



What is it ?

The cucumber belongs to the gourd family and is the cousin of melons and squash. The cucumber's skin can be green, yellow or white. Yellow and white cucumbers are not available on the North American market, but the green cucumber is widely available in grocery stores.



When can cucumbers be eaten ?

Field cucumbers : Mid-June to mid-October
Greenhouse cucumbers : Year-round

Did you know that...

There are about 40 cucumber varieties ?
The following varieties are the easiest to find in grocery stores :

- English cucumber
- Lebanese cucumber
- American cucumber
- Mini-cucumber
- Pickled cucumber (pickles)



Discovering the

CUCUMBER



How are cucumbers eaten ?

Fresh

salad

in a sauce
(tzatziki)

on their
own

gazpacho

with
a dip

sliced

Cooked

as a substitute
for zucchini

stew

gratiné

soup



Tip to avoid waste

Chances are, you're accustomed to eating cucumber fresh. But it can also be frozen to avoid waste, though you'll have to use it in a soup, as its texture changes when you freeze it, meaning it won't be as crunchy.



CONTINUE EXPLORING THE CUCUMBER

Actively challenge your campers, test their knowledge and discover all of this fruit's secrets.

Do you know me ?

Duration : 5-10 minutes



1. True or false ? All cucumber varieties are green.

Answer : False. Cucumbers can also be yellow or white.

2. True or false ? The English cucumber is the smallest of all the varieties.

Answer : False. The mini-cucumber is the smallest.

3. Where do cucumbers grow ?

- a) In fields
- b) In greenhouses
- c) In a secret area guarded by garden gnomes
- d) a) and b)

Answer : d)

4. True or false ? All cucumbers have seeds.

Answer : False. The English cucumber does not have seeds.

5. True or false ? English cucumbers, mini-cucumbers and Lebanese cucumbers are available for sale year-round.

Answer : True. Each of these varieties is grown in greenhouses.

The dancing cucumber

Duration : 10 minutes

Divide your campers into groups. Then instruct them to invent a dance connected to the cucumber. Hold a contest to determine which group created the best dance.



Cucumber ball

Duration : 15-20 minutes

Objective : The players must steal the cucumber.

Materials : One "cucumber" (ball) placed on one cone

Step 1 : Divide your group into two equal teams. Have the members of each team sit face to face on a different line. Place the cone and the ball between the two teams. Each team should be six metres from the cone.

Step 2 : Give a variety of cucumber (e.g. Dutch, prickly, Japanese) to each player. Make sure there is a player with the same variety of cucumber on the other team. The players must remember the variety of cucumber with which they are associated.

Step 3 : Tell a story, and when you name a variety of cucumber, the player associated with that variety on each team must hurry to collect the cucumber in the center.

Step 4 : The player who collects the cucumber first brings it back to their team.

Step 5 : The team that collects the most cucumbers wins !

Variation : If your group is odd-numbered, ask a camper to tell the story. The camper can then change places with the camper who lost their fight for the cucumber.

Nourish your expressiveness !

Power Up has coined a colourful new expression :

"I wish you a cucumber of a great day!"

Ask your campers to count the number of times you use the expression. At the end of the day, reward the camper who comes up with the best guess, for example by letting them choose an activity.



CONTINUE EXPLORING THE CUCUMBER

It's time for a taste test !



Taste it !

Duration : 30 minutes

Objective : Use the five senses to explore the cucumber in all its forms with your campers.

Materials : One mini-cucumber, one English cucumber, one American cucumber, or one field cucumber per camper, one pair of tongs, and one knife



Examine it with your eyes

- Do you observe a difference in colour between the three types of cucumber ?
- If you cut them in half, what differences do you see between the inside and the outside ?
- Does the colour remind you of another fruit or vegetable ?
- Do you find them appetizing ?



Explore them with your hands

- What do you think of their shape ? Is it uniform ? Does it make you think of anything ?
- How would you describe their texture (smooth, soft, coarse, etc.) ?



Recognize them through their smell

- Do you like their smell ? Why ?
- What exactly do they smell like (woody, floral, fruity, fresh, subtle, etc.) ?
- What does their smell make you think of (a place, a time, a celebration, a person) ?



Their sound

- Have you listened to the sound they make when you bite into them ? Can you describe it ?
- Is there a difference in the sound that the three varieties of cucumber make ?
- Is the sound faint or distinct ? Is it like the sound you hear when you bite into a melon or a carrot ?



Discover them with your mouth:

Their taste

- Do you like their taste ? Why ?
- How would describe their flavour ?
- Is their smell representative of their taste ?
- Does their taste remind you of any other foods ?

Tastes

- Sweet: like candy
- Bitter: like grapefruit
- Acidic: like lemon
- Salty: like salt

Their texture inside the mouth

- Can you find a word to describe their texture inside the mouth ?
- What do you like or dislike about each of the cucumbers ?
- Can you compare them to other foods you've eaten ?
- Which of the three cucumbers do you prefer ? Why ?

Textures

- Crunchy : like a celery
- Crispy : like a dried banana
- Juicy : like an orange
- Sticky : like caramel



Don your aprons!

Ready, set, cook ! Visit www.tremplinsante.ca to view recipes that feature the cucumber :

- Spring rolls with tofu
- Tzatziki
- Greek hero sandwich



For the curious

Did you know that pickles are a kind of cucumber ? In fact, pickles are a crunchier type of cucumber, which makes them perfect for marinades. Several delicious recipes are available on the Web. Try them with your campers!

For additional ideas on words to use to taste foods with the senses, please refer to the **Tasting Expert** activity on the PU portal. <https://portail.tremplinsante.ca/>

