



**SOUTH DAKOTA STATE  
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION**

**In season:**



**Summer**

# Cucumbers

*Lakota: kuńkún*

## Preschool Lesson Plan

### Objectives

Participants will:

- identify cucumbers as a vegetable from MyPlate.
- increase knowledge in growing, selecting, storing and using cucumbers.
- demonstrate use of cucumbers in a recipe.

### Items Needed for the Lesson

- MyPlate poster
- Parts of a plant visual
- Visuals of cucumbers – cucumber plants, cucumbers with smooth and bumpy skin, mature cucumbers
- 1 cup and ½ cup measuring cups
- Packet of cucumber seeds

### Handouts or Take Home Items

- Pick It! Try It! Like It! Preserve It! fact sheet
- Coloring Sheet

### Recipe

- Thai Cucumber Salad

### Cooking and Food Safety Skill Sheets

- Handwashing
- Washing Fruits and Vegetables
- Measuring Dry and Liquid Ingredients
- Knife Safety and Cutting Boards

### Other Cooking and Food Safety Skills

- Kitchen terms - dissolve

### Supplies for Cucumber Lesson

- Thai Cucumber Salad
  - » Measuring cups
  - » Measuring spoons
  - » Liquid measuring cup
  - » Cutting boards
  - » Knives
  - » Saucepan
  - » Bowl
  - » Spoon

| What You Say:  | What You Do:  |
|--|---|
| <p>Every class we're going to learn about a different fruit or vegetable. I'm going to give you some clues and I want you to try to think of what it is. After each clue, raise your hand if you think you know what it is.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These are a watery vegetable (96% water).</li> <li>• Most of their flavor comes from the seeds.</li> <li>• Some have smooth skin, others have bumpy skin.</li> <li>• Their thick skin makes it hard for bugs to eat them, but bugs do like to eat the plant that they grow on.</li> <li>• The smell of these help some people to relax.</li> </ul> <p>(Answer: Cucumber.)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name off each clue, allow a few guesses before moving on to the next clue.</li> <li>• After someone guesses the answer, or you tell them, show them visuals of cucumbers.</li> </ul> |
| <p>How many of you have seen a cucumber before?</p> <p>Did you know that cucumbers are related to cantaloupe, squash, pumpkins and watermelon? Can you think of anything that all of these have in common?</p> <p>They all grow on vines on the ground. Sometimes gardeners put poles in the ground so the plants can climb up the poles.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show the visuals of cucumbers again. Include visuals of cucumber plants.</li> </ul>  |
| <p>How many of you have seen this before?</p> <p>My Plate shows us how to eat healthier by dividing a "plate" into parts and using different colors and sizes for each of the food groups. Orange is for grain foods, Purple is for protein foods, Green is for vegetables, Red is for fruits and the round Blue part by the plate is for dairy foods, like milk.</p> <p>Can you see that <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> of the plate is fruits and vegetables – the red section plus the green section? That is what our plate should look like on most days – <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> full of fruits and vegetables.</p>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show the MyPlate visual.</li> <li>• Point out the different parts and colors.</li> <li>• Point out that half of the MyPlate is fruits and vegetables.</li> </ul>                     |
| <p>What food group do you think cucumbers come from?</p> <p>(Answer: Vegetable – the green part on MyPlate.)</p> <p>Because cucumbers develop from a flower on the cucumber plant and because they have seeds on the inside, cucumbers are actually the fruit of a plant. But because we eat them and use them as a vegetable, they are part of the vegetable group on MyPlate.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call on someone who would like to answer.</li> <li>• Refer again to the vegetable group on MyPlate. List some other vegetables from this group.</li> </ul>                           |

