

## Secret Ingredient

Spark your creativity in the kitchen! Experiment with one special ingredient that you already have in your kitchen in to transform simple drinks and dishes into unique masterpieces. In the how-to video, Kelsey uses mint, but you can use whatever you already have in your kitchen. The challenge is to use what you have without any special grocery store trips.



### How-to video

<https://youtu.be/Njo-u86-NrQ>

### Materials:

- A special ingredient that you can use try in multiple ways & dishes.
- Ingredients from your kitchen that you can pair with your special ingredient.
- Bowls, dishes, spoons, and other kitchen implements.

**SAFTEY NOTE:** Adults and young learners may decide to add cutting to their secret ingredient experiments. Adults should always supervise children when using knives. To practice knife safety skills and techniques, here's a handy [video](#) and [article](#) to get started. Keep in mind, smaller hands might need to adjust their knife grip accordingly.

### Steps:

1. Decide on your special ingredient! It will be helpful to pick something that you have enough of to incorporate in multiple dishes. Kelsey used mint in the video, but you can use anything that you already have. Maybe it's a special spice or seasoning, or a fruit or vegetable, maybe even cereal! Creativity is key.
2. Collect other ingredients from around your kitchen. These could be things that you think would go well with your special ingredient, things that you are curious to try, even things that you think might not go well with your special ingredient. It's okay if a dish doesn't turn out how you wanted or expected, it's all about experimenting.



3. List out some ideas for combining your ingredients. You don't have to follow your list, but it could be a helpful way to spark some inspiration and keep track of how you're using your ingredients.
4. Start making! Try to make at least three separate dishes or drinks that use your special ingredient. If you feel overwhelmed, you can try combining your special ingredient with just one other ingredient from your kitchen. Then, you can keep adding from there if you are inspired. If you are making a large batch of something, you can try setting aside a small portion as a tester before adding your special ingredient to the bigger batch.
5. Make sure to taste as you go. Maybe you will need to add some salt or seasoning, maybe you need to add more of a certain ingredient, or texture, or balance out the flavors.
6. Reflect! What worked? What didn't work? What would you try differently or improve upon next time? You can even keep a notebook to log your kitchen experiments and write down recipes, so you have your own recipe book.

**Caregiver tip:**

Maybe adults have their own special ingredient they want experiment with alongside their learner? Try combining special ingredients for new combinations! Share the reasons behind your choices.

If you want to experiment with more cooking adventures after this one check out the amazing [topic page about cooking on Howtosome](#). It includes hands-on activities that investigate basic components of cooking including bacteria, heat, water and phase changes, and much more!