

Test your taste

How good are you and your friends at detecting different flavours?



What you need

- A friend
- A blindfold
- Kitchen roll
- Some bite-sized foods, like cheese, chocolate or sliced fruit
- Four more foods chopped into tiny pieces – one sweet, one sour, one salty and one bitter

How does it work?

The first test reveals just how much you rely on saliva (spit) in order to taste things. Saliva is 99.5% water and the other 0.5% is a combination of chemicals, including proteins called enzymes. Your spit helps you digest your meals and starts breaking down food as soon as you take the first bite. Without your food being dissolved in saliva, the taste buds on your tongue can't detect food molecules, so a dry tongue should result in a lack of taste. The second test reveals the importance of smell when it comes to your sense of taste. When you eat or drink, air passes your nose carrying chemicals rising from your snacks. These scents give a more complex flavour to food. If your nose is blocked, you have to rely on your taste sense alone.

TOP TIP!
Try to use unexpected (but edible) foods. Chop or squish them up all so that their texture or shape doesn't give away the answer.



1 Blindfold your friend and get them to stick out their tongue. Dab it dry with kitchen roll, put a small bit of food on it and ask them to identify it.



2 Note their guess, as well as what the food actually was, and then try more foods. Then switch places and repeat. Who got more right?



3 Each of you should secretly prepare four more foods that have different tastes. This time you should block your nose and cover your eyes.



4 Get your friend to try each of your foods – this time they can actually eat them. Note their guesses, then switch roles. Who won this time?