| What You Say:   | What You Do:  |
|---|---|
| <p>How many vegetables do you think you should eat each day?</p> <p>Kids in preschool, should be eating 1 cup of vegetables each day. Kids in kindergarten should be eating 1 ½ cups of vegetables a day.</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow discussion.</li> <li>• Show preschool children a 1 cup measuring cup.</li> <li>• Show kindergarteners a 1 cup measuring cup and a ½ cup measuring cup.</li> <li>• Explain that this is how much they should be eating each day.</li> </ul> |
| <p>Have any of you ever grown cucumbers in your garden?</p> <p>Cucumbers can be planted from seeds or sometimes gardeners buy the plants already starting to grow from a greenhouse. Either way cucumbers plants need to be watered to keep the soil wet throughout the whole time they are growing.</p> <p>Remember, one of our clues was that this vegetable is 96% water.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If possible, show a packet of cucumber seeds.</li> </ul>   |
| <p>Cucumbers can be picked from the vine at any size. They should be a nice dark green color and they should feel firm, not soft. We do not want cucumbers to turn yellow. Yellow cucumbers are overripe. If you see a yellow cucumber on a vine, take it off so that the vine will make more cucumbers.</p> <p>Some cucumbers have smooth skin and some cucumbers have bumpy skin. This depends on the kind of cucumber that was planted and what the cucumber is going to be used for.</p> <p>Cucumbers that have bumpy skin are often made into pickles. Did you know that pickles are made from cucumbers?</p> <p>Cucumbers with smooth skin are often sliced for eating.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show a visual of a ripe cucumber with no signs of yellowing.</li> <li>• If possible, show a visual of a cucumber with smooth skin and one with bumpy skin.</li> </ul>  |
| <p>If you grow cucumbers in your garden or if you buy them at the store, we should store them in the refrigerator in a plastic bag until we eat them.</p>   |   |

| What You Say:  | What You Do:   |
|--|--|
| <p>Have you ever eaten a cucumber? How did you eat them? What did they taste like?</p> <p>Cucumbers are best eaten raw. They can be eaten plain as a snack, used in salads or dipped in low-fat dressing.</p> <p>Cucumbers should be scrubbed and rinsed well before eating or using in recipes. They can be eaten with the peel or they can be peeled using a vegetable peeler or knife. We want to ask permission or have an adult help us with peeling and cutting.</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow discussion about eating cucumbers.</li> <li>• Demonstrate scrubbing, rinsing and peeling a cucumber.</li> </ul> |
| <p>Why would we want to eat cucumbers?</p> <p>If we eat cucumbers with the peel on them, they give us fiber. Fiber helps to keep our digestive system healthy.</p> <p>Again, do you remember that we said cucumbers have a lot of water in them? Why is water important for our bodies?</p> <p>Water is a nutrient that all living things need. More than half of our body is made up of water.</p> <p>We should get 8 cups of water each day. This can come from drinking water and other beverages, as well as from foods like fruits and vegetables. Because cucumbers are made up mostly of water, eating them can count toward the 8 cups that we need.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call on someone who would like to answer.</li> </ul>  |
| <p>Are you ready to taste a recipe made from cucumbers?</p> <p>What is the first thing we need to do before making or eating food?</p> <p>(Answer: Wash our hands.)</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Handwashing skill sheet.</li> </ul>  |



# Use this page if you are going to prepare Thai Cucumber Salad

## Equipment List

- Measuring cups
- Measuring spoons
- Liquid measuring cup
- Cutting boards
- Knives
- Saucepan
- Bowl
- Spoon

| What You Say:  | What You Do:  |
|--|---|
| <p>Today we are going to be making Thai Cucumber Salad.</p> <p>Let's read through the recipe to make sure that we understand what we are going to do and to make sure we have everything needed.</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read the recipe to the students.</li> <li>• Show the ingredients as they are read.</li> </ul>  |
| <p>We are going to be measuring some dry and some liquid ingredients.</p> <p>What are some things we need to know about measuring?<br/>(Possible answers: Level dry ingredients, flat surface at eye level for liquid ingredients.)</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Measuring Liquid and Dry Ingredients skill sheet.</li> <li>• Demonstrate measuring dry and liquid ingredients.</li> </ul>               |
| <p>We are going to put the sugar, vinegar and salt into a small pan. We are going to put it on the stove and heat it until the sugar dissolves.</p> <p>Does anyone know what the word "dissolves" means?<br/>(Answer: The sugar can no longer be seen – it has become part of the liquid.)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call on someone who would like to answer.</li> </ul>   |
| <p>While the sauce is cooling, we are going to seed the cucumber.</p> <p>Does anyone know how we "seed" a cucumber?</p> <p>We will slice the cucumber the long way (from end to end) and then use a spoon to scoop out the part with the seeds.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call on someone who would like to answer.</li> <li>• Demonstrate seeding a cucumber.</li> </ul>  |
| <p>We will be using a knife and cutting board to cut the onions, red pepper and the cucumber.</p> <p>What do we need to remember when using a sharp knife?</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate using a knife and cutting board to cut the vegetables.</li> <li>• Refer to Knife Safety and Cutting Boards skill sheet.</li> </ul> |

