



ABILITYMPICS 2026

Contest Description

1. Contest Area: Cooking

Post-Secondary

Schedule:

| TIME | DATE | LOCATION |
|---------------------|------|--|
| 10:00 AM – 10:40 AM | | Welcomed by judges, event overview, kitchen orientation, safety briefing. Participants are divided into Group A and Group B. Workstations assigned with ingredients and Black Box Item revealed. |
| 10:45- 11:30 | | Group A Prepares their soup using the provided ingredients. Group B Heads to Flex space for a TAT or observes competition |
| 11:30 – 12:00 | | Group A Clean and Reset workstations. Judges taste and prepare for next phase. Group B returns |
| 12:00 – 12:45 | | Group B Prepares their soup using the provided ingredients. Group A Heads to lunch |
| 12:45-1:15 | | Group B Clean and Reset workstations. Judges taste and prepare for next phase. Group A returns |
| 1:15-2:15 | | Group B heads to lunch, Group A makes Grilled cheese |
| 2:15 -2:30 | | Group A clean and reset workstations. Judges taste and prepare for next phase. Group B Returns |
| 2:30-3:15 | | Group B Prepares Grilled cheese. Group B heads to flex space for a TAT workshop or observes competition |
| 3:15 -4:30 | | Group A clean and reset workstations. Judges taste and meet to discuss judging scores |
| 4:30 -5:30 | | Pizza Party and Medals Ceremonies |

2. Purpose of the Contest



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The purpose of this competition is to provide participants with an engaging and supportive opportunity to demonstrate their culinary skills, creativity, and professionalism. Competitors will prepare and present a healthy and comforting meal. This event is designed to encourage participants to showcase their knowledge of food preparation techniques, flavour balance, and presentation while maintaining a clean and organized workspace, focus on health, safety, and accessibility in the kitchen.

3. Criteria

Participants will prepare and present a healthy and exciting meal using various techniques and professional equipment. The task is to prepare Chicken Noodle Soup, served with a Grilled Cheese Sandwich on the side. "Black Box" (Mystery Items Necessary to create and prepare a Grilled Cheese Sandwich).

4. Number of Stations / Allocations

There will be five Cooking Stations and two groups: Group A and Group B. Skills Canada – Nova Scotia will provide all ingredients for competition day. If you have a special ingredient you would like to add please ensure this ingredient is submitted to Accessibility Services Coordinator: dominiquepetitpas@skillsns.ca a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the competition.

5. Skills & Knowledge to be Tested

Participants will be evaluated on their culinary knowledge, technical skills, and creativity. They must demonstrate safe food-handling practices, effective use of professional equipment, and strong time management while preparing a healthy and flavourful Chicken Noodle Soup and Grilled Cheese Sandwich. The competition also tests their ability to adapt, innovate, and creatively present their dishes using mystery ingredients in the Grilled Cheese "Black Box" challenge.

6. Prerequisites

Be a member of one of the six participating partnering programs: NSCC Achieve IT, NSCC Achieve Akerley, Achieve Truro, The Prescott Group, Building Futures & Steps on Arthur.

7. Equipment & Clothing

Participants will be provided with cooking equipment to practice with and use on the day. If a participant has taken home their kit to practice with, they are responsible for bringing it with them on March 27, 2026.



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All recipes, kitchen equipment, serving dishes and ingredients will be provided. Participants will be expected to wear non-slip, closed-toe shoes. An apron, shoe covers, and a hair net will be provided. Participants will be required to clean their workstations after completing the assignment

8. Evaluation & Judging Criteria

| POINT BREAKDOWN | / 100 |
|---|-------------|
| Personal & Workplace Hygiene: Washing hands, wearing special clothing (gloves & apron, hair tied back), keeping work surfaces clean & tidy. | 20 |
| Presentation - Style and Creativity: Visual appeal, plating technique, creativity in presentation, colour contrast. | 25 |
| Taste - Flavour and Balance: Overall taste, seasoning, balance of flavours, aroma. | 35 |
| Texture - Consistency: Correct doneness, mouthfeel, consistency of each component (sauce, protein, garnish, etc.) | 20 |
| TOTAL | <hr/> / 100 |

No ties are permitted

9. Additional Information

A snack during the break and lunch will be provided by SCNS. If you have any questions do not hesitate to reach out to PTC.

