Octopus Hot Dogs for kids

Lunch · ages 8 to 14 (grades 3rd–8th) · about 15 minutes, plus 2 minutes waiting · serves 4

Let's cut a hot dog into eight legs, then watch them curl in the pot! Steps marked Grown-up step are for a grown-up to do.

Ingredients

- 4 hot dogs
- 1 tablespoon mustard
- 1 tablespoon ketchup

Tools

A cutting board, A sharp knife (grown-up), A big pot, The stove (grown-up), A big spoon, A colander, A plate.

Steps

1. Wash your hands with soap for twenty seconds.
2. Grown-up step: A grown-up cuts each of 4 hot dogs from the bottom up to the middle, into eight legs.
3. Grown-up step: A grown-up heats a pot of water on the stove until it bubbles gently.
4. Grown-up step: A grown-up lowers the hot dogs into the water, heads up.
5. Grown-up step: A grown-up keeps it bubbling gently for 5 minutes. Watch the legs curl!
6. Grown-up step: A grown-up lifts them out and drains them in the colander.
7. Let them cool on a plate for two minutes.
8. Dab two dots of 1 tablespoon of mustard on each head for eyes.
9. Draw a smile on each one with 1 tablespoon of ketchup.
10. Your octopuses are swimming! Watch their legs wave.

Safety notes

- Sharp! A grown-up does this part.
- Hot! A grown-up does this part.
- None of the nine major allergens as written. Still read the labels on packets.
- Cut hot dogs into thin strips the long way, never round coins, for little ones under 4.
- Read the label on packets for allergies.

Kitchen science

A hot dog's skin shrinks faster than its middle when it gets hot, so each cut leg curls up into a curl all by itself.

Make it your own

- Thread dry spaghetti through the legs before cooking, for spaghetti legs.
- Give each octopus a tiny hat from a slice of carrot.
- Serve them on a bed of cooked noodles, as the sea.

Questions about octopus hot dogs

How do you make octopus hot dogs? A grown-up cuts each hot dog from the bottom up to the middle into eight thin legs. Lower them into gently bubbling water for about 5 minutes until the legs curl, drain them, and draw a face with mustard and ketchup.

Why do the legs curl? A hot dog's outer skin shrinks faster than its middle when it heats up, which pulls each cut strip into a curl.

Are hot dogs safe for young children? Whole round hot dogs are a choking risk for children under 4. Cut them into thin strips the long way, never round coins.

Can I make them ahead? Yes. Cook and curl them, keep them in the fridge, and warm them again before you add the faces.

Free at peabody.kids/kitchen/octopus-hot-dogs