## Visuals



**A cucumber blossom**



**A cucumber growing on the plant**



Photo by Mike Licht

**Smaller cucumbers are great for pickling**



**Large varieties of cucumbers are good for slicing**

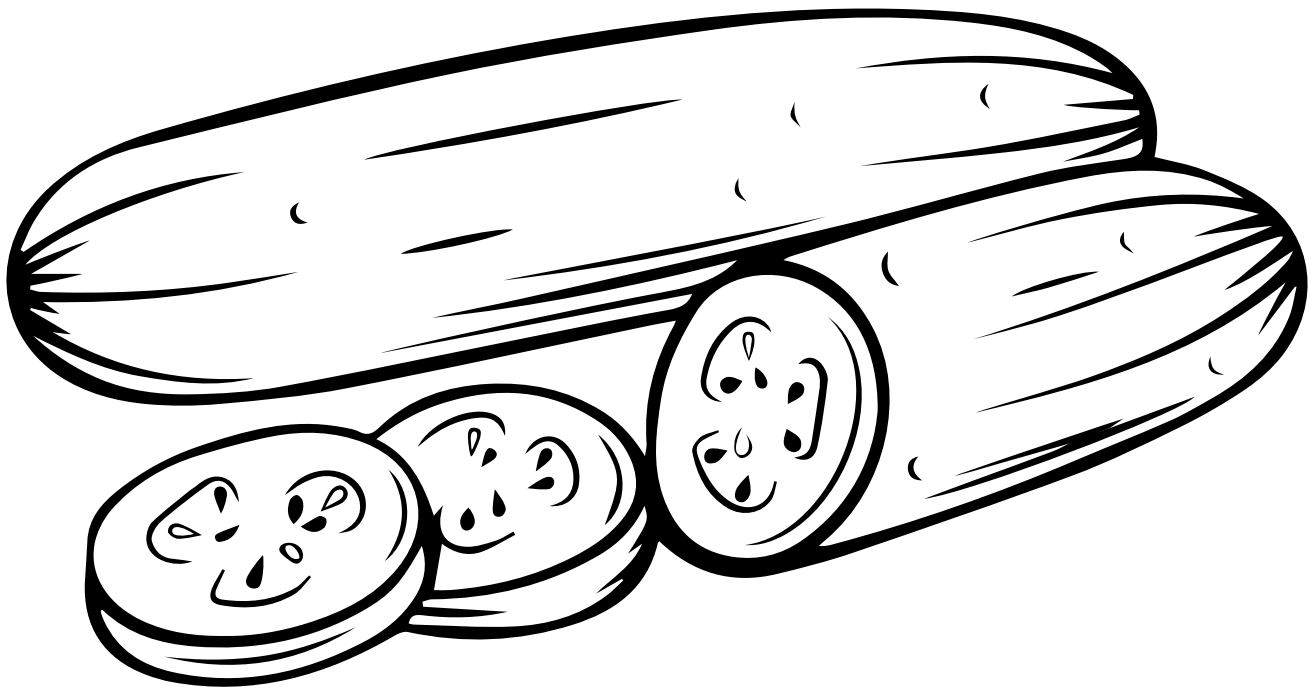
## Cucumber Nutrition Information

| Type  | Serving Size/Weight in grams                            | Calories                                   | Fiber (g)                                   | Vitamin A (International Units)                   | Vitamin C (mg)                              | Potassium (mg)                                    | Folate (mcg)                                    |
|---|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cucumbers, sliced   | ½ cup<br>52g  | 8  | .3  | 4   | 2   | 76  | 4   |
| <b>Daily Recommendations</b><br><b>RDA=Recommended daily allowance</b><br><b>AI=Adequate intake</b> | 1-4 cup servings of vegetables per day depending on age | Varies according to age and activity level | AI (depending on age) ranges from 14-33.6 g | Daily Value based on a 2,000 calorie per day diet | RDA (depending on age) ranges from 25-90 mg | AI (depending on age) ranges from 3,000-4,700 mg) | RDA (depending on age) ranges from 150-400 mcg) |



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# CUCUMBER



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# Cucumber Sources

## Recipe

- [myplate.gov/recipes/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap/cucumber-yogurt-and-herb-dip](https://myplate.gov/recipes/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap/cucumber-yogurt-and-herb-dip)