10. PTC Contact Information

| Name | Employer | Email |
|---------------|----------|--|
| Cameron Laing | | cameronlaing87@gmail.com |



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Daniel Obeng

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GRILLED CHEESE RECIPE

Ingredients:

- 2 slices of bread of your choice
- Mayonnaise 1-2 TBSP
- Dijon mustard 1TBSP
- 1 to 2 ounces grated cheese, of your choice
- 1 to 2 ounces of different grated cheese
- Butter, for the pan"

Instructions:

- Place the bread slices on a cutting board and spread the top side with a thin layer of mayo.
- Flip one slice of bread and spread its other side with Dijon mustard.
- Layer the cheeses on top of the mustard, then place the other slice of bread on top of the cheese, mayo side out.
- Heat a nonstick or cast-iron skillet over medium-low heat and melt enough butter in the bottom of the pan to coat it.
- Place the sandwich in the pan, cover, and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, or until the bottom slice of bread is golden brown and crisp.

GRILLED CHEESE RECIPE

Instructions Cont...

- **Flip, replace the lid, and cook until the other slice of bread is golden brown and the cheese is melted, 1 to 3 minutes.**
- **Reduce the heat to low if the bread is getting too brown before the cheese is fully melted.**
- **Slice and serve.**

Tips & Ideas:

- **Spread mayo on the outside of the bread. Not butter! The mayo helps the bread brown insanely well in the skillet, creating a mouthwatering crunch when you bite into the sandwich. It also gives the sandwich a richer flavor. Spread the inside of one slice of bread with a layer of Dijon mustard.**
- **Add grated cheese. I find that grated cheese melts more evenly than a slice of cheese does. (Though of course, if you choose to use a softer type of cheese, such as brie, you'll have to slice it.) Use enough to create a small mound of grated cheese over one slice of bread, generally 1 to 2 ounces of each type of cheese. Place the other slice of bread on top, mayo side out!**

GRILLED CHEESE RECIPE

Tips Cont...

- **Choose the right skillet.** We like to use cast-iron because it creates gorgeous browning on the outside of the sandwich. In a pinch, nonstick works too!
- **Go low and slow.** I don't raise my heat any higher than medium-low. If the pan gets too hot, the bread will burn before the cheese melts.
- **Cover the pan.** Add enough butter to coat the bottom of the pan. Then, add the sandwich, and COVER the skillet. The lid will trap steam in the pan, helping melt the cheese as the bread toasts. Cook for 2 to 3 minutes, or until the bread is golden brown. Flip and cook, covered, on the second side.
- **Adjust the heat as needed.** Lower it if the bread is browning too quickly!
- **When the bread is browned on both sides and the sandwich is full of melty cheese, remove it from the pan.** Slice (into triangles, please!), and serve!

Remember

In the competition there is a "Black box" element - this simply means that there will be a surprise ingredient - be sure to practice with other flavours and ingredients like sweet, salty and sour .



CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP

Ingredients:

- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon butter
- 1-2 tablespoons celery, small dice
- 2-3 tablespoons carrot, small dice
- 2-3 tablespoons onion, small dice
- $\frac{1}{4}$ small clove garlic, minced (or a pinch of minced garlic)
- 2 cups chicken stock or broth
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon salt, to taste
- Pinch of freshly ground black pepper
- Tiny pinch dried rosemary
- Tiny pinch dried thyme
- Very small pinch crushed red pepper flakes (optional)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cooked egg noodles or small pasta
- $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{3}$ cup cooked rotisserie chicken, chopped
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon Better Than Bouillon (chicken flavor), or to taste

Instructions:

1. In a small saucepan, melt the butter over medium heat.
2. Add the onion, celery and carrots and sauté for about 2-3 minutes, until slightly softened.
3. Add the garlic and cook for about 20-30 seconds, just until fragrant.
4. Pour in the chicken stock and season with rosemary, thyme, red pepper flakes, salt, and pepper.



CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP

Instructions cont...

5. Stir in the Better Than Bouillon. Taste and adjust seasoning as needed.
6. Bring to a gentle boil, then add the noodles. Cook just until al dente (be careful not to overcook).
7. Remove from heat and stir in the cooked chicken.
8. Taste once more and adjust seasoning if needed.

CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP