

# BREAD GARDENS



**Art! Science! Nature! Chemistry!**

Making Bread Gardens is more than just an exercise in baking- It provide opportunities for scientific exploration and creative self-expression through a joyful tactile experience!



With this program, you will create a beautiful, edible landscape while enjoying homemade bread. This activity is easy, fun, and requires items you very likely already have at home! Simply follow the steps and recommendations below, and enjoy your delicious masterpiece!



## STEPS

**Step 1:** Prepare your bread dough (recipe below). This is your canvas.

**Step 2:** While your dough is rising, sketch a draft of the design you would like to create on your bread canvas that you can refer to once you begin laying your vegetables in place.

**Step 3:** Gather your garden! Search your refrigerator and pantry for different colors and shapes of foods you can use to create the landscape you imagined. Let your imagination run wild! You can use raw vegetables, mushrooms, herbs, olives, garlic, seeds and nuts, capers, and more! Sliced cherry tomatoes and bell peppers make lovely poppies and roses; sliced red onion in circles make blooming roses while sliced red onions in strips make lovely daisies; sliced yellow squash or yellow bell peppers with olives in the center make sunflowers; asparagus make thorny stems and broccoli make robust plants and trees; corn kernels make lovely petals in the wind; sliced purple and sweet potatoes make tulips; herbs make lovely wildflowers and bushy native plants; thinly sliced carrots make dandelions; slices of red cabbage make lavender sprigs; sliced mushrooms can grow right in the "soil" ...

And don't forget about the sun, the rain, rainbows, birds, and more! These are only suggestions, but there are many more ways to create beautiful edible scenes. There is no right or wrong way to create your bread garden. Just use your imagination, and the ingredients you have!

**Step 4:** Once your dough has risen, grease a baking sheet, stretch your dough out, and lay it spread out on the baking sheet. The bread recipe we recommend is for focaccia, which bakes nice and flat (recipe below).

**Step 5:** Create! Cut your ingredients into the shapes you like, and lay them upon the dough in your chosen design, gently pressing them into the dough to help them stay in place.

**Step 6:** Bake your bread according to the recipe.

**Step 7:** Enjoy your masterpiece!





# FOCACCIA DOUGH RECIPE



## Bread Making Supports NGSS!

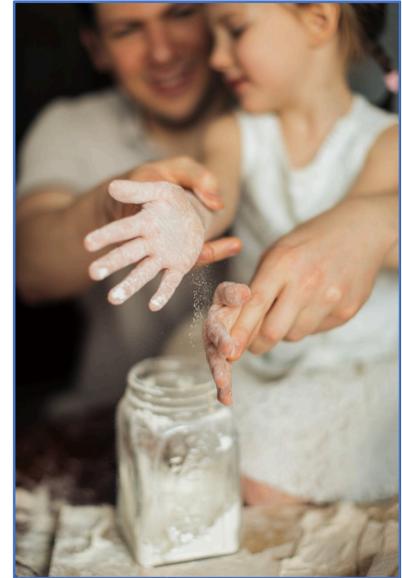
While making Bread Gardens, children will explore: Cause & effect; Scale, proportion, & quantity; Energy & matter; and Stability & change; They will engage in planning & carrying out investigations; Using mathematical & computational skills; Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information; They will learn about Life Science and Physical Science.

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 Tablespoon active dry yeast
  - 1.5 cups warm water
  - 2 & 3/4 cups flour
  - 3/4 Tablespoons salt

### DIRECTIONS

*Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Place yeast in a bowl. Pour in warm water, gently mix once, and let the liquid sit for 5 minutes. Add flour and salt. Start mixing with a wooden spoon, use your hands as necessary to fully wet the mixture (the dough will be very wet and sticky!). Once thoroughly mixed, set aside to rise for 45 minutes, or however much longer it takes for you to begin creating your landscape. Grease a baking sheet and stretch and spread the dough, laying it upon the baking sheet. Decorate with your edible landscape design. Bake for 30 minutes. Remove from oven and let cool 15 minutes before eating. Enjoy!*



***Making bread is a wonderful tactile experience for children, as well as an opportunity to talk to them about the chemistry of cooking, the reaction of the yeast and water, the way flour bonds to liquid, and more. Explore the links below for articles on how to talk to children about the science of baking!***

<https://www.rookieparenting.com/the-science-of-bread-baking-kids-experiment/>  
<https://www.washingtonparent.com/articles/1706/1706-teach-kids-science-through-baking.php>

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/culture/food/the-plate/2015/01/09/experimental-cookie-science/>



# CREATE AWAY!



*\*Special thanks to Sugar Geek for these fantastic before and after photos!  
\*Arboretum At-Home Nature Adventures Sponsored in part by Edison International.*

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[brooke.applegate@arboretum.org](mailto:brooke.applegate@arboretum.org).

