

Kids' Corner

Magic Hats

Keep kids busy this summer with a fun food project

WHEN I WAS GROWING UP, SUMMERTIME MEANT FUN TIME IN OUR BACKYARD SWIMMING POOL. My sister and I would have played in the water with our friends all day if Mom didn't devise other activities for us. When she saw our fingers beginning to get waterlogged, she'd call us out of the pool: "Let's make ice cream cone hats." We would immediately stop our game of tag or "Olympic diver" and scramble out. • Looking back, I realize Mom really outdid herself with this cooking project. In order to make these ice cream cone hats, we had to leave the pool several times and sit quietly: first to fill, then to decorate the cones. Our greatest delight came at mid-afternoon when she finally pulled the hats out of the freezer for a sweet snack. • You can use these treats—as my mom did—to get your kids to cool down out of the summer sun and to explore their imaginations. My recipe on page 68 encourages your children and their friends to indulge in a bit of fantasy and create magical wizard's caps. Try combinations like fresh bananas and chocolate sorbet or nuts and chocolate chip-cookie dough ice cream; or layer three kinds of ice cream—dulce de leche is one tasty choice—hiding chocolate candies between each type. Even better, plan to make these hats for your child's next birthday: Fill the cones up to three days in advance, then let the kids decorate them at the party.



TURN EVERYDAY CONES INTO TASTY DECORATED CAPS WITH CHOCOLATE COATING, COLORFUL ICING, CANDY SPRINKLES, AND EVEN BIRTHDAY CANDLES.

Wizard Hat Hints

If your kids are young, have an adult put the hats together before letting the children decorate the outsides. If the children are older, they can make these desserts themselves from start to finish.

For added summer fun, make the cookies from scratch with your children up to 1 day before making the Wizard's Surprise Ice Cream Cone Hats. Make sure the cookies are thoroughly cooled or they will melt the ice cream when you attach them to the cone. Use your favorite recipe for sugar, peanut butter, chocolate chip, or molasses cookies, or use a mix or purchased cookie dough. Be sure to make the cookies large enough to form a hat brim for decorating.

The candy and fruit "surprises" must be cut into bite-size pieces to easily fit in the cones.

Make sure the kids' hands are freshly washed before starting.

Have a wet washcloth and a dishtowel handy to clean and dry hands. Encourage kids to wash rather than lick melted ice cream or sticky candy from their fingers.

If kids have trouble filling the cones, try this tip: Stand the cone in a two-cup liquid measuring cup, preferably plastic, with paper towel crumpled around cone to protect it and hold it steady.

Don't worry if a child's cone cracks during filling. Cracks can be covered with chocolate coating, frosting, and candy decorations.

WIZARD'S SURPRISE ICE CREAM CONE HATS

PREP TIME: 2 to 4 hours

MAKES: 4 cones

- 4 regular-size sugar cones or large waffle cones
- Safeway SELECT Ice Cream or Sorbet, your favorite flavor
- Fruit, candy, and nuts (see "Super Surprises" at right)
- 4 cookies (3 in. in diameter for regular cones, 4 to 4½ in. in diameter for waffle cones; round biscuits and molasses, sugar, and chocolate chip cookies all work well)
- Chocolate shell coating, frosting, and candy decorations (see "Dynamite Decorations" at right)

1. Cover a baking sheet or shallow pan with wax paper and set it in the freezer.
2. Place the ice cream carton in the microwave and heat on defrost for 10 to 20 seconds, until ice cream is just soft enough to scoop but not melting.
3. Scoop ice cream from carton (you'll need a total of about 1 cup if you're using regular cones, 2 cups for waffle cones); place in a bowl.
4. Using a small spoon, quickly place a small amount of ice cream in the bottom of a cone. Gently press your choice of candy, fruit, or nuts into the ice cream as the "surprise." Add more ice cream and gently press down with the spoon or the tips of your fingers to pack. Place another surprise on top of the ice cream and top with more ice cream; continue until ice cream fills the cone. (You'll use about ¼ cup ice cream for

each regular cone, ½ cup for each waffle cone.)

5. Gently level off the ice cream with the back of the spoon. Place a cookie on top of the ice cream to form the brim of the hat. (The ice cream will act like glue to hold the cookie in place.) Turn the hat over and quickly place it on the paper-lined pan in the freezer. Repeat with remaining cones. Freeze regular cones at least 1 hour, waffle cones at least 2 hours.

6. Cover counter or other decorating surface with wax paper. Remove cones from the freezer and place on the wax paper. (If working on only one cone at a time, remove only one from the freezer.) To prevent ice cream from melting, quickly decorate with coating, icing, sprinkles, etc., then replace in the freezer for at least 1 hour or up to 3 days before serving.

By
HOLLY RUDIN BRASCHI

What you'll need to fill and finish the cones

Super Surprises

- Safeway SELECT Truffles or Cups, halved
- Hershey's Bites
- M&M's
- mini chocolate chips
- snack-size Snickers bars, sliced
- fruit-flavored jelly candies
- roasted, unsalted nuts, any kind (mixed nuts, almonds, cashews, peanuts)
- fresh banana, diced
- fresh strawberries, diced
- canned pineapple pieces, well drained
- fresh orange slices, cut into small pieces
- blueberries, fresh or frozen (do not thaw if frozen)

Dynamite Decorations and how to use them

- chocolate shell coating: drizzle over the top of the hat
- decorating icing in different colors: squeeze over the chocolate coating or where the cone meets the cookie to hide the seam, or use like glue to attach candies
- colored sprinkles: scatter over the coating before the chocolate firms up
- small candy letters used for cake decorating: spell your initials, your name, or write a secret message; attach with icing
- colored sugar: sprinkle over wet icing so it sticks