

Cooking Groups - an overview and signup

Last updated June 10, 2024

PLEASE VISIT: <https://today.canil.ca/community/cooking>

Total number of dorm residents: 20
Approx Other interested non-residents: 10
Could create 4 groups of 7-8 people

Google Document Resources for CanIL Summer Cooking Groups

[Overall summer cooking schedule](#)

[5 Tips for Dorm Meal Dinner planning](#)

For the last number of summers, students have self-organized into dormitory cooking groups, taking turns preparing weekday dinners, or taking turns cleaning up afterwards. The groups have been made up of both dorm-resident and non-resident CanIL students and staff.

Dormitory cooking groups are a great way to:

- Get to know and serve one another
- Keep food costs down
- Get some interesting variety over the summer :)

Here is what you can expect if you join a cooking group

- Cooking groups provide dinner for Monday - Friday, except for holidays and some special CanIL events.
- Normally a group will take two weeks of preparation and two weeks of clean-up. Different members of the group will take different days of their weeks or everyone works together all the time.
- Dinner starts at 6:15pm.
- Depending on the meal, size of team, etc., preparation starts in earnest at 4:45p but often pre-preparations are started earlier by one or two group members.
- Clean-up follows the meal and is typically done by about 7:30.

Normally there are four groups that take two weeks of the summer for preparing/cooking and another two weeks for cleanup. Doing it one week at a time helps cooking groups plan meals and do shopping for the entire week. The more people in a group, the more you can distribute the workload across individuals for the week. For example, if you have 5-7 people in a group, depending on the meal requirements, you could have 3-4 preparers per meal.

Typically, we have had about 30-50 people that commune together for evening dinners. Dropins have been allowed in the past, up to a certain number (plan on 7 extra people) and they put \$6 in a jar that goes toward the money pool (administered by the cooking group treasurer). Regular dropins should be encouraged to join a group so that they are putting in a fair share of labor.

How the finances work

1. At the beginning of the summer, everyone in a cooking group pays the cooking group treasurer (via cash). This amounts to 8 weeks x 5 meals per week x \$6 per meal = \$240 per person
2. The cooking group treasurer (dorm host) disburses funds each week (or the week prior) to the cooking group in charge for that week. Each group has 1/8 of the total money pool to work with for their week. For example if we have 30 people, the group would have \$180/meal or \$900 for the week (\$6 per person x 30 persons = \$180/day or \$900/week). If the average number of dropins is around 5 people, then the treasurer should be adding this into the disbursement for the week.
3. The group can choose how to spend this - they might do a simpler meal one day and a more extravagant meal on another day. Groups have come up with a wide variety of meals and it's amazing how well you can feed a group for two quarters per person. You could even order in pizza or whatever if it fits the budget.
4. Groups are also free to spend more if they want but that will either be divvied amongst their group or individuals in the group. They will be treating the others, which historically, some have really enjoyed doing but there is no obligation to do this.
5. Left-over funds from one week can be used in the 2nd round for the group, or contributed towards another group if they need more funds for a more expensive meal, supplies for everyone (oil, spices, etc.). If there is a lot of money left over at the end of summer, it can be divvied back to the participants - this is highly unlikely - or given to drivers for gas money who did most of the hauling for shopping runs.

How the groups work:

1. Groups appoint a leader(s).
2. Normally, groups assign head chefs for particular meals and who is going to assist. The larger the group, the easier it is to divvy up the work.
3. Groups decide on meal plans for their weeks, generate shopping lists, plan shopping trips, and distribute the pool money for the week's groceries across the shopping group members.

Food Allergens

Please refer to Food Allergen considerations at the top of the overall cooking group schedule to help as many partake in the group community as possible.

Occasional CanIL faculty, staff and student involvement in cooking groups for non-dorm residents

Sign-up [link](#)

Some non-dorm residents will sign up to be part of a *regular cooking group* but for most who live off campus, a sign-up to be involved for the *occasional* meal is provided here ([link](#)). They can help with clean-up or preparation and should be included in any communications for that day so they can help out. **Time in dorm meal prep clean up is an excellent opportunity to get to know one another.** Cost is \$6 per person which can be put in the collection jar when you arrive or given directly to the treasurer. PLEASE SIGN UP WELL IN ADVANCE (a week is preferred!) so meal planners can make adjustments!