

MEASURING & WEIGHING

FACT SHEET

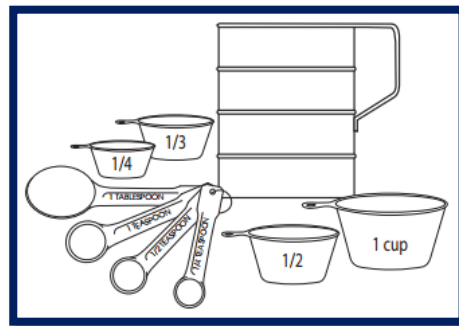
WHY ARE WEIGHING & MEASURING IMPORTANT?

Success in food preparation depends on using the correct amount of ingredients as stated on the recipe. The *only* way to get the correct amount is by measuring or weighing each ingredient – a guess won't be accurate!

WHAT EQUIPMENT IS USED?

Equipment to measure **volume** includes:

- Measuring spoons
- Dry measuring containers
- Liquid measuring containers



Equipment to **weigh** ingredients are scales.

- Scales should be calibrated. Handle scales by the base to maintain accurate readings.
- Types of scales:
 - Traditional scales may also be called portion or pound scales.
 - Range of capacity is typically 2 to 50 pounds.
 - Dials may be fixed (stationary) or adjustable.
 - If dial is fixed, place the container on the platform and record the weight of the container before adding ingredients to be weighed.
 - If dial is adjustable, place the container on the platform and turn the pointer to 0, then add ingredients until required weight is reached.
 - Electronic scales
 - Need an electric or battery source.
 - Range of capacity is typically 10 to 50 pounds.
 - The tare button allows you to return the scale to zero weight after placing the container on the scale.
 - As an option, place the container on the scale before you turn it on and it will automatically tare to zero.



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WHAT IS THE CORRECT WAY TO MEASURE OR WEIGH INGREDIENTS?

It is important to follow the correct technique for measuring and weighing. Weigh and measure your ingredients for a recipe before combining. This is your *mise en place*, meaning all your ingredients are in place before you start preparing and cooking.

Measuring Techniques

- Dry ingredients – spoon or scoop ingredient lightly into spoon or cup, and then level top with flat surface.
- Liquid ingredients – fill measuring container and then place container on a level surface. Use your eye to be sure the bottom of the liquid curve (this is called the meniscus) is at the appropriate measure.

Weighing Techniques

- If a fixed dial, weigh the container you plan to use to weigh food. Use a permanent marker to write the weight of the container on the bottom of the container so you do not have to do this step again.
- If an adjustable dial, place container on the scale, then “tare” the scale by moving the dial indicator to the zero mark. If using an electronic scale, simply press the “tare” button to zero the scale.

WHICH IS BETTER – MEASURING OR WEIGHING?

- It is more accurate and easier to use a scale to weigh ingredients, especially dry ingredients. Food products vary in amounts of air, which can affect volume when measured by different people.
- Follow the recipe carefully to weigh and measure with precision.
- Accuracy is very important when weighing ingredients and helps the school chef produce consistently fabulous foods every time.

REFERENCES

Adapted from Institute of Child Nutrition's *Measuring and Weighing Fact Sheet for Child Care*.