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with Mandy Hall Masterchef 2019



Prep Time: 15-30mins

## CHEESE GRAZING BOARD

Please don't forget if you are preparing food for guests, keep everyone safe and use gloves. This is the time of year for gatherings, a grazing board is a fabulous way to feed a few people with loads of little bites and without the pressure of putting together a special dish. Here's a simple guide with tips and tricks to make your own platter at home that guarantees something for everyone!



Serves: 6 +

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## CHEESE GRAZING BOARD

- You don't have to have a board, you can use a big plate, a baking tray that you have covered in brown paper, a chopping board!
- When you are shopping for your board, think about how many people, food intolerances and allergies, what is seasonal and therefore, more flavour and cost effective.
- Decide what bits and pieces you need, if you have bought or made some dips, it's great to put them into little bowls - but keep the tubs with lids because then you can put the leftovers back in the fridge! What nuts and seeds etc do you already have at home, now is the time to use up any bits and pieces.
- Allow about 50g of cheese per person when you are thinking about cheese buying, that helps to stay on track, I allow the same if I am also including any charcuterie. I buy about three to four different varieties of cheese and two to three varieties of cold meats.
- Other things to put on your board are, fruits – dried or fresh, nuts, veggies, pickles, tinned fish like sardines are really popular now as is cured fish, also olives, breads and crackers – again, a variety of breads and crackers looks fabulous and keeps everyone happy, if you have things in oil or marinated – place some tooth picks in easy reach so that people can easily select.
- If you are using fruit and veg like grapes, strawberries or tiny vine tomatoes – keep them all on the stems, it looks great and it stops them from rolling around.
- I love apple & pear on boards BUT they go brown pretty quickly once cut and can then look a little uninviting, so I tend to leave them off.
- Don't forget to let your cheeses come to room temp, that's when they show off their best.
- Placement – I start by laying out my cheese, still in wrappers - spacing out the varieties, then I decide what bowls to put my dips in (think about colours), space the empty bowls around the board. Then I can see where to put the meat. I look for whatever larger fruit or veg items I have and place those. Once I am happy with those placements, I unwrap everything, reposition the cheese, put the dips, olives into the bowls, fold my meats for presentation and serving ease, then place them together in a section. Next come my breads and crackers, I place the crackers in their groups on different sections of the board and then I simply fill in the gaps with things like nuts, dried fruit, vegetables etc.
- A few little things make a huge difference - like piling up ingredients instead of leaving things flat, cutting things in angular shapes, sprinkling nuts and berries throughout, leaving green tops on fruits or veg, drizzle some honey on Brie and topped with chopped nuts, (put the Brie on a small plate first) beside the board leave some serviettes and a little bowl for any seeds, stems etc.
- I keep a special section, away from everything for the chocolates if I am adding them, it's a great idea to keep the chocolate aside until the board is starting to look like it needs refreshing.
- Remember that odds and mismatching works well here, bowls can be different colours, shapes and sizes, you might even choose something other than a bowl, maybe a small glass or cup. Use a selection of different knives or spreaders, some forks, it will all work.
- If it's super hot, try and find a cool place for your platter, I often fill a big salad bowl with ice and then sit the platter/board on top, it keeps things nice and cool.

*Grazing boards are all about variation and ease – don't think too hard, buy what you love and place in a way that makes you smile, your guests will feel the joy.*



Find this recipe on line at [afsfoodland.com.au](http://afsfoodland.com.au)

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