupons.

Chicken leg quarters are often on sale for about 29 cents a pound. If I buy the legs and thighs in separate packages, they cost 99 cents/pound, so I’ll buy the leg quarters and cut the leg from the thigh at home (many stores will even do this for you). Because we like chicken, I’ll buy 10 pounds. That’s only \$2.90 for ten pounds of meat! We’ll eat about 3 pounds this week when I fix Crispy Oven-Baked Chicken and I’ll use several pounds in a chicken casserole. I have room for the rest in the freezer.

Fresh orange juice is also on sale, but I have room for just 2 cartons in the refrigerator so that’s all I’ll buy. Canned tuna fish is another loss leader at 3 cans for \$1. We enjoy tuna casserole and the cans of tuna take little space in the pantry so I’ll stock up and buy six cans.

By now you can see how buying groceries on sale works to your advantage. I’ve purchased chicken at one-quarter the usual cost, tuna at half the cost, and earned big savings on the other sale items. Go through the process with the girls; “think aloud” with them so they understand how to plan, shop and save money.

In addition to the grocery ads, most newspapers carry weekly coupon inserts. **Coupons** come in the mail, from dispensers on the grocery shelf, and at coupon sites online. Use a coupon organizer, file box, or envelopes to organize coupons. Take out any coupons for the items on your grocery list so they’re handy when you pay for your groceries.



Meal planning, preparing a grocery list, and using food ads and coupons will become second nature with a little practice and will reap huge savings for your family. Well done, good and faithful steward!