



How to make a great family cookbook

So you want to make a family cookbook? Amazing! Here are a few tips and tricks I've learned along the way that will help make this project a success.

Some things to think about before you get started

1. Do I want to do this alone? Or are there family members that can help with collecting recipes (reaching out to relatives for recipes and photos), entering content and proof reading the book.
2. Do I want to add photos to my book?
3. Do I want to add a family history?
4. How do I want to organize my book? In the traditional way, by course? Or maybe by family, season, holiday?
5. What's my budget?

Once you've figure these things out, you are ready to get started.

Collecting recipes

I find it useful to collect recipes either in a folder on my computer in word documents, or if you are a premium member, in your own online recipe box.

People often end up with a lot of baking recipes. If you want a more well-rounded book, maybe ask relatives for specific recipes. If you want your book to truly be a reflection of the foods you celebrate, then don't worry about it!

It's helpful to give people a deadline- no more than a month or they will forget!

Don't forget to ask for stories about these recipes- this is really what makes a personal book so special!

Handwritten recipes add a great touch to your family book- we have two layout developed especially for uploading images of recipe cards or handwritten recipes.

Collecting photos

Again, it's useful to keep photos in a folder on your computer, and maybe label them by recipe so you know where to find them when you load them into your book, and you can also make sure you don't have duplicates.

Make sure photos are all jpg or png format, and high res.

You can decide later if you want your images to be in color or black and white, so don't worry about that now. Color pages are more expensive than black and white pages.

Entering recipes

Try putting together a team to help with this- you can invite them as contributors so they can also enter recipes.

If you are working as a team, it's a good idea to put together a formatting sheet so everyone works the same way- how you are abbreviating common measurements? (Is tablespoon going to be tbsp, or T?, for example). Also decide if you are going to number steps, go to the next line for every new step, or just write it all in one block? Will your tone be formal? Or more casual?

Enter ingredients in the steps they are used. This is very helpful!

Decide if you are listing yield, time, oven temperature etc. and where you are going to list these (there is a place for them in the templates, but you can override that or use that space for other things)

Proofread your book!

I can't stress this enough. It's a good idea to print out your preview copy and give it to someone that has never seen the book so they can proof it for you. Then proof it again!

Contributors can only edit recipes they have entered. If you want them to edit the whole book, you'll have to share your log on with them.

Placing your order

It's a good idea to think about budget before you get too far into the book. Our books are priced per page, and the more books you order, the less each individual book costs. So a 400 page book is going to cost a lot more than a 150 page book! Remember also that color pages are more expensive than black and white pages. Finally, the binding you choose has a lot to do with the final cost. You choose this at the end, so you can clearly see what you can afford.

We can ship to multiple locations, but it's much more expensive than shipping to one location and having you do the legwork of distribution.

Order in bulk for best pricing, rather than having everyone order their own copies.

Remember we can send out PDFs or Epubs for anyone that wants a digital format!

Give yourself enough time!

A book takes a while to put together, so give yourself enough time. A month is about average, and then we need two to three weeks to print, and up to a week to ship. So if you need your books by a certain date, we need the file a month before, and it would be wise to give yourself at least a month to put the book together. More if you are collecting recipes.

Have fun!

I've heard time and time again from people who enjoy the process of putting the book together almost as much as having the book in their hands! It's a chance to wander down memory lane and reconnect with your roots. And remember that you can always reorder your books if new members of the family come along.