# Braille in the Kitchen

Presented by Emma Williams on 1 June 2021

## Labelling

Braille can be an effective way to identify products in the kitchen for both proficient braillists and people learning. Some products already have braille on the packaging, such as own brand products from the Co-op, medication and cleaning bleach.

If not and you are constructing your own labels, write them in a way you understand. This could be abbreviated e.g. toms for tinned tomatoes.

### Sticky Labels

You can either use labelling tape or sticky sheets (RNIB DL11). They are especially useful for:

* Refillable items such as spices, oils, coffee
* Items transferred to refillable containers, such as rice and pasta in a Tupperware container

You can use a Braille Labeller, 6-Dot Braille Label Maker, Tatrapoint or hand frame to produce labels on labelling tape. If you have one, you can also use the labelling tape adapter for the Perkins Brailler but this is not readily available in the UK.

### Elastic Labels

You can write labels on thick, durable card or plastic sheets which are not sticky, such as acetate or thermoform plastic. Cut them out, punch a hole at one end and thread an elastic band through them. These are useful for:

* Tins, packets and jars
* Ready meals that look the same
* Batch cooked foods

If you prefer, you could attach cardboard to elastic and then apply labelling tape to the cardboard.

You could also attach these labels with a bulldog clip if you do not wish to use elastic, but be careful not to flatten the dots!

### Frozen Food

You can make a braille label on regular paper, place it on top of the item to be frozen and then wrap Clingfilm around the item and its label. This will protect the paper from damage whilst allowing the label to still be read.

### Other Reusable Labels

For open packets, seal them with a large plastic clip and attach a self-adhesive label to the clip. The clip can then be used for packets of the same product in future without needing to rebraille the label.

Tactile markings and braille may also be found on measuring scoops and jugs. In particular, look at products from Pourfect.

### Braille on White Goods

You can request a braille panel from the manufacturers of, e.g. washing machines, tumble dryers, dishwashers etc. Be sure to know the exact model number of the machine when making your request, or ask the shop at the point of purchase.

The panels are free and are supplied with a braille key, as the labels on the panels themselves are very heavily abbreviated.

Braille for touch screen elements is generally applied below the touch area.

### Fun Ways to Learn Braille

You can use round fridge magnets or egg boxes filled with ping-pong balls to construct braille cells. This is a good learning tool for yourself or people you live with.

## Recipes

### Hard Copy

You can produce hard copy recipes yourself by:

* Finding them on the internet and embossing them with a braille embosser
* Brailling them on a Perkins onto thermoform plastic

Thermoform is particularly useful if you wish to reuse your recipes as it can be washed without ruining the braille. You may wish to apply a small amount of flour to your fingers to aid reading on this material.

If you do not have access to thermoform plastic, you could produce your recipes on A4 paper and insert it into a plastic wallet.

You may like to adapt the recipes before you print them, especially if they are for children or new braille readers. For example:

* Add measurements to the Method section – usually they are just in the Ingredients section
* Produce them with double line spacing
* Add numbers to the steps in the Method section, if they are not already numbered

RNIB also has braille recipe books available.

You may find it useful to mark your place in a recipe using, e.g. Blue Tack at the left margin.

### Soft Copy

When reading recipes on a braille display, put the display in a large food bag to protect it from dirt. The braille should still be readable through the bag.

Clingfilm may also be an option, but the braille display may puncture it as the cells refresh, it may be applied so tightly as to press the buttons, and it may become too creased over time to read the braille.

The SD card which comes with the Orbit Reader contains many recipe books. You can also access recipes via Kindle, Apple Books etc and connect to a braille display via Bluetooth to read them.