## Other

- [pickyourown.org/SDharvestcalendar.htm](https://pickyourown.org/SDharvestcalendar.htm)
- [fruitsandveggies.org/fruits-and-veggies/cucumber/](https://fruitsandveggies.org/fruits-and-veggies/cucumber/)
- [web.extension.illinois.edu/veggies/cucumber.cfm](https://web.extension.illinois.edu/veggies/cucumber.cfm)
- [extension.umaine.edu/publications/4254e](https://extension.umaine.edu/publications/4254e)
- [wifss.ucdavis.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/FDA\\_WIFSS\\_-Cucumbers\\_PDF.pdf](https://wifss.ucdavis.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/FDA_WIFSS_-Cucumbers_PDF.pdf)
- [healthysd.gov/veggie-of-the-month-cucumbers/](https://healthysd.gov/veggie-of-the-month-cucumbers/)

## Clues

- [konnecthq.com/cucumbers/](https://konnecthq.com/cucumbers/)

## Cooking Glossary

- [reallifegoodfood.umn.edu/kitchen-skills-and-tips/cooking-terms-glossary](https://reallifegoodfood.umn.edu/kitchen-skills-and-tips/cooking-terms-glossary)

## Lakota translation

- Translated by Jeshua Estes

## Photo credit

- Pickling Cucumbers: Photo by Mike Licht, [flic.kr/p/h2M5Hi](https://flic.kr/p/h2M5Hi)

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In season:



Summer

# Cucumber

*Lakota: kunjúŋ*

## Pick it!

Cucumbers range from 2 inches to 1 foot in length.

Select firm cucumbers no soft spots and an even bright green color. Do not choose cucumbers with yellow spots.

Avoid bulging cucumbers that likely are filled with large seeds and tasteless flesh.

Store-bought cucumbers are waxed to hold moisture. Refrigerate in plastic bag for up to 3 days.



## Try it!

Slicing and seedless cucumbers are used fresh in salads or on vegetable platters.

Rinse under cold water to remove waxy coating, slice as desired.

Skins can be left on or peeled before eating; removing skin removes fiber and vitamin A.



## Types of Cucumber

**Slicing:** Most common, can be eaten raw or pickled

**Pickling:** Grown specifically to be pickled, less bitter, smaller, fewer seeds

**Seedless:** Full-size and mini varieties



## Did you know...

Cucumbers are full of water. Water moves nutrients and wastes in the body. Water is part of the body's cooling system and balances the acid-base ratio.



**Like it!**

## Thai Cucumber Salad

### Ingredients

- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ cup white vinegar
- 4 cucumbers, sliced lengthwise, seeded
- 1-2 green onions, thinly sliced
- 10 whole cilantro leaves or 1 teaspoon dried cilantro leaves
- ¼ cup red pepper, cut into 1-inch strips

### Directions

1. Combine sugar, vinegar and salt.
2. Heat mixture in a small saucepan until the sugar is dissolved, about 5 minutes. Don't boil.
3. Place saucepan in cold water so the mixture cools.
4. Combine cucumbers and green onions in a bowl.
5. As soon as it is cool enough, pour over the cucumbers and green onions and place red peppers on top.

Yield 4 servings

#### Nutrition Facts per Serving:

Calories 80; Fat 0mg; Cholesterol 0mg; Sodium 590mg; Carbohydrates 18mg; Sugar 16g; Fiber 2g; Protein 1g

## Cucumber Yogurt and Herb Dip

### Ingredients

- 2 cups low-fat yogurt, plain
- 2 medium cucumbers
- ½ cup non-fat sour cream
- 1 Tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 Tablespoon fresh dill
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes
- 1 cup broccoli florets
- 1 cup baby carrots

### Directions

1. Peel, seed and grate 1 cucumber. Slice the other cucumber and set aside.
2. In a bowl, mix yogurt, grated cucumber, sour cream, lemon juice, dill and garlic. Chill for 1 hour.
3. Arrange tomatoes, cucumbers, broccoli and carrots on a colorful platter.
4. Serve platter with cucumber dip.

Yield 6 servings

#### Nutrition Facts per Serving:

Total Calories 94; Total Fat 2g, Saturated Fat 1g; Cholesterol 7mg; Sodium 109mg; Carbohydrates 15g, Dietary Fiber 2g, Total Sugars 9g, Added Sugars included 0g; Protein 6g

Source: [myplate.gov/recipes/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap/cucumber-yogurt-and-herb-dip](https://myplate.gov/recipes/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap/cucumber-yogurt-and-herb-dip)

*Lakota word translated by Jeshua Estes*

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