

Getting Kids to Help: Dishes

Cleaning up after eating is an important life skill! It can also lead to fun teachable moments in your home. Use this guide for making quick work of post-meal cleanup.

Option 1: Have each child choose one night each week to take care of the dishes.

Option 2: Try the team approach, so kids can work together to "divide and conquer."

Doing the dishes means:

- Clearing the table
- Scraping the dishes
- Loading the dishwasher
- Washing/drying (for hand-washed items)

Safety Tip

Younger children can be in charge of non-breakable items and utensils (minus the sharp knives!)

Teach children what items:

- Get thrown away
- Go in the compost bin (consider starting a compost pile if you don't already have one)
- Can — and can't— go into a garbage disposal, if you have one



Do a **Dishwasher "Demo."**

Show kids how to load the dishwasher properly, such as:

- Lining up like items to maximize space and efficiency
- Putting plastic containers and cups go on the top
- Loading sharp knives facing downward
- Reading the label on dishwashing detergent packages
- Adding dishwashing detergent (for older children only)

JUST FOR FUN

... each night, have a different family member choose "music to do the dishes by." Dancing is allowed ... but only as long as it's done safely, far away from breakable dishes and sharp utensils!



american cleaning institute®
www.cleaninginstitute.org